

# We Believe in the Holy Spirit

## Session Focus

This session explores our belief in the Holy Spirit: “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). It engages the participants in examining the traditional symbols of the Holy Spirit from the Scriptures and life of the Church, and how the Holy Spirit is active and alive in their lives, the Church, and the world. This session guides people in reflection on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in their lives and how they can utilize those gifts in their families, church, and community.

## Learning Objectives

The session on the Holy Spirit guides learners of all ages to...

- describe the traditional symbols of the Holy Spirit and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and interpret their meaning for us today
- value and appreciate the significance of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life, the Church, and the world today
- discover practical ways to recognize the Holy Spirit’s active presence in life today and live the Gifts of the Holy Spirit as active members of the faith community

## Session Overview

**Part 1. (5 minutes)**

**Gathering**

**Part 2. (25 minutes)**

**All Ages Learning Experience: The Actions and Symbols of the Holy Spirit**

**Part 3. (75-90 minutes)**

**In Depth Learning Experience: The Holy Spirit in our Lives and Church**

- Option 1. Whole Group Format—all participants remain in the same room.
- Option 2. Age Groups Format—participants go to separate rooms for parallel learning: families with children, adolescents, adults.

**Part 4. (15 minutes)**

**Sharing Learning Experiences**

**Part 5. (15 minutes)**

**Closing Prayer Service**

## Design Options for In-Depth Learning

### Option 1. Whole Group Format

This format guides the entire assembly through each of the learning experiences. You might choose this format if you have:

- a large physical space with good acoustics/sound system and furniture to comfortably accommodate the learners
- a competent large group facilitator/master of ceremonies able to provide clear directions and to manage the dynamics and energy of a large group
- a group of catechists who feel comfortable moving through the assembly offering assistance, or a large enough team of table leader catechists to have one catechist work with each table group
- a learning topic that lends itself to everyone learning the same thing at the same time, but in different ways, in the same space

**Facilitation Tips for This Format:**

Guide small groups through each of the activities at the same time.

- Organize people into table groups based on age groupings: families with children (grades 1-5), middle school adolescents, high school adolescents, young adults, and adults.
- The lead facilitator guides the entire group through each of the learning experiences. All presentations and activity instructions are given to the whole group.
- The age-appropriate learning activities within each learning experience are conducted in table groups.
- Where needed, catechists and small group leaders facilitate the work of the table groups.

**Option 2. Age Group Format**

This format provides for three separate parallel learning programs. Though age groups are separated, each one is focusing on the same topic. You might choose this format if you have:

- an adequate number of meeting spaces for the various groups to gather
- an adequate number of competent facilitators and catechists to work with each group
- a topic that is best explored through age-specific learning

**Facilitation Tips for This Format**

- Organize participants into three or more parallel learning groups: families with children (grades 1-5), adolescents (grades 6-12), and adults.
- If there are a large number of adolescents, divide them into two groups: middle school and high school.

Organize separate groups for young adults, adults, and older adults. Or you can give the adults their own choice for forming small groups.

- Direct the adolescents and adults into small groups. Give them all the handouts and learning materials needed for the learning experiences
- Guide the families with children into table groups of two or more families. Give each table all the handouts and learning materials necessary for the learning experiences.
- A facilitator must guide all the of the families through each learning experience, while catechist move from table to table assisting.

**Guest Presenter**

In addition to the learning activities in this session, you might want to invite a guest presenter to speak to the adults. Use the session plan for adults as a guide to focus the speaker’s presentation and engage the adults in activities and discussion to complement the presentation.

# Materials Needed

## Gathering

- Name tags
- Community building activities
- Bible
- Prayer table with a red tablecloth and Bible

## All Ages Opening Learning Experience

- Opening Prayer Service Handout
- Every table should have a centerpiece with a red candle, bowl of water, jar of oil, and a small loaf of bread (large roll would be fine). Consider making a placemat for the symbols in the shape of a dove. Before the session light the candles on the table.
- Illustrate the symbols for each Scripture passage and sacramental ritual in the opening prayer service. These could be objects such as a bowl of water, a large candle, and a jar of oil, or hand-made artwork such as a dove or heart. Symbols to illustrate: fire, dove, power, wind, love, water, truth, witness, and oil.
- Red balloons to decorate the meeting room.
- Several fans to simulate wind, or use overhead ceiling fans

## In-Depth Learning Experience

- Handout #1: The Holy Spirit in Our Family (Family Learning Plan)
- Handout #2: Scripture Passages on the Holy Spirit
- Handout #3: The Gifts of Holy Spirit in Our Lives (Adolescent Learning Plan)
- Handout #4: The Holy Spirit in Our Tradition and Our Lives (Adult Learning Plan)
- For family learning plan: The materials families will need are determined by which activities are selected. A list of materials is included with each activity.
- For the adolescent learning plan: Creative arts materials for creating Holy Spirit public service announcements

## Closing

- Closing Prayer Service

# Session Plan

## Part 1. Gathering (5 minutes)

### Preparation

Prepare a newsprint sheet or handout that lists the order of the activities or create a PowerPoint presentation that guides people through the session.

