### Opening Prayer Service

#### Gathering Song

Come, Holy Spirit, by whose breath

Life rises vibrant out of death:

Come to create, renew, inspire;

Come, kindle in our hearts your fire

In you God’s energy is shown,

To us your varied gifts made known,

Teach us to speak, teach us to hear;

Yours is the tongue and yours the ear.

Through you may we the Creator learn

And know the Son and you discern;

You come from both and we’ll adore

In perfect faith forevermore.

(Rabanus Mauris, ninth century)

#### Listen

Let us listen as the Word of God teaches us about the Holy Spirit.

##### Images of the Holy Spirit in the Bible

**Fire**

John answered all of them by saying, ‘I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire (Luke 3:16).

**Dove**

And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him (Matthew 3:16).

**Power**

He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure (John 3:34).

It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life (John 6:63).

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

**Breath**

When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’ (John 20:22).

**Wind**

The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit’ (John 3:8).

**Love**

. . . God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us (Romans 5:5).

**Oil**

The Lord said, ‘Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.’ Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward (1 Samuel 16:12-13).

**Water**

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, “Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.” ’ Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified (John 7:37-39).

**Truth**

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you (John 14:15-17).

**Witness**

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you (John 14:26).

##### Images of the Holy Spirit in Baptism

Whenever we celebrate Baptism, we ask the Holy Spirit to come so that we will grow closer to Christ and become strengthened for the challenge of being his body in the world. In Baptism, we pray that the Father will “send the Holy Spirit upon the waters” of the font so that all who are baptized with the water will receive “newness of life” in Christ (*Rite of Baptism for Children* # 91). Listen now to the action of the Holy Spirit in the prayer over the baptismal water which was prayed at our Baptism:

Father, you give us grace through sacramental signs, which tell us of the wonders of your unseen power.

In baptism we use your gift of water, which you have made a rich symbol of the grace you give us in this sacrament.

At the very dawn of creation your Spirit breathed on the waters, making them the wellspring of all holiness.

By the power of the Holy Spirit give to the water the grace of your Son, so that in the sacrament of baptism all those whom you have created in your likeness may be cleansed from sin and rise to a new birth of innocence by water and the Holy Spirit.

We ask you, Father, with your Son to send the Holy Spirit upon the waters of this font. May all who are buried with Christ in the death of baptism rise also with him to newness of life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen. (*Rite of Baptism* #54)

Pass the bowl of water and bless yourselves with water, saying: “In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”

#### Respond

Holy Spirit, Creator, in the beginning you moved over the waters. Holy Spirit, come!

Response: Holy Spirit, come into our midst.

Holy Spirit, Creator, from your breath all creatures drew their life.

Response: Holy Spirit, come into our midst.

Holy Spirit, Counselor, by you inspiration the prophets bore witness to the Word of God.

Response: Holy Spirit, come into our midst.

Holy Spirit, you prepared the Virgin Mary to become the mother of the Lord.

Response: Holy Spirit, come into our midst.

Holy Spirit, you descended upon Jesus on the day of his baptism.

Response: Holy Spirit, come into our midst.

Holy Spirit, you led Christ into the desert; you assisted him in proclaiming the Kingdom.

Response: Holy Spirit, come into our midst.

Holy Spirit, Christ promised you would always be with us and in us.

Response: Holy Spirit, come into our midst.

Holy Spirit, you came down upon the apostles to gather them into a new communion, the Church.

Response: Holy Spirit, come into our midst.

Holy Spirit, comforter, you bring us to birth as God’s children.

Response: Holy Spirit, come into our midst.

Holy Spirit, you make us a living sign of God’s presence.

Response: Holy Spirit, come into our midst.

Holy Spirit, you pray within us.

Response: Holy Spirit, come into our midst.

(*Prayer for Each Day*. Taize.)

#### Go Forth

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful;

And kindle in them the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created;

And you shall renew the face of the earth. Amen.

### Handout #1.

### The Holy Spirit in Our Family

#### Who is the Holy Spirit?

. . . the Holy Spirit is *God’s own self in outreach to the world*. The Holy Spirit is God’s presence and activity among us. The Holy Spirit is God, continuously drawing near and passing by to vivify, renew and love us and the whole of creation.

. . . the Spirit is first and foremost the Creator Spirit who creates, empowers, and fills the whole world with life”. . . “At every moment the Spirit sustains every place, every moment, every creature, the whole interconnected community of creation itself.”

