

Transformed in Christ

Pentecost: Catechesis for Young People



AIMS:

Participants will:

- ✓ Understand that the Holy Spirit chooses those who know they are weak
- ✓ Reflect on the experience of the joy of the Holy Spirit
- ✓ Grasp the use and significance of oil in the sacraments
- ✓ Ask the Holy Spirit to show them his power

CATECHIST PREPARATION:

Jesus - "I will send you the Holy Spirit from the Father" John 15:26

"As fire transforms into itself everything it touches, so the Holy Spirit transforms into the divine life whatever is subjected to his power" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1127)

- Spend time prayerfully reading Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11 and John 15:26-27; 16:12-15.
- Read Catechism of the Catholic Church, paras 731-736.

TIMING:

The full session is designed to take around 30 minutes.

SETTING:

Create a relaxed setting with candles, quiet music, and a beautiful image of sacred art, e.g. an icon of Pentecost or of the Holy Spirit.

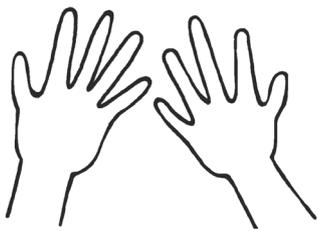
SUGGESTED MUSIC:

Burning in my Soul - Matt Maher

Spirit of the Living God - Audrey Assad

YOU WILL NEED:

- Young people to act in skit (see Handout 1) - to play parts of Jesse, Samuel, David and Jesse's 5 sons (note: practice will be needed for this)
- Enough Bibles for young people present
- Copies of the 'Consecration of the Chrism' sheet (Handout 2)
- Photo of Chrism Mass in your diocese to display
- (If possible) the oil of Chrism for the young people to see and smell
- Copies of 'Pentecost Sequence' prayer (Handout 3)
- Flames cut from paper/card with one of the following quotes:
 - "Arise, anoint him; for he is the one" (1 Samuel 16:12)
 - "I will send you the Holy Spirit from the Father" (John 15:26)
 - "The Holy Spirit turns into joy whatever he touches" (St Seraphim of Sarov)
 - "Look to him and be radiant, your faces shall never be ashamed" (Psalm 34:5)



Skit Activity

What you'll need:

- Handout 1
- Young people to act in skit to play parts of Jesse, Samuel, David and Jesse's 5 sons (note: practice will be needed for this)



Liturgy of the Word

INTRODUCTION

We're going to be reflecting on the Holy Spirit tonight. Who does he choose and how does he come to us?

To introduce the session, we're going to meet two characters - Samuel, the prophet and Jesse, the father of a large family. Samuel has been asked by God to go to Bethlehem to the family of Jesse. The one God has chosen to be the king of Israel is one of Jesse's sons. Samuel is to find him, and then anoint him as king.

Let's see what happens...
Perform skit

In a few moments of silence, ask the young people to pray to the Holy Spirit in their hearts.

Then, pray out loud to the Holy Spirit in your own words, or using the prayer, Come, Holy Spirit.

OPENING PRAYER

Brothers and sisters,
On the night of Pentecost,
the Apostles and disciples with Mary, the Mother of Jesus,
persevering in prayer,
waited for the Spirit promised by the Lord.
Like them, let us, too,
listen with quiet hearts to the Word of God.
Let us meditate on how many wonders
God has done for his people
and let us pray that the Holy Spirit,
sent by the Father,
may bring everything he does to perfection.
We ask this through Christ our Lord,
Amen.

(adapted from the Address at the beginning of the Pentecost Vigil Mass)

READING

A reading from the First Book of Samuel. 1 Samuel 16:6-13

When Jesse and his sons came to Samuel, Samuel looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him." But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen these." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down till he comes here." And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. And the Lord said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he." Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



Catechesis

What you'll need:

- Bibles
- photo of Chrism Mass
- the oil of Chrism (if possible)

CATECHESIS

It didn't even occur to Jesse that one of his sons was missing! David was the youngest, a long way off his brothers when it came to height and strength. And yet, this is the one God wanted. The least likely. In the prayer we will use at the end of the session, it calls the Holy Spirit "the Father of the poor" - he chooses the weak.