### Registration and Hospitality

- Welcome people and ask them to sign in for the program.
- Provide name tags or invite people to make their own.
- Distribute handouts participants will need for the session. (You can also distribute handouts for the In-Depth Learning program at the beginning of the activity.)
- Invite people to share a meal; depending on time of day, the program may end with a meal instead.

Welcome the participants to the program and introduce the theme of the session, using the words below or your own words.

This session explores our belief in the Holy Spirit: ““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). It engages the participants in examining the traditional symbols of the Holy Spirit from the Scriptures and life of the Church, and how the Holy Spirit is active and alive in our lives, the Church, and the world. We will reflect on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives and how we can utilize those gifts in our families, church, and community/world.

Present an overview and the schedule of the program.

## 1. Group Formation

Organize people into intergenerational small groups of approximately eight people for the All Ages Learning Experience. Ask all members of the same family to sit together in these intergenerational groups. Each group should have as many of the following categories as possible: family (parents, children, teens), young adults, adults without children, and older adults. If members of the same family are intergenerational—children, teens, parents, and grandparents—keep them together in one group.

For the In Depth Learning Experience (Part 3) organize the participants into three types of table groups: family clusters of two or more families, groups of adolescents, and groups of adults. See the session plans for adolescents and adults for more instructions on organizing groups.

Conduct an icebreaker or community building activity if you wish.

## Part 2. All Ages Learning Experience: The Actions and Symbols of the Holy Spirit (20 minutes)

### Preparation

The focus of the All Ages Learning Experience is to experience the symbols of the Holy Spirit in Scripture, sacramental rites, music, and prayer.

Set-up a prayer table with red tablecloth and Bible. The table will be “set” with symbols of the Holy Spirit during the prayer service.

Every table should have a centerpiece with a red candle, bowl of water, jar of oil, and small load of bread (large roll would be fine). Consider making a placemat for the symbols in the shape of a dove. Before the session light the candles on the table.

Gather a group of participants who will assist with prayer:

- Assign one person to each symbol. These people will process toward the front of the assembly at the beginning of the prayer service and hold their symbol until their Scripture passage is read. Then they will place the symbol on or next to the prayer table.
- Assign a reader for each Scripture passage and sacrament prayer text.

Illustrate the symbols for each Scripture passage and sacramental ritual in the prayer service. These could be objects such as a bowl of water, a large candle, and a jar of oil, or it could be hand-made artwork such as a dove or heart.

- Fire
- Dove
- Power
- Wind
- Love
- Water
- Truth
- Witness
- Oil

Decorate the room with red balloons to symbolize the Holy Spirit’s presence.

Bring in several fans to simulate wind, or turn on overhead ceiling fans. You don’t need lots of wind, just a little.

Consider illustrating the symbols of the Holy Spirit by creating a PowerPoint presentation with photos of the symbols and sacramental rituals, nature scenes, religious art, and so on.

Consider using icons, paintings, and/or statues to illustrate the symbols of the Holy Spirit. To purchase icons check Monastery Icons and Printery House online. To download free icons check the web site for the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

Light the paschal candle or a large red candle to begin the prayer service.

### **Gather**

Introduce the prayer experience using your own words or the words of Maura Hagarty below.

The Holy Spirit is God moving and acting in the midst of all we do. It is so easy to forget this. Too often we go about our days mentally disconnected from the reality that God's love flows through us and all of our relationships. If we can open our minds and hearts to the impulses for good in the world and in our own lives, we will come to see with much greater clarity that the power of the Spirit is at work in the world.

At the heart of our faith is the belief that God is present and active in the world. Even when things seem bleak, God is there. This touches the heart of what it means to profess belief in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity.

Despite the Church's unwavering faith in the presence of the Holy Spirit, sometimes Christians have a tendency to think more about God the Father and Jesus Christ than about the Holy Spirit.

