

## ASCENSION & PENTECOST

# Adaptive Activities for Children



National Catholic Partnership on Disability

## Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your ministry that serves the liturgical formation of children for their participation in the Eucharist, the "source and summit of the Christian life." This resource is provided by the Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD). It aims to offer an adaptive catechetical opportunity for all who have a heart for disability ministry to reflect on the liturgical year. We welcome you to this virtual community and hope you find this resource beneficial.

Here you will find reflections to guide children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, or diverse learners, through the current liturgical season with adaptive catechesis to help them to participate fully. Each offering includes prayer, Scripture, activities and more that incorporate the senses and take into consideration the needs of all learners. We invite you to gather children around the table of the home or the table of the classroom as preparation for their participation at the sacred table of the Eucharist.

#### Each monthly edition incorporates the following:

- 1. Prayer
- 2. Sacred Scripture
- 3. Reflection
- 4. Faith in Action
- 5. Activities
- 6. Saint
- 7. Resources/Bibliography

## **Prayer for the Solemnity of the Ascension**

Celebrated on May 9 (Recognized at Sunday Liturgy on May 12)

Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

#### Leader:

After Jesus was resurrected from the dead and returned to his disciples, it was time for him to return to his Father in heaven. Let's read from the Acts of the Apostles to see what it says about Jesus' Ascension into heaven:

#### A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Jesus told his disciples: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and give you power. Then you will tell everyone about me in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and everywhere in the world." After Jesus had said this and while they were watching, he was taken up into a cloud. They could not see him, but as he went up, they kept looking up into the sky. Suddenly two men dressed in white clothes were standing there beside them. They said, "Why are you men from Galilee standing here and looking up into the sky? Jesus has been taken to heaven. But he will come back in the same way that you have seen him go." 1



Image from Midjourney

#### Leader:

Jesus you are the King of Heaven and Earth. We thank you for preparing a way for us to join you in heaven.

#### Amen.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Sunday Readings – Pflaum Publishing Group." n.d. Accessed April 14, 2024. <a href="https://www.pflaum.com/readings/">https://www.pflaum.com/readings/</a>.

Note: Song Suggestion- *Alleluia! Sing to Jesus* https://youtu.be/U079AY5mkVg?si=60IG7yQErrXQ8xEB

Additional Resource: A Novena is a prayer that you repeat for nine days. There is a special Novena that you can pray for the Ascension that lasts until the Feast of Pentecost. You can sign up to receive this Novena via email at: <a href="Ascension Novena - Pray More Novenas - Novena">Ascension Novena - Pray More Novenas - Novena</a>
<a href="Prayers & Catholic Devotion">Prayers & Catholic Devotion</a>



Image from Midjourney / Photoshop

## **Prayer for the Feast of Pentecost**

Celebrated on May 19

Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

#### Leader:

After Jesus went to heaven, his disciples were afraid. They hid in the upper room where they had enjoyed special memories with Jesus. None of them wanted to leave, because they were afraid that they would be hurt by the same people who persecuted Jesus. Before Jesus went to heaven, he promised that he would send the Holy Spirit to guide them. Let's read from the Acts of the Apostles to see what it says about Pentecost:

#### A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

On the day of Pentecost all the Lord's followers were together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a mighty wind! It filled the house where they were meeting. Then they saw what looked like fiery tongues moving in all directions, and a tongue came and settled on each person there. The Holy Spirit took control of everyone, and they began speaking whatever languages the Spirit let them speak.<sup>2</sup>

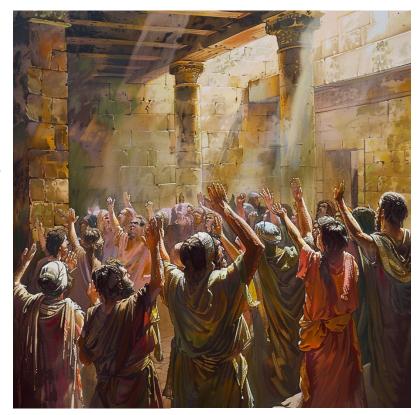


Image from Midjourney

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "Sunday Readings – Pflaum Publishing Group." n.d. Accessed April 14, 2024. https://www.pflaum.com/readings/.