The Spirit is simply God, present and active everywhere, pervading our life. Through the Spirit, the risen Christ is present with us everywhere and in every moment, as pervasive as the air we breathe, as the sun or the rain that comes down on us, as the wind that blows around us, as the life that flows through our veins. This is the God we are talking about when we speak of the Spirit.

Through the Spirit, the risen Christ is present with us everywhere and every moment, as pervasive as the air we breathe, as the sun or the rain that comes down on us, as the wind that blows around us, as the life that flows through our veins. This is the God we are talking about when we speak of the Spirit (Elizabeth Johnson. *Who is the Holy Spirit?*).

##### Opening Family Discussion

Take a moment as a family to recall the many symbols of the Holy Spirit from the opening prayer service: fire, dove, power, breath, wind, love, water, truth, witness, and oil. Together as a family discuss following statements:

* My favorite image or symbol of the Holy Spirit is . . . because . . .
* One new image or symbol of the Holy Spirit that I learned about in the opening prayer service is . . .
* If the Holy Spirit were a color, I think the Spirit would be . . . because . . .
* This is how I feel when I think of the Holy Spirit . . .

##### Closing Family Discussion

Take a moment as a family to summarize what you have learned about Holy Spirit from the various activities. Together as a family discuss following statements:

* One new thing I learned about Holy Spirit is . . .
* When I think about the Holy Spirit, I will . . .
* If the Holy Spirit had one wish for our family, I think it would be…
* I think the Holy Spirit would like our world to change in this way . . .

#### Activity: Holy Spirit and Power

Take a tour of your home with the family. Identify the “power source” for various items in and around the house. For example, you will identify the electrical outlets as the power source for many of the appliances around your home. You will identify human energy as the power source to operate the non-electric gadgets such as the manual can-opener, and perhaps natural gas as the power source for the furnace or hot water heater. You may identify the sun as the power source for the newly planted flowers blooming in the garden.

After you have identified the sources of power, talk about how the power makes things work. What good would a computer be without electricity? Or the hot water heater without gas? Or the manual can-opener if no one knows how to use it? Or plants without sun light. Talk about how power or energy sources bring to life much of what we have around us in our environment.

Share these words from Scripture on the Holy Spirit and power with your family:

He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. (John 3:34)

It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. (John 6:63)

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

Share with the family:

Jesus gave his disciples, (and he gives us) an incredible power source for living Gospel lives of forgiveness and love. He gives us the Holy Spirit—the power or energy source which brings life to everything Jesus taught, which gives us the strength and energy to live as disciples. He wants us to “plug into” the Spirit.

#### Activity: Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Each of us is blessed with gifts of the Holy Spirit. These qualities or gifts need to take root in our personal lives and our family’s life. How can your family live the “gifts of the Holy Spirit” in your family today?

**Wisdom:** The Spirit’s gift of Wisdom enables us to see things with God’s eyes. The gift of Wisdom helps us interpret life through the lens of Jesus Christ and his vision and teachings.

**Understanding:** The Spirit’s gift of Understanding enables us to understand God’s plan for our life and our world. The gift of Understanding helps us to interpret God’s plan for us in the daily events of our lives.

**Right Judgment (Counsel):** The Spirit’s gift of Right Judgment helps us to make good choices—to make God’s choices and to seek God’s counsel, God’s advice. Right judgments are made in light of God’s laws.

**Courage (Fortitude):** The Spirit’s Gift of Courage enables us to see where our real strength lies: God is our strength. The gift of Courage enables us to face danger and overcome fear with confidence.

**Knowledge:** The Spirit’s Gift of Knowledge helps us to know the right things; which things are important and which are not. It helps us to know Jesus and what he teaches us.

**Reverence (Piety):** The Spirit’s Gift of Reverence helps us show our gratitude for all that God has done for us. It moves us to worship God, to offer praise to God, to pray always in confidence.

**Wonder and Awe in God’s Presence (Fear of the Lord):** The Spirit’s Gift of Wonder and Awe enables us to see the beauty of God’s creation and the beauty in each person we meet.

On each gift box sheet provided write one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Discuss as a family how your family will live or demonstrate this gift at home. Write what you will do on each gift box. Paste each gift box onto a large sheet of newsprint.

Write a prayer to the Holy Spirit on a file card. When you get home post the gift boxes and your prayer on the refrigerator or wall near your family room or kitchen table.