In the Acts of the Apostles, when the apostles gathered with Our Lady in the upper room waiting for the Holy Spirit, they were a really unlikely group, too. These men were uneducated, mostly ex-fisherman. They were not influential, most were not gifted in speech. Out of all the people God could have chosen, why them?

And then, something incredible happened.

Invite the young people to look at Acts 2:1-4 in their Bibles.

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Minutes later, they are proclaiming the works of God to the crowds that had gathered - their fear had completely melted away! They were bursting with joy, full of the Holy Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit fills you, it is unmistakable. When Samuel anointed David, "the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him from that day forward" (1 Sam 16:13).

Fast forward 3000 years from David's anointing... This year, in Holy Week, there was a Mass in our Diocese called the Chrism Mass. All the priests gathered with the bishop, and the bishop consecrated the oil that would be used in the sacraments during the year.

If possible, have a photo of the Chrism Mass from your diocese displayed, and the oil of chrism so that they can see and smell it.

If you've ever been to the Chrism Mass, you will know that the prayer the Bishop prays over the oil is very long and beautiful. The Bishop recalls the moments in salvation history that were waiting for and preparing for this point.

Give out copies of this prayer. Ask the young people to find all the references to David.

There are two references. Depending on time, and the age and level of understanding of the young people, use as much or as little of this explanation as is helpful:

“David, too, foreseeing by the spirit of prophecy the sacraments of your grace, sang of oil making our faces radiant with joy...”



David lived around 1000 years before Christ. Yet the meaning of David's life is only revealed when Christ comes. This is true of the whole Bible! (CCC 134) As he was praising God who anoints kings with oil, David was in fact - without knowing it - prophesying about the sacraments. The sacraments are ways that Christ gives his own life to his people through visible signs (CCC 1115).

“your voice then followed and declared him to be your Only-Begotten Son, well pleasing to you; and you were seen clearly to affirm him, just as your prophet David had foretold, as the one anointed with the oil of gladness above his companions”



You know the story of Jesus's Baptism in the Jordan and how the Father called Jesus his "Son, the Beloved" (Mark 1:11)? Well, this too is foretold by David. In the Psalms he sang, "The Lord said to me, 'You are my Son. It is I who have begotten you this day'" (Psalm 2:7). How could he have known this was about Jesus! Christ's divine Sonship is also foretold to David by the prophet Nathan, "I will be a father to him and he a son to me" (2 Samuel 7:14).



When have you been anointed with oil?

At Baptism and at Confirmation. (Perhaps also the Anointing of the Sick if they have been seriously ill.)



What happens when someone is anointed with oil in the sacraments?

It is a sign of the Holy Spirit filling you. Baptism is the first outpouring of the Spirit; Confirmation is the second outpouring.

On the day of your Confirmation:

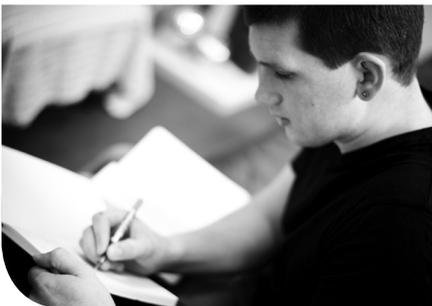
- Just like David, "the Spirit of the Lord comes mightily upon you from that day forward" (1 Sam 16:13).
- Just like the Apostles, you are "all filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:4).

The prayer tells us, "an anointing with this Oil makes our faces joyful and serene."

Years after his anointing, David who loved to sing and write songs, would sing about this experience. In one of the Psalms, he wrote that the Lord gave "oil to make his face shine" (Ps 104:15) and invites us, "Look to him and be radiant, so your faces shall never be ashamed" (Ps 34:5). The Holy Spirit fills us with joy that shows on our faces!