Leader:

Lord Jesus, thank you for sending your Spirit to give us wisdom, understanding, good decision

making, strength and courage, knowledge, piety, and wonder and awe. Your Spirit helps us to

follow your will for us here on earth and allows us to be united with you and your Heavenly

Father. Help us to open our hearts to your Spirit, so that we can receive this special gift.

Amen.

Note: Song Suggestion - Send Down the Fire (Marty Haugen)

https://youtu.be/GKbWrjWF06Q?si=Sf9lUG10utnuSxe2

**Reading of Sacred Scripture:** 

John 20:19-23

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

The disciples were afraid of the Jewish leaders, and on the evening of that same Sunday, they

locked themselves in a room. Suddenly, Jesus appeared in the middle of the group. He greeted

them and showed them his hands and his side. When the disciples saw the Lord, they became

very happy.

After Jesus had greeted them again, he said, "I am sending you, just as the Father has sent me."

Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they

will be forgiven. But if you don't forgive their sins, they will not be forgiven."

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## **Gospel Reflection**

John's gospel tells us that the apostles were together in a room in Jerusalem. The doors to the room were shut. But somehow, Jesus appeared to them. How can this happen? Is he a ghost or is it really Jesus? Do you think the apostles were scared? Or were they happy to see Jesus? Do the apostles realize that Jesus has risen from the dead?

Jesus breathes on the apostles and says, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.' During the days leading up to

Christ's death and resurrection, He promised to send the Spirit as helper to the apostles.

The Holy Spirit is your helper too. In an earlier gospel, John told us that, "The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and make you remember all that I have told you." In other words, the Holy Spirit will help the apostles to spread the Good News. (Do you remember from last month what the Good News is? If not, reread the April lesson).



Image from Midjourney/ Photoshop

Jesus and the Holy Spirit restore the faith of the apostles. They are no longer afraid. Rather, they are ready to face the people to talk about the life of Jesus, and the forgiveness of sins.

https://journeyonline.org/john-2019-23-receive-the-holy-spirit/ - www.usccb.org

### Vocabulary

Apostle - an early follower of Jesus

Promise - to say that something will or will not be done

Forgiveness - to stop being angry at someone or something

(https://www.dictionary.com)

## **Faith in Action**

Pentecost Sunday is a wonderful feast day in our Church where we celebrate receiving the Holy Spirit. It is considered the birthday of our Church.

Everyone loves birthdays. They are great opportunities for families to give gifts and to honor one another. It is a time to celebrate the gifts of each member of the family on their special day. It is also a time to reflect on what we have accomplished



Image from Midjourney

in the past year and what we look forward to accomplishing in the future. Pentecost is a terrific time to reflect on the gifts of the Holy Spirit as a family, and how we can use those gifts to serve God's kingdom here on earth.

Gather your family around your sacred space at home and begin by reading the second reading for the Feast of Pentecost which is celebrated on May 19th this year.

Begin by saying – "A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians."

1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13

Brothers and sisters: No one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To every individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ.<sup>3</sup>

Say – "The Word of the Lord." And everyone replies – "Thanks be to God."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> (USCCB Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States, second typical edition, Copyright © 2001, 1998, 1997, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.)



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Ask your family to close their eyes and read the passage again, or as many times as needed. Ask them to think about the gifts that they have and the gifts that they recognize in others as they are hearing the Word of God proclaimed. Ask each member of your family what gifts they appreciate most about themselves. Have them share aloud or in a drawing how they might use their gifts to help serve others. Ask everyone to also identify gifts in each other and acknowledge that these gifts are from God. Talk about how we are all created in the image and likeness of God and each of us is valuable and has gifts that we can use for the benefit of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Share with your family what are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit according to the Sacred Scriptures (Isaiah 11:1–3) – Wisdom, Understanding, Right Judgement, Courage, Knowledge,

Reverence, and Wonder and Awe in God's Presence. Define each one in terms that everyone can understand. Use social narratives, pictures and share examples in everyday life to illustrate the meaning of each gift. Brainstorm some ways that you as a family can explore and exercise these gifts each day for the next couple of days, weeks, or months. Talk about how using these gifts can be a habit that each of you can engage in for a lifetime. Celebrate the gift of Pentecost by sharing the gifts that the Holy Spirit has given to you.



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## **Activities with Children**

### Activity for the Ascension of the Lord

The Celebration of the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord commemorates when Jesus ascended body and soul into Heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God the Father. In a Vatican News article, it states that "with his Ascension into heaven, the presence of the 'historical Christ' comes to an end, and the presence of the Body of Christ, the Church, is inaugurated."