Take time each day to ask how you as an individual, and together as a family, are living the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In a week or so, have a family conversation, at a meal, about how everyone is living the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

#### Gift Box

Create a gift box about the size of the one below. It should be outlined in black with white spaces (instead of the back fill) so people will be able to write on the box. The ribbon and bow are important so that it has the look of a gift box.



#### Activity: The Fruits of the Holy Spirit

How can your family live the “fruits of the Holy Spirit” today?

**Love**: total giving, forgiving; seeing others through the eyes of Christ; sensitive, compassionate, and empathetic.

**Joy**: exuberance flowing from deep, inner spiritual reservoirs, even in the midst of storms, trials, and discouragement.

**Peace**: deep serenity, emotional health, and well-being; harmony within yourself, a sense of inner quiet in the midst of stress.

**Patience**: ability to stay calm under trying circumstances, tolerant; to turn your mistakes, and the mistakes of others, into opportunities for growth.

**Kindness**: sensitive to the needs of others, helpful, sympathetic, caring; ability to feel deeply the pain of others.

**Generosity**: giving, serving, a concern for the needs of the other person, not clinging to material goods but willing to share what one has with others

**Faithfulness**: endurance, constancy, steadfast to principles; consistent, dependable—even when the world is falling in.

**Gentleness**: healthy self-appraisal that is strong enough to be gentle, tender, childlike; sane estimate of your (and others’) importance.

**Self-Control**: stable, disciplined; able to channel energy in the right direction; poised, under orders, trained, heat-resistant.

Write a prayer to the Holy Spirit on a file card. When you get home post the tree and your prayer on the refrigerator or wall hear your family room or kitchen table.

Take time each day to ask how you as an individual, and together as a family, are living the fruits of the Holy Spirit. In a week or so, have a family conversation, at a meal, about how everyone is living the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

#### Leaf

Create a leaf about the size of the one below *without* lines in the middle of the leaf.

#### Activity: Holy Spirit Windsock

The Holy Spirit is often described as a strong wind or breath. Share these words from Scripture with your family:

When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’ (John 20:22).

Jesus answered (Nicodemus), ‘Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, “You must be born from above.” The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit’ (John 3:5-8).

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability (Acts 2:1-4).

To experience the power of the wind, each child in the family will be making a Holy Spirit windsock. First, take a moment as a family to recall the many symbols of the Holy Spirit from the opening prayer service: fire, dove, power, breath, wind, love, water, truth, witness, and oil. In addition in the reading on Pentecost the Holy Spirit comes as “tongues of fire.”

Work with the children to select several symbols they want to include on their Holy Spirit windsock. Cut-out these symbols from the construction paper on the table.

Attach the symbols to the poster board with glue. The children can also add appropriate words, a message, a brief Scripture passage, or other designs, if they would like.

Help the children to staple or tape the two long sides of the poster board together to form a circular windsock. Staple or tape several crepe paper streamers around the bottom of the tube. Punch four evenly-spaced holes near the top of the windsock. Attach equal pieces of yarn or string to each hole, then bring these together and tie in a knot at the top.

When you are finished, discuss as a family:

* How is the Holy Spirit like wind or breath?
* If the Holy Spirit “blew” into your family, what special gift would you hope for?
* If the Holy Spirit “blew” into our world, what change would you hope for?

Consider hanging the windsocks around the church or ask families to hang their windsocks outside, especially on the weekend of the Feast of Pentecost.

#### Activity: Holy Spirit Poster or Placemats

Begin by reviewing the symbols or images of the Holy Spirit from the opening prayer service:

* fire
* dove
* power
* breath
* wind
* love
* water
* truth
* witness
* oil

If any of the images are not clear, read the Scripture passage from Handout #2: Scripture Passages on the Holy Spirit.

Together as a family select several images or symbols that really speak to your family about the meaning of the Holy Spirit.

For each symbol, discuss as a family:

* What does this symbol mean to our family today?
* If we have to describe the importance of this symbol for people today, what would we say? What examples would we give?

Take each symbol you have selected and create a picture of the symbol by cutting it out of construction paper and/or by drawing it onto a piece of paper and then cutting it out.

Create one family poster with multiple symbols, or create several placemats, one for each symbol. Take each symbol, paste it onto the poster or placemat, and write key words or phrases that describe what the symbol means today and why it is important for your family. Do this for each symbol.