If we tend to forget that the Spirit of God is within us, we begin to imagine God as far away and distant from us. Our spiritual senses dull, making us less aware of God's loving and active presence in ourselves, in other people, and in the world that surrounds us.

In our prayer experience we are going to remember the many ways the Holy Spirit touches our lives.

As the opening song begins, people process toward the front of the assembly, holding their symbol. These people should form a semi-circle around the prayer table and hold their symbol until their Scripture passage is read. Then they will place the symbol on or next to the prayer table.

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**

As the reader steps forward to read the short Scripture passage, he or she names the symbol and the symbol-bearer comes forward to hold the symbol. At the conclusion of the reading, the symbol-bearer places the symbol on or next to the prayer table. For the sacramental prayer texts, the symbol-bearer

should lift up the symbol which has already been placed on the prayer table and stand next to the reader.

## **1. Images of the Holy Spirit in the Bible**

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

### **Fire**

Reader: 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**

Reader: 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**

Reader: 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**

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

### **Wind**

Reader: 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**

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

### **Oil**

Reader: 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**

Reader: 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**

Reader: "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**

Reader: 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).

## **2. Images of the Holy Spirit in Baptism**

Share the following:

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.

### **Baptism and Water**

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 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)

Ask each table group to pass the bowl of water and to bless themselves with water, praying silently as they do so. Play instrumental music while participants bless themselves.

## **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 your 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.

## Part 3. In Depth Learning Experience (75-90 minutes)

### The Holy Spirit Lives! (Families)

Select two or three activities to conduct.

1. Activity 1: Holy Spirit and Power
2. Activity 2: Gifts of the Holy Spirit
3. Activity 3: The Fruits of the Holy Spirit
4. Activity 4: Holy Spirit Windsock
5. Activity 5: Holy Spirit Poster or Placemats

#### Preparation

Select two or three learning activities to conduct with the families. It would be best to include Activity 2: Gifts of the Holy Spirit because the adolescent and adult groups will also be doing this activity. Each activity is a separate page on Handout #1, so it will be easy to select and copy the materials you need.

Advance preparation varies depending on which activities are selected. Review the activity to determine preparation requirements.

Only make copies of the activities that you are going to conduct with families (see Handout #1).

Guide families through the following process. The activity can be conducted as a table group activity or within individual families. Handout #1 provides the information for parents to use with their families. A variety of activities is included, more than can be conducted in one session. Select the activities that you want to include. It would be best to include Activity 2: Gifts of the Holy Spirit because the adolescent and adult groups will also be doing this activity.

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

In the Age Group Format present the following explanation of the Holy Spirit, using the words below or you own words. In the Whole Group Format ask parents to review this information with their children.

... 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?*)

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 . . .

## Activity 1: Holy Spirit and Power

Conduct the following activity using your own words or the words below.

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 in your home. You will identify human energy as the power source to operate the non-electric gadgets such as the manual can-opener, just as you will identify natural gas perhaps 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 2: Gifts of the Holy Spirit

### Materials Needed

- 7 copies per family of the gift box artwork page (Handout #1).
- One sheet of newsprint or poster board, marking pens, pens/pencils, and glue for each family
- File card for the Holy Spirit prayer

Conduct the following activity using your own words or the words below.

The blessings of the Holy Spirit are often summarized in the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, as described in Isaiah 11:1-2. Share these words from Scripture with your family:

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. (Isaiah 11:1-2)

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" 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 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 sheet onto a large sheet of newsprint.

When you are finished, discuss as a family:

- What did we learn about the gifts of the Holy Spirit through this activity?
- What did we learn about our family through this activity?
- What special strength do we want to ask the Holy Spirit to give our family so that we can live these gifts in our family?

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.

### Activity 3: The Fruits of the Holy Spirit

#### Materials Needed

- 9 copies of the leaf artwork page for each family (see Handout #1).
- One sheet of newsprint or poster board, marking pens, pens/pencils, and glue for each family
- File card for the Holy Spirit prayer

Conduct the following activity using your own words or the words below.

St. Paul describes, in his letter to the Galatians, the fruit of the Spirit which is evident in the lives of believers. Share these words from Scripture with your family:

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 5:22-23, 25-26)

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.

On a large sheet of newsprint create a “Holy Spirit Tree” with nine branches, one for each fruit of the Holy Spirit. Label the trunk the Holy Spirit. On each leaf write one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Discuss as a family how your family will live or demonstrate this fruit at home. Write what you will do on a leaf. Paste this onto a branch of your “Holy Spirit Tree.” Do this with each of the fruits.

