

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Outline	Environment	Materials
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Gathering and Opening Prayer2. Activity Centers<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activity 1: Mobiles—<i>The Fire of the Spirit</i>• Activity 2: Johnny Appleseed Story—<i>The Fruits of the Spirit</i>• Activity 3: Pinwheels—<i>The Holy Spirit Is Like the Wind</i>• Activity 4: Bible Search—<i>Who Is the Holy Spirit?</i>3. Peer Group Time4. Family Time5. Closing Prayer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A space large enough to accommodate<ul style="list-style-type: none">–four corner activity centers–a center prayer table covered with a red cloth with a Bible on a stand–tables for families (2 or 3 families to a table) to gather and eat lunch• A separate place for children to hear and discuss story• 4 activity center facilitators• Volunteers to distribute/serve lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lunch, refreshments• Nametags (color coded for activity centers)• 4 large tables for activity centers• Votive candles for each child• Paper and pencils• Large candle on or near Prayer Table• <i>Songs of Celebration</i> CD• Bibles (suitable for age group) 1 per family• <i>Old Turtle</i> by Douglas Wood*• Apples, 1 per family• Additional materials needed are listed within each activity

Gathering and Opening Prayer (20 minutes)

Welcome the participants and explain the agenda for the gathering. Have facilitators distribute nametags and invite families to enjoy the light refreshments as they find a place to sit in the circle of chairs.

Invite the children who are confirmation candidates to assemble together for a procession. Tell each to each bring an unlit votive candle from their tables. Be sure all candidates have a candle.

Sing “We Are Marching,” *Songs of Celebration* CD, track 2.

Have the candidates gather around the prayer table with the large candle. As the singing continues light each child’s votive candle, and direct them to return to their table and place the lighted candles on the table.

Direct the group to sit.

Proclaim *Acts 2:1–43*.

Reflection The same Holy Spirit who came to the Apostles on Pentecost is the Spirit given to us in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Direct the families to silently think about why the Holy Spirit is so important. Ask them to share their ideas at their tables.

Close the prayer by asking the participants to stand and pray together with you.

Leader: *Open our hearts to receive the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit.*

All: *Come, Holy Spirit.*

Leader: *Open our hands and feet to serve others.*

All: *Come, Holy Spirit.*

Leader: *Be with us today to inspire, guide, and direct us.*

All: *Come, Holy Spirit.*

Leader: *Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.*

All: *Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with your love. Amen.*

**Old Turtle*, Douglas Wood. Scholastic Incorporated, New York, NY, 2001.

Activity Centers

Direct the participants to note the color code on their nametag and ask them to move to the appropriate center.

Tell the group that the lunch break will occur after the families have visited two centers. The remaining two centers can be visited after lunch.

Activity 1: Mobiles—*The Fire of the Spirit*

(30 minutes)

Materials Needed

- Long narrow strips of red fabric (6–7" long, 7 per family)
- Permanent markers
- Wire coat hangers (1 per family)
- Red yarn or string (6–7" long, 7 lengths per family)
- Stapler
- Construction paper (8.5 x 11", white or yellow, 2 per family)

Direct the families to talk about all the things that fire can do. One symbol for the Holy Spirit is fire. What does that tell us about the Holy Spirit? After a short discussion invite the parents to help children write their responses on the seven strips of red fabric provided for each family.

How to Make a Mobile

1. Staple one red fabric strip to each length of yarn.
2. Cover both sides of the wire coat hanger with construction paper.
3. Decorate the paper and write "Holy Spirit" on it with the markers.
4. Staple the yarn to the decorated coat hanger, creating a mobile of the tongues of fire to symbolize the Holy Spirit.

Rotation and Break (5 minutes)

Activity 2: Johnny Appleseed Story—*The Fruits of the Spirit* (30 minutes)

Materials Needed

- Story of Johnny Appleseed*
- **Family Confirmation Retreat Handout 1**
- Pencils

Show participants an apple and ask them to share what they know about Johnny Appleseed.

Tell the story of the man who took it upon himself to travel in the wilderness around the Great Lakes planting apple seeds. This was his gift to the human family. End by saying that we enjoy the fruit of his planting today every time we bite into a crisp apple.

Explain that the work of the Holy Spirit in us is similar to Johnny Appleseed and his apples. In the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Holy Spirit plants the seeds, which are called the gifts of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit also tends these gifts in our hearts like seeds so that our lives will bear fruit. We bear the fruit of the Spirit's presence when we live as holy people.