When you are finished, discuss as a family:

* What did we learn about the Holy Spirit through this activity?
* What did we learn about our family through this activity?
* How is the Holy Spirit at work in our family and our world today?

### Handout #2

### Scripture Passages on the Holy Spirit

##### Fire

John answered all of them by saying, ‘I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire (Luke 3:16).

##### Dove

And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him (Matthew 3:16).

##### Power

He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure (John 3:34).

It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life (John 6:63).

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

##### Breath

When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’ (John 20:22).

##### Wind

Jesus answered (Nicodemus), ‘Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. 6What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, “You must be born from above.” The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit’ (John 3:5-8).

##### Love

Therefore, since we are justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us (Romans 5:1-5).

##### Oil

The Lord said, ‘Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.’ Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward (1 Samuel 16:12-13).

##### Water

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, “Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.” ’ Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified (John 7:37-39).

##### Truth

‘If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you’ (John 14:15-17).

‘I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you’ (John 16:12-15).

##### Witness

So when they had come together, they asked him, ‘Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?’ He replied, ‘It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven’ (Acts 1:6-11).

##### Gift-Giver

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,  
   and a branch shall grow out of his roots.   
The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,  
   the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
   the spirit of counsel and might,  
   the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.   
His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD (Isaiah 11:1-3).

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 1All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

(1 Corinthians 12:4-13).

Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another (Galatians 5:16, 22-23, 25-26).

##### Mission

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:   
‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
   because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
   and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free,   
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor’ (Luke 4:14-19).

##### Teacher

Jesus answered him, ‘Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

‘I have said these things to you while I am still with you. 6But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid (John 14:23-27).

##### Comforter during Hardship

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God (Romans 8:26-27).

### Handout #3.

### The Holy Spirit in Our Lives

#### Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The blessings of the Holy Spirit are often summarized in the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (as described in Isaiah 11:2-3). Take a moment to reflect on how you live these gifts in your life using the following rating: 1 = This is too hard to do. 2 = I’ve got a lot of work to do if I’m going to live this. 3 = I’m working to live this. 4 = This is one of my strengths.

**Wisdom** 1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s gift of Wisdom enables us to see things with God’s eyes. The gift of Wisdom helps us interpret life through the lens of Jesus Christ and his vision and teachings.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

**Understanding** 1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s gift of Understanding enables us to understand God’s plan for our life and our world. The gift of Understanding helps us to interpret God’s plan for us in the daily events of our lives.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

**Right Judgment (Counsel)**  1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s gift of Right Judgment helps us to make good choices—to make God’s choices and to seek God’s counsel, God’s advice. Right judgments are made in light of God’s laws.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

**Courage (Fortitude)**  1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s Gift of Courage enables us to see where our real strength lies: God is our strength. The gift of Courage enables us to face danger and overcome fear with confidence.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

**Knowledge** 1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s Gift of Knowledge helps us to know the right things; which things are important and which are not. It helps us to know Jesus and what he teaches us.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

**Reverence (Piety)**  1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s Gift of Reverence helps us show our gratitude for all that God has done for us. It moves us to worship God, to offer God praise, to pray always in confidence.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

**Wonder and Awe in God’s Presence (Fear of the Lord)**  1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s Gift of Wonder and Awe enables us to see the beauty of God’s creation and the beauty in each person we meet.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

Share with the group two gifts which are strengths for them and one gift they want to develop. Then, working together as a group, develop ideas for growing in each gift.

#### The Holy Spirit in Daily Life

Take a few moments to identify where you discover or encounter the Holy Spirit in daily life, and to identify new ways you will try to discover or encounter the Holy Spirit.

Ways I Do Ways I Will Try

* reading Scripture
* praying
* alone with God
* learning more about my faith
* exploring new ways to live my faith
* worshipping at Sunday Mass
* serving those in need
* nature/creation
* my relationships with friends
* my relationships with family
* being close to the pain of hurting people
* praying with friends
* creating something
* at work
* times of forgiveness and reconciliation
* having fun
* other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Take a moment to reflect on what you have learned about the Holy Spirit from the various activities and then share your responses to the following statements with your group:

* For me, the Holy Spirit is . . .
* One new thing I learned about Holy Spirit is . . .
* When I think about the Holy Spirit, I will . . .
* I would ask the Holy Spirit to help me live my faith by . . . .
* I will try to discover the Holy Spirit at work in the world and Church by . . .
* I think the Holy Spirit would like our world to change in this way . . .