When you are finished, discuss as a family:

- What did we learn about the fruits of the Holy Spirit through this activity?
- What did we learn about our family through this activity?
- What special gifts or strength do we want to ask the Holy Spirit to give our family so that we can live these fruits in our family?

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 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 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.

## Activity 4: Holy Spirit Windsock

### Materials Needed

- Lightweight poster board (bright color) for each child or family. Cut the poster board in half width-wise in advance.
- Construction paper, scissors, crepe paper for streamers, stapler or tape, hole punch, and yarn or string for each family

Conduct the following activity using your own words or the words below.

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 5: Holy Spirit Poster or Placemats

### Materials Needed

- For posters: large sheet of poster board
- For placemats: 8.5 x 14 inch paper
- Construction paper, scissors, glue, marking pens, pens/pencils for each family
- Construction marking pens, pens/pencils, and glue for each family
- File card for the Holy Spirit prayer

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, and 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?

## Closing Family Discussion

Present the following information in your own words, or the words below.

Take a moment as a family to summarize what you have learned about Holy Spirit from these 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 . . .

# The Holy Spirit in Our Lives (Adolescents)

## Materials

- Creative arts materials: newsprint or poster board, paper, marking pens, and additional materials for creating Holy Spirit public service announcements

## Preparation

It is recommended that each small group of young people have an adult leader to help guide the work of the group. In the Age Group Format a leader will guide the entire group through the process with small group leaders facilitating table groups. In the Whole Group Format, facilitators guide the entire process.

Have available Handout #2: Scripture Passages on the Holy Spirit and Handout #3 The Holy Spirit in Our Lives.

Guide the young people through the following process of presentations, discussion, and activities.

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

Ask each young person to take a moment to answer the following question:

When you hear the word “Holy Spirit” what comes to mind?

Present the following explanation of the Holy Spirit using the words below or your own words.

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.

“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?*).

Invite questions or discussion on your presentation.

## 2. Symbols of the Holy Spirit for Today

Ask the young people to review the many symbols of the Holy Spirit from the opening prayer service and on Handout #2: fire, dove, power, breath, wind, love, oil, water, truth, witness, gift-giver, mission, teacher, comforter.

Discuss as a group the following questions:

- One new image or symbol of the Holy Spirit that I learned today is . . .
- The most meaningful image or symbol of the Holy Spirit for me is . . . because . . .
- This is how I feel when I think of the Holy Spirit . . .

Present the following explanation of the activity using the words below or you own words.

How do the symbols/images of the Holy Spirit speak to us today? If you had to talk about the work of the Holy Spirit today, what would you say?

Working as a team, your group is going to produce two or three “public service announcement” describing who the Holy Spirit is today, using the language and examples of contemporary life. Your task is to relate the Holy Spirit to life today.

Select a target audience for each of your announcements, e.g., teens, children, families, the entire church, people who are not active in the church community, or a general audience in your wider community.

Begin by reviewing the traditional symbols and the Scripture passages (see Handout #2).

Then use one of methods to communicate the meaning of Holy Spirit and the traditional symbols for each announcement. You can use artwork, music, magazine ad, poster advertisement, billboard, TV or radio commercial, internet web page, and so on. Write the content for your “script” and produce your announcement.

When the groups complete their announcements, discuss the following questions:

- What did you learn about the meaning and symbols of Holy Spirit for life today?
- Was it difficult or easy to describe the Holy Spirit using the language and examples of contemporary life?

Consider creating a display or gallery of announcements/ads in the church foyer or gathering space.

### 3. Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Present the following overview of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit using the words below or you own words.

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.”

Using the *Gifts of the Spirit* reflection, ask the young people to identify which gifts of the Holy Spirit are strongest in their lives and which gifts need development.

## The 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

Ask the young people to 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.

## 4. The Holy Spirit in Daily Life

Tell the adolescents to take a few moments to identify where they discover or encounter the Holy Spirit in daily life, and to identify new ways they will try to discover or encounter the Holy Spirit.

### Ways I Do

- 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: \_\_\_\_\_

### Ways I Will Try

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- other: \_\_\_\_\_

Direct the young people to share with the group one or two ways they discover or encounter the Holy Spirit in daily life, and one new way they will try in the coming weeks.

## 5. Concluding Reflection

Ask the young people to take a moment to reflect on what they have learned about Holy Spirit from the various activities and then share their responses to the following statements with their group:

- For me, the Holy Spirit is . . .
- One new thing I learned about the 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 . . .