Introduce Family Confirmation Retreat Handout 1 with these or similar words:

The Holy Spirit lives in you. He helps us live as God wants us to live. We cannot live like God wants us to without help. So the Holy Spirit helps us. When we use the gifts of the Holy Spirit, people can see it! They see the fruits of God's action in us. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. We are confirmed in the Holy Spirit so that we might walk in His ways.

Direct the parents to work on the **Family Confirmation Retreat Handout 1** with their children.

Lunch (45 minutes)

* *Johnny Appleseed*, Jane Yolen. Harper Collins World, New York, NY, 2006.

Activity 3: Pinwheels—*The Holy Spirit Is Like the Wind* (30 minutes)

Materials Needed

- Squares of paper (4" x 5")
- Permanent markers
- Scissors
- Pushpins
- Small wooden dowels and pencils (1 per family)
- Two large sheets of newsprint taped to the wall
- Children's Bible

Begin by blowing on a pinwheel.

Ask: what is making the paper turn? Do you see the air I am blowing? Can you see the Holy Spirit?

Tell the story of Nicodemus (*John 3:1–8*).

Ask the participants: What does this story tell us about the Holy Spirit?

Invite participants to share all the things that are important about the wind, air, and breath. Write these down on the newsprint.

Direct each family to make a pinwheel as a reminder of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

How to Make a Pinwheel

1. Distribute paper squares. Fold the square corner to corner, and then unfold. Do this with all four corners.
2. Make a pencil line about 1/3 of the way from the center on all four folds. Cut a slit on each fold line up to the pencil line.
3. Write a word or phrase that tells how the Spirit is like the wind on each of the four sections.
4. Bring every other point into the center and stick a push pin through all four points. The head of the pin forms the hub of the pinwheel.
5. Turn your pinwheel over. Make sure the pin pokes through in the exact center. Roll the pin around in little circles to enlarge the hole a little. Then push the pin into a thin dowel, but not too far.
6. Blow and let your Spirit wheel spin.

Rotation and Break (5 minutes)

Activity 4: Bible Search—*Who Is the Holy Spirit?* (30 minutes)

Materials Needed

- Children's Bible for each family
- Cards with Bible citations
(do not write the qualities on the card)
- Pencils

Passages: *Romans 8:14–16* (leads); *Romans 8:26* (prays for us); *John 14:26* (teacher); *John 16:13* (guides, shows the truth); *John 15:26* (helper); *Ephesians 1:13–14* (supporter)

Distribute the cards with various Bible passages on them. Ask the families to look up their chosen passages.

Direct them to read the passage and then discuss: What does this passage say about the qualities of the Holy Spirit? Give each family an opportunity to write their response on the back of their card. These can then be shared in the large group.

Peer Group Time (20 minutes)

Adult Session:

Begin by asking the parent(s) to share their experience of Confirmation with others at their table. Invite a few to share in the large group.

Ask: When have you felt the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in your life?

Invite each participant to share his or her response with the person next to him or her.

Make the following points:

- The Holy Spirit is real and personal, not a vague, ethereal shadow, nor an impersonal force.
- The Spirit is God, a Person equal in every way with God the Father and God the Son.
- A primary role of the Holy Spirit is to be the presence of God to the Church for all times.
- The Spirit teaches us all truth, revealing God's will and guiding us in all decisions.

- The Spirit is our Advocate: praying, pleading and presenting us to the household of God and making us a holy people.
- The Holy Spirit is the motivating force behind all our prayers, our good choices, and our loving actions.

Invite the parents to add their ideas about the Holy Spirit.

Children’s Session:

Gather the children in a story circle.

Read or tell the story, *Old Turtle*, by Douglas Wood.

Discuss how the Spirit of God has been with us since the beginning of creation and is still with us now.

Closing Prayer (20 minutes)

Gather the families back at the tables.

Ask the families to work together to write a prayer to the Holy Spirit.

Distribute Family Confirmation Retreat Handout 2 to help guide this process.

Invite the participants to gather and process into the worship space singing “We Are Marching,” *Songs of Celebration* CD, track 2, as they wave their Spirit wheels.

Read *John 14:16–18*.

Have each family pray aloud its Prayer to the Holy Spirit. The mingling voices will echo the Pentecost scene.

Pray the following prayer:

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.

Invite all to extend a Sign of Peace to one another.

Distribute an apple to each family.

Thank the families for participating in the retreat.

