

FAMILIES FORMING DISCIPLES

ASCENSION AND PENTECOST

TOPIC(S): THE CHURCH'S MISSION

THE CENTRAL MYSTERY OF CHRISTIAN FAITH AND LIFE: THE MOST BLESSED TRINITY
FAMILY ROSARY – THE GLORIOUS MYSTERY OF THE CORONATION OF MARY AS QUEEN OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

REFERENCES: CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
nos. 731-32

SACRED SCRIPTURE

IS 61:1-3
MT 28:16-20
LK 24:50-53
ACTS 1-2

CREED

nos.
232-67,
659-67,
731-47,
758-69

LITURGY

nos.
1076,
1108-09,
1265-66

LIFE

nos.
1699,
1708-09,
1715

PRAYER

nos.
2623,
2652,
2670-
72

Materials:

Week 1: Copy of the Prayer to the Holy Spirit, Bible, *Rosary for Children* Pamphlet, and rosaries. To prepare for the teaching portion of this session, watch: Scott Hahn, [The Ascension: The Underrated Mystery](#), by St. Paul Center

Week 2: Families will need favorite snacks for Family Movie Night, candle for home prayer altar/space & piece of white paper for origami dove

Week 3: Music, altar, statue of Mary, one flower per person, large vase(s), crown for Mary, birthday cake with plates, napkins, & utensils (ice cream is optional but preferred!)

Goals:

- Families will reflect on the Ascension of Jesus, the mission He gave to the Church, as well as their own family's mission
- Families will reflect on the coming or Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost
- Families will reflect on their *Living-the-Easter-Season Family Plan*

OPENING PRAYER

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

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.

O God,
by the light of the Holy Spirit,
You have taught the hearts of Your faithful.
In the same Spirit
help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in His consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



ICE BREAKER

Ask the following questions and tell the families to act out their answers without using words as in the game charades.

Questions: What is your most favorite thing about Spring? What is your least favorite thing about Spring?



TEACH

1. Hook/Question

We learned many different prayers including the Rosary and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy this year. Of all the different prayers said throughout this year, which is your favorite and why?

(Let families discuss among themselves, and then invite sharing with the larger group.)

2. Introduce Topic

Today we prayed the powerful *Prayer to the Holy Spirit* together because we are going to reflect on what the Second and Third Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary, Jesus' Ascension and the Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, really mean.

3. CONTENT

Explain: Last month we talked about the Good News (Gospel) of Jesus' Paschal Mystery – His Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Glorious Ascension – which is the whole reason God the Father sent His Son Jesus to us.

Let's read together Luke 24:50-53, on the Ascension. (When possible, it is best if you read directly from your Bible so you are modeling for the families the action of taking up the Scriptures and reading.)

Then he led them (out) as far as Bethany, raised his hands and blessed them.

When Jesus raised His hands and blessed them, they knew that meant Jesus was our High Priest and that He was blessing them.

As he blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to heaven.

Ask: How would you feel if you were the disciples and you watched Jesus ascend into Heaven?
(Allow families to answer)

Explain: A lot of people might feel sad, but the disciples were rejoicing because they knew that Jesus would sit at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, which is his priestly throne. From there He would continue to be their High Priest, so Jesus would be with them and with us forever as He promised!

Read: *They did him homage and then returned to Jerusalem with great joy and they were continually in the temple praising God.*



Explain: The disciples understood that Jesus is the High Priest of all creation, Heaven and earth. Jesus' Paschal Mystery would not be complete until He ascended back up into Heaven – both in His divinity and humanity – taking His place on His priestly throne, “at the right hand of the Father.” From Heaven, Jesus continues his mission and lives His holy Priesthood, so that at every Mass, in every sacrament, Jesus is present. In a special way, He comes to us in humility and love during the consecration of the bread and wine into His Body and Blood during the Mass, the moment when Heaven touches earth! So the disciples were not sad, but rejoiced because God had kept His promise and sent them a Savior who had taken His place in Heaven but who would still always be with them (especially through the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost).

Source: Scott Hahn, [The Ascension: The Underrated Mystery](#), by St. Paul Center; see also CCC, no. 662.

Read: Matthew 28:18-20, The Great Commission, which is Jesus' final instructions to His disciples right before He ascended into Heaven.

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.