### **Optional Additional Activity**

In addition to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit reflection, you can add the Fruits of the Spirit reflection activity. The exercise appears in Handout #3. Ask the young people to identify which fruits of the Holy Spirit are strongest in them and which fruits they need to develop. After the individual reflection, ask the participants to share their strengths and areas for growth with their small group. Ask the participants to discuss how they live the fruits of the Holy Spirit and how they could live them more fully in their lives. Invite the participants to share several ways to live the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

# The Holy Spirit in Our Tradition and Our Lives (Adults)

The adult learning plan has been created as a self-directed small group activity. Facilitators can guide the adults through the learning activities as outlined below and on Handout #4. Write the essential instructions on newsprint or create a PowerPoint presentation with the instructions.

This session plan can also be utilized as a series of large group presentations with small group discussions and activities. Presenters can utilize the commentary in the session plan as source material for their presentation. A facilitator can guide the participants through the activities and discussions in the session plan.

Have available Handout #2: Scripture Passages on the Holy Spirit and Handout #4: The Holy Spirit in Our Tradition and Our Lives.

## 1. Who is the Holy Spirit?

Present the following information using the words below or your own words.

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?

## The Holy Spirit in Scripture

Present the following information using the words below or your own words.

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

Present the following information using the words below or your own words.

Discuss together: What are examples of the Holy Spirit's role or action 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*, 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's essay, *Who is the Holy Spirit?*:

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.

“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?*).

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

Present the following information using the words below or your own words.

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.”

## Reflection on the 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: Which gifts of the Holy Spirit are strongest in your life and which gifts you need to develop. Use the following rating to help you:

- 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

### Group Sharing

Share with your group two gifts which are strengths for you and one gift you want to develop. Work together as a group, to develop ideas for growing in each gift.

## 3. Encountering the Holy Spirit Today

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

### Ways I Do

- 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

### Ways I Will Try

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other: \_\_\_\_\_  other: \_\_\_\_\_

Share with the group one or two ways you discover or encounter the Holy Spirit in your daily life. Share one new way you will try in the coming weeks.

Discuss the following questions:

- How can you be more open to discovering the Spirit's work in your life.
- How can you be more open to discerning the signs of the Spirit at work in the world and in the Church?

## 4. Concluding Reflection

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

- For me, the Holy Spirit is . . .
- One thing I learned about the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life . . .
- One way I can grow in a deeper appreciation of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life . . .
- 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 . . .

### Optional Additional Activity

In addition to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit reflection, you can add the Fruits of the Spirit reflection activity on Handout #3. Ask the adults to identify which fruits of the Holy Spirit are strongest in them and which fruits they need to develop. After the individual reflection, ask the participants to share their strengths and areas for growth with their small group. After the personal sharing, ask the participants to discuss how they live the fruits of the Holy Spirit and how they could live them more fully in their lives. Invite the participants to share several ways to live the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

## Part 4. Sharing Learning Reflections (15-20 minutes)

The whole group sharing experience provides an opportunity for each age group to share something they have learned with the entire group. Ask the participants to rejoin their intergenerational groups from the All Ages Learning Experience.

First, ask each age group to share what they learned in their activity. For example, the family can share one Holy Spirit project they created, adolescents can share their public service announcements for the Holy Spirit today, and adults can share how we encounter the Holy Spirit in daily life. You can also use a large group presentation by selecting a cross-section of families to share their projects, table groups of adolescents to present their announcements for the Holy Spirit today, and a panel of adults to share how we can encounter the Holy Spirit in daily life.

Second, present the following information using the words below or your own words:

Think of everything we have done in this session to understand the Holy Spirit. To help us take our learning from this session and live in our lives and homes, reflect on the following questions and share your thoughts with your group.

- What new insights about the Holy Spirit did you discover through this session?
- Do you need to revise or expand your understanding of the Holy Spirit because of your learning?
- How will your learning influence your faith in the Holy Spirit and your ability to see the Holy Spirit at work in your life, the Church, and the world?

Invite participants to take several minutes for small group sharing.

## Holy Spirit: Reflection Questions

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.

How are you living the gifts of the Holy Spirit in your life, at home, in the world: wisdom, understanding, right judgment (counsel), courage (fortitude), knowledge, reverence (piety), and wonder and awe at God's presence (fear of the Lord)?

Where have you seen the Holy Spirit at work in your life, your family, the Church, and the world?

How are you growing deeper in your appreciation of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life?

How are you praying to the Holy Spirit?

## Part 5. Closing Prayer Service (10 minutes)

### Gather

#### **Traditional Pentecost Sequence** (from the *Lectionary*)

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.

**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.