



a Kendall Hunt Company

Pentecost Sunday, Year B, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary



(Mass During the Day)

Catechist Background and Preparation

To prepare for this session, read all the readings.

Acts 2:1-11

Psalm 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34

1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13

John 20:19-23

Spend a few minutes reflecting on what these readings mean for you today. Is there a particular reading that appeals to you? Is there a word or image that engages you?

Read the following **Word in Liturgy** and **Catholic Doctrine** sections. Read the Word in Liturgy and Catholic Doctrine sections. These give you background on what you will be doing this session. Read over the session outline and make it your own. Check to see what materials you will need.

The Word In Liturgy

Today's feast of Pentecost celebrates the sending of the Spirit upon the Church. It is the last Sunday of Easter and brings the season to a close. The liturgical year honors the chronology of Luke by placing our celebration of the Spirit's descent fifty days after the resurrection. The Christian Pentecost in Luke coincides with the Jewish feast of Weeks, fifty days after Passover, which was a time of prayer for a good harvest, and later became a commemoration of the giving of the Law. Against this background, Luke's presentation of the Pentecost event calls our attention both to the way in which the descent of the Spirit resembles the theophany at Mount Sinai (fire, sound, and word), and to the effects of Pentecost as the "harvest" of the paschal mystery.

The first reading tells in very few words the story of the Spirit's descent and how it was manifested: a loud sound (like wind), tongues (like fire) coming to rest on each disciple, and bold proclamation of the Good News thereafter by the disciples.

The gospel passage, introduced by the description of the disciples gathered in fear behind locked doors, draws our attention to the reversal of their fear into joy and their transformation from frightened followers to apostolic witnesses ("apostle" means "one sent"). At the heart of this change is the presence of the Risen Lord, the command to go forth, and the giving of the Spirit. In a gesture that recalls God's act of creation, Jesus bestows the Spirit from his own wounded and risen body by breathing on the disciples. It is thus a new act of creation, by the crucified and glorified Christ. Last of all, as in Luke's gospel, reconciliation, enabled by the Spirit, is central to the mission entrusted to them.



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Catholic Doctrine

The Holy Spirit and Confirmation

The Holy Spirit goes by many names, such as "Spirit of God," "Breath of God," "Paraclete," and "Advocate." All these names refer to the same reality, the third person of the Trinity.

The work of the Spirit both sustains us and surprises us. The Holy Spirit steadily maintains God's presence in our lives and in the life of the Church. The Spirit thus bestows the gifts of healing, unity, and love (Saint Paul's letters). The Spirit is the architect of the Church and a guide to those who pray (Luke, Acts). The Spirit is also the teacher and Advocate (gospel of John). We believe the Spirit is also the animating breath of liturgy and sacramental life.

Given this background on the Holy Spirit, what do we believe about the sacrament of confirmation? This sacrament is one of the three initiation sacraments and it is necessary in order to complete baptismal grace, for by it the faithful are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with the special strength to become true witnesses of Christ. Like baptism, confirmation is celebrated only once, for it imparts an indelible imprint, or character, upon the soul.

Confirmation is usually conferred by a bishop with a laying on of hands and anointing with sacred chrism. The laying on of hands symbolizes the descent of the Spirit, and the anointing symbolizes not only healing but investing with power. Both these gestures are performed at baptism, and so, a direct ritual link is made between the first sacrament and this second sacrament of initiation. The word "Christ" means "anointed one." It is no accident that the tradition developed of anointing at both baptism and confirmation—since in these sacraments we are configured to Christ in order to carry on his mission.