Vatican News, Liturgical Feasts,

https://www.vaticannews.va/en/liturgical-holidays/solemnity-of-the-ascension-of-the-lord.html

The Ascension of the Lord takes place on the fortieth day after Easter Sunday; in 2024, it falls on Thursday, May 9th. However, some dioceses have transferred this Holy Day of Obligation to the Seventh Sunday of Easter which is on May 12th.

In recognition of this very important day in the Church, perhaps you can read an accounting of Jesus'
Ascension found in Acts 1:6-12. After reading this passage to your child, assist him/her with placing a statue of Jesus in a place of honor in your home. If you wish, you can add cotton batting at the base of the statue to represent the clouds. Your family may already have a tradition of placing the baby Jesus in the creche on Christmas morning. Perhaps you can start a new tradition of placing the ascended Jesus in your home as a way to celebrate his ascension into heaven.



Photo by <u>Arturo Rey</u> on <u>Unsplash</u>

## **Activity for Confirmation**

Confirmation, along with Baptism and Eucharist, are the Sacraments of Initiation. According to an article by Catholic Identity,

The Sacraments of Initiation are so named because all three of them are necessary for one to be a full member of the Christian community. Baptism is a re-birth of the individual into sharing the life of Christ. According to Church tradition, set free from sin, the baptized now becomes part of God's family. To carry on Christ's mission in the world, the Christian needs the gifts of the Holy Spirit that filled Christ in his lifetime. These are bestowed through Confirmation. The daily living of the Gospel is not possible alone. It must be done in union with the whole Body of Christ and relying on the nourishment that God gives. First Communion introduces one to the Eucharist, which especially among its liturgical celebrations is the 'summit and source of the Church's life.'

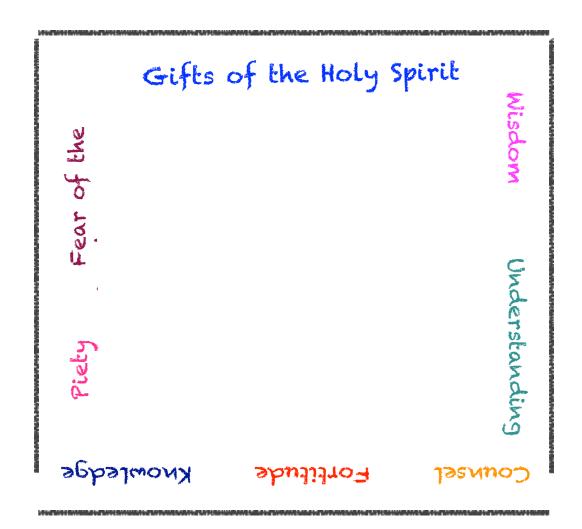
Catholic Identity, "Sacraments of Initiation", <a href="https://catholicidentity.bne.catholic.edu.au/scripture/SitePages/Sacraments-of-Initiation.aspx?csf=1&e=zuN4hs">https://catholicidentity.bne.catholic.edu.au/scripture/SitePages/Sacraments-of-Initiation.aspx?csf=1&e=zuN4hs</a>

All baptized Catholics have the right to receive Confirmation. The USCCB's *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities* clearly state that baptized Catholics are encouraged to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is through Confirmation, that individuals receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

USCCB, Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities,

Re-vised Edition, June 2017: <a href="https://www.usccb.org/committees/divine-worship/policies/guidelines-sacraments-persons-with-disabilities">https://www.usccb.org/committees/divine-worship/policies/guidelines-sacraments-persons-with-disabilities</a>

The gifts of the Holy Spirit include wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. These gifts help the individual carry-on Christ's mission in the world. In recognition of these gifts, consider assisting your child in writing or decorating a note to an individual who has or will be receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. The following note card can be used to acknowledge when the individual has demonstrated one of the Holy Spirit's gifts (e.g., *Thank you for your understanding when* . . .) or to give them encouragement (e.g., *May the Holy Spirit's gift of fortitude be with you during this challenging time*.)