#### The Fruits of the Holy Spirit

…the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)

Paul describes (in his letter to the Galatians) the fruit of the Spirit which is evident in the lives of believers. How are you living the “fruits of the Holy Spirit” in your life today? Take a moment to reflect on each of these key teachings and rate yourself: 1 = This is too hard to do. 2 = I’ve got a lot of work to do if I’m going to live this. 3= I’m working to live this. 4 = This is one of my strengths as a disciple.

**Love**: total giving, forgiving; seeing others through the ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

eyes of Christ; sensitive, compassionate, and empathetic.

**Ways to grow in love…**

**Joy**: exuberance flowing from deep, inner spiritual reservoirs, ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

even in the midst of storms, trials, and discouragement.

**Ways to grow in joy…**

**Peace**: deep serenity, emotional health, and well-being; ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

harmony within yourself, a sense of inner quiet in the midst of stress.

**Ways to grow in peace…**

**Patience**: ability to stay calm under trying circumstances, tolerant; to turn ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

your mistakes (and the mistakes of others) into opportunities for growth.

**Ways to grow in patience…**

**Kindness**: sensitive to the needs of others, helpful, sympathetic, caring; ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

ability to feel deeply the pain of others.

**Ways to grow in kindness…**

**Generosity**: giving, serving, a concern for the needs of the other person, ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹  
not clinging to material goods but willing to share what one has with others

**Ways to grow in goodness…**

**Faithfulness**: endurance, constancy, steadfast to principles; consistent, ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

dependable—even when the world is falling in.

**Ways to grow in faithfulness…**

**Humility**: healthy self-appraisal that is strong enough to be gentle, tender, ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

childlike; sane estimate of your (and others’) importance.

**Ways to grow in humility…**

**Self-Control**: stable, disciplined; able to channel energy in the right ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹

direction; poised, under orders, trained, heat-resistant.

**Ways to grow in self-control…**

### Handout #4

### The Holy Spirit in Our Tradition and Our Lives

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets. (Nicene Creed)

#### 1. Who is the Holy Spirit?

Take a few moments to reflect on the Holy Spirit in your life. Then share your reflections with your group. This is a storytelling experience so be sure to give each person time to share without interruptions or discussion.

* What personal experiences come to mind when you think of the Holy Spirit? Think back to your childhood and adolescent years, as well as adulthood.
* What images or symbols of the Holy Spirit are important for your understanding of the Holy Spirit?
* Where do you encounter the Holy Spirit today?

**Reflections**

##### The Holy Spirit in Scripture

Review the many Biblical images/symbols of the Holy Spirit (Handout 2): fire, dove, power, breath, wind, love, oil, water, truth, witness, gift-giver, mission, teacher, comforter. Take a moment to reflect on these images:

* The Biblical images that reinforce my understanding of the Holy Spirit are . . .
* The images/symbols of the Holy Spirit that are the most meaningful for me today are . . . because . . .
* One new image/symbol of the Holy Spirit that I learned today is . . .
* This is how I feel when I think of the Holy Spirit . . .

Whenever we celebrate Baptism, we ask that the Holy Spirit will come so that we will grow closer to Christ and become strengthened for the challenge of being his body in the world.

##### The Holy Spirit in Baptism

Discuss together: What are examples of the Holy Spirit’s role or action in Baptism?

Whenever we celebrate Baptism, we ask that the Holy Spirit will come so that we will grow closer to Christ and become strengthened for the challenge of being his body in the world. In **Baptism**, we pray that the Father will “send the Holy Spirit upon the waters” of the font so that all who are baptized with the water will receive “newness of life” in Christ (*Rite of Baptism for Children*, n. 91).

“Father, you give us grace through sacramental signs, which tell us of the wonders of your unseen power.

“In baptism we use your gift of water, which you have made a rich symbol of the grace you give us in this sacrament.

“At the very dawn of creation your Spirit breathed on the waters, making them the wellspring of all holiness.

“By the power of the Holy Spirit give to the water the grace of your Son, so that in the sacrament of baptism all those whom you have created in your likeness may be cleansed from sin and rise to a new birth of innocence by water and the Holy Spirit.

“We ask you, Father, with your Son to send the Holy Spirit upon the waters of this font. May all who are buried with Christ in the death of baptism rise also with him to newness of life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen” (*Rite of Baptism* #54).