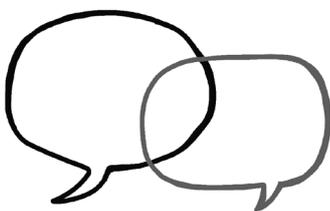
St Seraphim of Sarov said, "The Holy Spirit turns into joy whatever he touches"

Let's have some moments to reflect silently... *If your young people use spiritual journals, they could use them to write in. You might want to play some quiet music during this time.*



Reflection

Ask yourselves: The joy of the Holy Spirit is often a quiet joy that wells up inside of us. It wipes away our fear, it fills us with boldness and strength. Have you ever experienced the joy of the Holy Spirit?



Group Discussion

DISCUSSION

Invite everyone to share (in small groups if your numbers are large), if they are willing, a time when they have experienced this joy, fearlessness and boldness of the Holy Spirit. What was the situation? How did you experience the Holy Spirit? What change did it bring about in your thoughts or feelings or actions?



Prayer

PRAYER

We are going to have a time praying in silence for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

We are going to pray earnestly, like the Apostles and Mary waiting in the upper room.

We're going to pray with full confidence that God chooses us - like he chose David, those who know they are weak.

If you have never before experienced the quiet joy and power of the Holy Spirit, ask him to come to you now.

Have several moments of silence, allowing the young people to enter into prayer.

Then, play some quiet music. Invite everyone to pray aloud what they would like to ask for most from the Holy Spirit. Or, they can simply say, Come, Holy Spirit.

Finally, finish by praying together the Pentecost sequence. This sequence is very old (sometimes attributed to the 13th century Pope Innocent III) and is prayed during Mass on the Solemnity of Pentecost. You could pray the verses alternately in two halves.

As young people leave, invite them to pick one of the flames from a box to take with them.

CREDITS:

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www.transformedinchrist.com

SKIT - JESSE'S SONS

Samuel (Striding in, toward Jesse): *I'm looking for a King!*

Jesse: *I'm sorry, you mean like an actual... King?!
Like with a crown and servants and stuff?*

Samuel: *Yes of course!*

Jesse: *I didn't realise we needed one.*

Samuel: *Well if we wish to be a great nation we must elect a King to lead us!*

Jesse: *Aha! I have just the man for you!*

(Jesse walks behind a wall and fetches his son.)

Jesse: *This here, is my only son! You can see he is strong, bold, he could conquer a country single handed!*

(Samuel looks up to God.)

Samuel: *No, sorry I'm not seeing it.*

Jesse: *Are you sure? I can just imagine him leading a thousand men into battle!*

Samuel: *No, he is definitely not the right man to be King.*

Jesse: *Okay...well...I may not have been telling the entire truth when I said he was my only son...*

(Jesse goes behind the wall to fetch another son.)

Jessie: *Oh look I happen to have another son! Now he is just as bold and strong, yes I can easily see him reigning for years!*

Samuel: *...Not him either I'm afraid.*

(Pause)

Jesse: *Okay, I may happen to have one more son, but he's the last chance you have!*

(Jesse goes behind the wall and retrieves his third son, and pushes him in front of Samuel.)

Jesse: Now look, his head was made for a crown, if his face doesn't scream ruler of millions of people I don't know what does!

Samuel: I'm sorry he too is not the right man for the throne.

Jesse: Okay I have one more but he is definitely my last son!

(Jesse brings out his fourth son.)

Jesse: Now, he is just as good!

Samuel: ...No

Jesse: Okay this actually is my last son now!

(Jesse goes behind the wall to fetch his 'final' son.)

Jesse: Okay this is your absolute last chance to find your King here!

Samuel: Not him either, I am sorry.

Jesse: ...Fine, I've got a few daughters as well, do you fancy a queen?