## Activity for Pentecost

Pentecost is celebrated when the seven weeks of Easter season come to an end; in 2024,

Pentecost Sunday will be on May 19th. Pentecost commemorates the outpouring of the Holy

Spirit onto the apostles so that they were able to go forth and proclaim, "the mighty works of

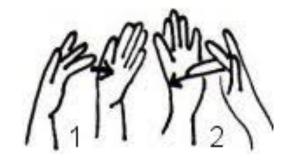
God." Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1287

At this time, the Holy Spirit gave the apostles the ability to speak in different languages - and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. *Acts of the Apostles 2:4* 

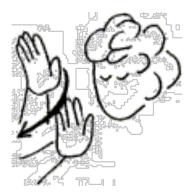
In recognition of the Holy Spirit giving the apostles the ability to communicate to a wide variety of people, consider teaching your child a few simple words in sign language so that he/she can also proclaim the mighty works of God.

For example, to sign "Jesus", touch the middle finger of the left hand to the palm of the right hand; then repeat by touching the middle finger of the right hand to the palm of the left hand. To sign "God", move an open hand toward the forehead; the thumb will almost touch the forehead; continue moving the hand downward to the chest area.

Jesus -



God -



Lesson Tutor, American sign language (ASL) and signed English (SE) series: Religious Signs, by Elaine Ernst Schneider, https://www.lessontutor.com/ees asl relgious/

## Saint for May Saint Isidore the Farmer

#### Memorial - May 15

Saint Isidore is the patron saint of Madrid, Spain and of farmers and rural communities. He began farming as a young boy on an estate outside Madrid. He also had a great love of churches, got up very early every morning to go to church, and took time to go visit as many as he could. Because of his church visits, he was often late for work. When he did farm, he would often pray while working. Saint Isidore helped the poor in his area by giving them food which he somehow managed to gather. He was also very protective of animals. Saint Isidore lived a simple life but was very happy, and very holy. We too can live as a simple life just like Saint Isidore; "[S]eek first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness and all these things will be given you besides." (Matthew 6:33)



Image from Midjourney

## May - Resources

Archdiocese of Baltimore, "Resources for Catholic Religious Interpreting", resources for individuals who are deaf: <a href="https://www.archbalt.org/deaf-ministry/resources-catholic-religious-interpreting/">https://www.archbalt.org/deaf-ministry/resources-catholic-religious-interpreting/</a>

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Second Edition, https://www.usccb.org/sites/default/files/flipbooks/catechism/

Catholic Identity, "Sacraments of Initiation", article: <a href="https://catholicidentity.bne.catholic.edu.au/scripture/SitePages/Sacraments-of-Initiation.aspx?csf=1&e=zuN4hs">https://catholicidentity.bne.catholic.edu.au/scripture/SitePages/Sacraments-of-Initiation.aspx?csf=1&e=zuN4hs</a>

Catholic News Agency, "Everything you need to know about Pentecost", article: <a href="https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/36152/everything-you-need-to-know-about-pentecost">https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/36152/everything-you-need-to-know-about-pentecost</a>

Catholic Online, "Pentecost", video: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJXNAryOlil">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJXNAryOlil</a>

Church Signs in ASL, American Sign Language, Religious Signs, video: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VNpO-DPYa4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VNpO-DPYa4</a>

My Catholic Life!, "The Ascension of the Lord", article: <a href="https://mycatholic.life/saints/saints-of-the-liturgical-year/the-ascension-of-the-lord/">https://mycatholic.life/saints/saints-of-the-lord/</a>

Traditional Prayers in ASL (American Sign Language), Loyola Press, videos: <a href="https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/parish-ministry/special-needs/resources/american-sign-language-prayers">https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/parish-ministry/special-needs/resources/american-sign-language-prayers</a>

USCCB, "Confirmation", resources: <a href="https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/confirmation">https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/confirmation</a>

USCCB, Diocesan Resources, "Confirmation: Strengthened by the Spirit, Called to Action", 2/27/13, article: <a href="https://www.usccb.org/resources/confirmation-strengthened-spirit-called-action">https://www.usccb.org/resources/confirmation-strengthened-spirit-called-action</a>

USCCB, "Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities", Revised Edition, June 2017: <a href="https://www.usccb.org/committees/divine-worship/policies/guidelines-sacraments-persons-with-disabilities">https://www.usccb.org/committees/divine-worship/policies/guidelines-sacraments-persons-with-disabilities</a>

USCCB, "Pope: Prepare for Pentecost", 5/24/23, video: Pope: Prepare for Pentecost | USCCB

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