##### Reflections on the Holy Spirit

Read the following excerpts from Elizabeth Johnson:

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Blessed Trinity and was sent by Jesus to the apostles at Pentecost. But the Holy Spirit is so much more . . .

“. . . the Holy Spirit is *God’s own self in outreach to the world*. The Holy Spirit is God’s presence and activity among us. The Holy Spirit is God, continuously drawing near and passing by to vivify, renew and love us and the whole of creation.”

“. . . the Spirit is first and foremost the Creator Spirit who creates, empowers, and fills the whole world with life. At every moment the Spirit sustains every place, every moment, every creature, the whole interconnected community of creation itself.

“We encounter the Spirit in nature (the natural world), in human relationships, and in the social world—in the building up of the society.

“There are a variety of images of the Holy Spirit in our tradition: “the hand of God reaching out of the world,” the finger of God, fire (the warmth of fire—love poured into our hearts), the sun (light and warmth), a river (irrigating land and helping to bring forth vegetation), a plant (bringing forth leaves, fruits and seeds). All of these images speak of God who draws near to the world, who dwells in the world, who vivifies the world, who heals the world, who energizes and empowers the world.

“The Bible presents a variety of images of the Spirit: Spirit as wind, Spirit as fire, Spirit as water (to name only a few).

“The Spirit is simply God, present and active everywhere, pervading our life. Through the Spirit, the risen Christ is present with us everywhere and in every moment, as pervasive as the air we breathe, as the sun or the rain that comes down on us, as the wind that blows around us, as the life that flows through our veins. This is the God we are talking about when we speak of the Spirit.

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It is hard to imagine and explain the Holy Spirit. But it is even harder to imagine faith without the Holy Spirit. Ignatius of Laodicea, a martyr in the second century, pondered this challenge:

“Without the Holy Spirit, God is distant, Christ is merely an historical figure, the Gospel is a dead letter, the Church is just an organization, authority is domination, mission is propaganda, liturgy is only nostalgia, and the work of Christians is slave labor. But with the Holy Spirit, Christ is risen and present, the Gospel is a living force, the Church is a communion in the life of the Trinity, authority is a service that sets people free, mission is Pentecost, the liturgy is memory and anticipation, and the labor of Christians is divinized.”

Discuss together:

* How has my understanding of the Holy Spirit been expanded, enriched, and/or supported as a result of this study of the Holy Spirit?
* How would you describe the Holy Spirit now?

#### 2. Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The biblical origin of the “Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit” is found in Isaiah 11:1-3 where he is foretelling the qualities of the Messiah.

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,  
   and a branch shall grow out of his roots.   
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,  
   the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
   the spirit of counsel and might,  
   the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.   
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

[The ancient Greek and Latin translations of this passage read “piety” for “fear of the Lord” in line six; this gives us our traditional seven gifts.]

“These seven gifts are the signs that the Messiah will be guided by the Spirit. The word “Messiah” (Christos in Greek) means “anointed.” Jesus was “anointed,” filled with the Holy Spirit at his baptism. . . . Throughout the Gospels we see how these seven gifts form Jesus’ personality. They are characteristic of his activity. Consider the wisdom expressed in the parables; his understanding of the poor and the sick; his right judgment when tested by the Pharisees; his courage to continue the journey to Jerusalem where he surmised what fate awaited him; his knowledge of God’s will; his reverence for his heavenly Father; his awe before the wonders of creation—the lilies of the field, the birds of the air… The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are manifestation of the Divine Power active in the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

In Baptism, our sins are washed away and we come up from the water bath to be clothed in a garment. Putting on the baptismal garment is a visible symbol of the invisible reality of “putting on Christ.”

##### Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The blessings of the Holy Spirit are often summarized in the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (as described in Isaiah 11:2-3). Take a moment to reflect on how you live these gifts in your life using the following rating: 1 = This is too hard to do. 2 = I’ve got a lot of work to do if I’m going to live this. 3 = I’m working to live this. 4 = This is one of my strengths.