Samuel: Sorry, we must leave!

(David runs in.)

David: Dad! I'm sorry I'm late one of the sheep just could not get down from this rock I don't even know why! (Points to Samuel and men) Who are they?

Jesse: (Whispers) No one, now get back to the field before they see you!

Samuel: (Points to David) You!..You! You are the one to rule!

(Pause - David look bewildered)

Jesse: (Shrugs and sighs) Well, I would have preferred you choose one of the others but he'll do I guess.

CONSECRATION OF THE CHRISM

*O God, author of every increase and of all spiritual growth,
graciously accept the joyful homage of thanksgiving
which the Church renders you through our voice.*

*For in the beginning you commanded the earth
to produce fruit-bearing plants,
and among them the olive tree,
to bring forth the great richness of this Oil,
that its fruit might serve
for the making of sacred Chrism.*

*David, too, foreseeing by the spirit of prophecy
the sacraments of your grace,
sang of oil making our faces radiant with joy;
and when in former days
the world's sins were washed away in the Great Flood,
the dove, showing forth by an olive branch
a figure of the gift to come,
announced that peace had been restored to the earth.*

*In these latter times,
all this has been manifestly fulfilled,
for when all sinful deeds
are washed away in the waters of Baptism,
an anointing with this Oil
makes our faces joyful and serene.*

*Moreover, to your servant Moses
you gave the command
that he make his brother Aaron, washed first with water,
a priest by the pouring of this oil.*

*To this there came still greater dignity,
when your Son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord,
insisted on being washed by John in Jordan's waters;
for as your Holy Spirit, in the likeness of a dove,
was sent upon him from on high,
your voice then followed and declared him
to be your Only-Begotten Son, well pleasing to you;
and you were seen clearly to affirm him,
just as your prophet David had foretold,
as the one anointed with the oil of gladness
above his companions.*

*To you, therefore, O Lord, we pray,
that by your + blessing you may graciously sanctify
the rich substance of this Oil you have created,
and permeate it with the strength of the Holy Spirit
by means, too, of the power at work in your Christ,
from whose holy name is named the Chrism,
with which you have anointed
your priests and kings, prophets and martyrs.*

*For those to be reborn through the spiritual bath of Baptism,
make the Chrism you have created
a holy sign of the fullness of life and salvation,
that through the sanctification imparted by the anointing,
and with the corruption of their first birth now cleansed,
they may be made a temple of your majesty,
and give forth the fragrance
of an innocence of life pleasing to you.*

*By the nature of the sacrament you have established,
may they be endowed
with the dignity of king, priest, and prophet,
and clothed with the garment
of that incorruption which is your gift.*

*And may this Oil become
the Chrism of salvation
for those who will be born again
of water and the Holy Spirit,
and make them partakers of eternal life,
sharers of heavenly glory.
Through Christ our Lord.*

R. Amen.

PENTECOST SEQUENCE

*Holy Spirit, Lord of Light,
From the clear celestial height.
Thy pure beaming radiance give.
Come, thou Father of the poor,
Come, with treasures which endure;
Come, thou Light of all that live!*

***Thou, of all consolers best,
Thou, the soul's delightful guest,
Dost refreshing peace bestow.
Thou in toil art comfort sweet;
Pleasant coolness in the heat;
Solace in the midst of woe.***

*Light immortal, Light divine,
Visit thou these hearts of thine,
And our inmost being fill.
If thou take thy grace away,
Nothing pure in man will stay;
All his good is turned to ill.*

***Heal our wounds, our strength renew;
On our dryness pour thy dew,
Wash the stains of guilt away.
Bend the stubborn heart and will;
Melt the frozen, warm the chill;
Guide the steps that go astray.***

*Thou, on us who evermore
Thee confess and thee adore,
With thy sevenfold gifts descend.
Give us comfort when we die;
Give us life with thee on high;
Give us joys that never end.*

Amen! Alleluia!