Show Video: Catholic Kids Media - \ *What is the Ascension?! Solemnity of the Ascension, cycle A (for younger children)* (Stop at 1:49)



Explain: In the Bible, we read that right before He ascended Jesus gave the Church her mission, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Ask: We are the Church, the Body of Christ, so each one of us and each family here has a mission to be Jesus' witnesses. How are you a witness for Jesus? How is your family a witness for Jesus? (Allow time for families to reflect and share together. Then allow for large group sharing.)



4. MISSION

Step 1: Introduce Mission Activity

Mission Activities are to be done at home during Week 2 and to be shared at the gathering of families on Week 3.

Step 2: Explain Activity

- a. Since we are still in the Easter Season, be prepared to share about how your *Living-the-Easter-Season Family Plan* is going. Which activities are your favorite so far and why?
- b. Have a Family Movie Night and together watch the videos on Pentecost.
- c. Place a candle on your home altar and together pray for the release and outpouring of the fullness of the Holy Spirit in the life of your family.

- i. Dad or Mom lights a candle
- ii. Ask everyone to quiet themselves
- iii. Ask everyone to make the Sign of the Cross with you
- iv. Ask everyone to lift up their hands, bow their heads and repeat after you:

Come Holy Spirit, come.

Fill us with the grace that the Apostles experienced in the Upper Room.

Renew our baptismal consecration and transform us Anoint us with the fire of Your love.

Release and pour out the fullness of Your Spirit within our family life,

So we may go out and preach the Good News.

Holy Spirit, come.

Holy Spirit, come.

Holy Spirit, come.

Glory Be...

- d. Have a Family Movie Night and together watch the videos on Pentecost.
- e. Complete the [Families Forming Disciples Family Survey](#) if you have not already done so.

Step 3: Model

Model for the families by sharing about how your own *Living-the-Easter-Season Family Plan* is going and share about how praying for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit has impacted you and your family.

5. CLOSING

Pray: Ask families to gather around their home altars/prayer spaces and invite them to share any intentions for which they would like everyone to pray. Use the *Rosary for Children* pamphlets/booklets to lead families in **one decade** of the Rosary together in which they meditate on the Second Glorious Mystery of Jesus' Ascension into Heaven.

SUPPORTING QUOTES FROM CHURCH DOCUMENTS

Pope Francis, *Regina Caeli* Message (May 24, 2020):

“I am with you always, to the close of the age” (Mt 28:20).

This promise ensures the constant and consoling presence of Jesus among us. But how is this presence realized? Through His Spirit, who leads the Church to walk through history as the companion of every person. That Spirit sent by Christ and the Father, who works the remission of sins and sanctifies all those who are repentant and open themselves with confidence to his gift. With the promise to remain with us until the end of time, Jesus inaugurates the style of his presence in the world as the Risen One. Jesus is present in the world but with another style, the style of the Risen One, that is a presence that is revealed in the Word, in the Sacraments and in the constant and interior action of the Holy Spirit. The Feast of the Ascension tells us that although Jesus ascended to Heaven to dwell gloriously at the right hand of the Father, he is still and always among us: this is the source of our strength, our perseverance and our joy, from the very presence of Jesus among us with the strength of the Holy Spirit.

Pope Benedict XVI, *Regina Caeli* Message (May 11, 2008):

Today we are celebrating the Solemnity of Pentecost... This was the “Baptism of the Holy Spirit” which had been foretold by John the Baptist....

... Pentecost is in a special way the Baptism of the Church which carries out her universal mission starting from the roads of Jerusalem with the miraculous preaching in humanity's different tongues. In this Baptism of the Holy Spirit the personal and community dimension, the “I” of the disciple and the “we” of the Church, are inseparable. The Holy Spirit consecrates the person and at the same time makes him or her a living member of the Mystical Body of Christ, sharing in the mission of witnessing to his love. And this takes place through the Sacraments of Christian initiation: Baptism and Confirmation. ... Today I would like to extend the invitation to all: let us re-discover, dear brothers and sisters, the beauty of being baptized in the Holy Spirit; let us recover awareness of our Baptism and our Confirmation, ever timely sources of grace.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, nos. 1830-1832:

The moral life of Christians is sustained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit.... The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.... The fruits of the Spirit are perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the first fruits of eternal glory. The tradition of the Church lists twelve of them: “charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity” (Gal 5:22-23).