**Wisdom** 1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s gift of Wisdom enables us to see things with God’s eyes. The gift of Wisdom helps us interpret life through the lens of Jesus Christ and his vision and teachings.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

**Understanding** 1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s gift of Understanding enables us to understand God’s plan for our life and our world. The gift of Understanding helps us to interpret God’s plan for us in the daily events of our lives.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

**Right Judgment (Counsel)**  1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s gift of Right Judgment helps us to make good choices—to make God’s choices and to seek God’s counsel, God’s advice. Right judgments are made in light of God’s laws.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

**Courage (Fortitude)**  1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s Gift of Courage enables us to see where our real strength lies: God is our strength. The gift of Courage enables us to face danger and overcome fear with confidence.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

**Knowledge** 1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s Gift of Knowledge helps us to know the right things; which things are important and which are not. It helps us to know Jesus and what he teaches us.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

**Reverence (Piety)**  1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s Gift of Reverence helps us show our gratitude for all that God has done for us. It moves us to worship God, to offer God praise, to pray always in confidence.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

**Wonder and Awe in God’s Presence (Fear of the Lord)**  1 2 3 4

The Spirit’s Gift of Wonder and Awe enables us to see the beauty of God’s creation and the beauty in each person we meet.

**Ways to Grow in This Gift**

Share with the group two gifts which are strengths for them and one gift they want to develop. Then, working together as a group, develop ideas for growing in each gift.

#### 3. The Holy Spirit in Daily Life

Take a few moments to identify where you discover or encounter the Holy Spirit in daily life, and to identify new ways you will try to discover or encounter the Holy Spirit.

Ways I Do Ways I Will Try

* reading Scripture
* praying
* alone with God
* learning more about my faith
* exploring new ways to live my faith
* worshipping at Sunday Mass
* serving those in need
* nature/creation
* my relationships with friends
* my relationships with family
* being close to the pain of hurting people
* praying with friends
* creating something
* at work
* times of forgiveness and reconciliation
* having fun
* other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Take a moment to reflect on what you have learned about the Holy Spirit from the various activities and then share your responses to the following statements with your group:

* For me, the Holy Spirit is . . .
* One new thing I learned about Holy Spirit is . . .
* When I think about the Holy Spirit, I will . . .
* I would ask the Holy Spirit to help me live my faith by . . . .
* I will try to discover the Holy Spirit at work in the world and Church by . . .
* I think the Holy Spirit would like our world to change in this way . . .

### Closing Prayer Service

#### Gather

Come, Holy Spirit, and from heaven direct on man the rays of your light. Come, Father of the poor; come, giver of God’s gifts; come, light of men’s hearts.

Kindly Paraclete, in your gracious visits to man’s soul, you bring relief and consolation. If it is weary with toil, you bring it ease; in the heart of temptation, your grace cools it; if sorrowful, your words console it.

Light most blessed, shine on the hearts of your faithful—even into their darkest corners; for without your aid man can do nothing good, and everything is sinful.

Wash clean the sinful soul, rain down your grace on the parched soul and heal the injured soul. Soften the hard heart, cherish and warm the ice-cold heart, and give direction to the wayward.

Give your seven holy gifts to your faithful, for their trust is in you. Give them reward for their virtuous acts; give them a death that ensures salvation; give them unending bliss. Amen. Alleluia.(Traditional Pentecost Sequence from the *Lectionary*)

#### Listen

Luke 4:14-19 or Acts 2:1-8, 12-13, 14-21

#### Respond

Lord, send out your spirit and renew our family and our world.

Holy Spirit, grant us your gift of wisdom so that we may know that all life comes from you and, therefore, is sacred.

Response: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of each one of us with the fire of your love.

Holy Spirit, grant us your gift of understanding so that we may see and accept ourselves as we are.

Response: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of each one of us with the fire of your love.

Holy Spirit, grant us your gift of counsel so that we may seek out help from others especially when we are in need.

Response: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of each one of us with the fire of your love.

Holy Spirit, grant us your gift of fortitude so that we may have the courage to do what is right and just.

Response: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of each one of us with the fire of your love.

Holy Spirit, grant us your gift of knowledge so that we may have a burning desire to seek the truth about ourselves.

Response: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of each one of us with the fire of your love.

Holy Spirit, grant us your gift of piety so that our relationship with you will be awakened.

Response: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of each one of us with the fire of your love.

Holy Spirit, grant us your gift of fear of the Lord so that someday we will stand before you in judgment for what we have done in response to the poor and hurting.

Response: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of each one of us with the fire of your love.

#### Go Forth

Spirit of God, you are the stirring in our hearts. You urge us to get going. You prompt us to follow. You encourage us not to give up. You call us to open our minds and our hearts to receive your energizing, transforming radiance. Make us receptive so that we will follow your loving movement within our lives. We trust in your powerful presence within us. Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful;

And kindle in them the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created;

And you shall renew the face of the earth. Amen.