

The Holy Spirit in Our Lives

In this unit students learn about the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. They learn how the Holy Spirit inspired the early Christians, and how the Holy Spirit continues to be active in people's lives today. The students explore the qualities of Spirit-filled people and investigate ways in which the local Church carries on the work of the Holy Spirit. The students reflect on what it means for them personally to be a Spirit-filled person.

DOCTRINAL FOCUS

In planning to teach this unit the following references from the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church are recommended:

#691 'Holy Spirit' is the proper name of the one whom we adore and glorify with the Father and the Son. The Church has received this name from the Lord and professes it in the baptism of her new children. The term 'Spirit' translates from the Hebrew word *ruah*, which, in its primary sense, means breath, air, wind.

(See *Compendium #47 Who is the Holy Spirit revealed to us by Jesus Christ?*)

#2623 On the day of Pentecost the Spirit of the Promise was poured out on the disciples, gathered 'together in one place'. While awaiting the Spirit, 'all these with one accord devoted themselves to prayer'. The Spirit who teaches the Church and recalls for her everything that Jesus said was also to form her in the life of prayer.

(See *Compendium #144 What happened at Pentecost?*)

#737 The mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit is brought to completion in the Church, which is the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

(See *Compendium #137 Why are the missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit inseparable?*)

#721 Mary, the all-holy ever-virgin Mother of God, is the masterwork of the mission of the Son and the Spirit in the fullness of time. For the first time in the plan of salvation, and because his Spirit had prepared her, the Father found the dwelling place where his Son and his Spirit could dwell among men.

(See *Compendium #142 What is the work of the Spirit in Mary?*)

#1697 *Catechesis* has to reveal in all clarity the joy and the demands of the way of Christ. Catechesis for the 'newness of life' in him should be ... *a catechesis of the Holy Spirit*, the interior Master of life according to Christ, a gentle guest and friend who inspires, guides, corrects, and strengthens this life.

(See *Compendium #389 and #390 What are the gifts and the fruits of the Holy Spirit?*)

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION FOR TEACHERS

Is a hero the same as a Spirit-filled person?

What kind of people do you think of as Spirit-filled? Who are Spirit-filled people that inspire you? To what extent do they live out what they believe? What mistakes or poor decisions have they made, and what did they learn from them?

After Jesus Christ's death many of his followers shared similar experiences of his Holy Spirit. This gift of the Holy Spirit to the first Christians is the same gift that Christians recognise in Baptism, and whose presence the Church confirms in Confirmation. How do you experience the Holy Spirit in your life? What are the signs of the Holy Spirit about you?

The experience of the Holy Spirit by Jesus Christ's followers was a shared one. It drew them together as a community which eventually developed practices of retelling the stories of Jesus and listening to the teaching of the apostles, of breaking bread and sharing prayer, and of selling their possessions and distributing to those who had need. What are the signs of the Holy Spirit in the local parish and in the wider Church today?

LINKS WITH STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES

Story is a powerful means for students to learn about the Holy Spirit. The use of sign and symbol will encourage growth in an understanding of the presence of God's Holy Spirit.

Students have heroes that they regard as models for acting and thinking. *Who are these heroes? What attracts students to them? In what ways are they Spirit-filled people? Are there ways in which some heroes differ from what Christians consider a Spirit-filled person?*

Students understand that being generous, kind and loving is an important sign of the Holy Spirit working in our lives. *How do students' actions, thoughts and deeds reflect those of Jesus Christ?*

Students have a diverse understanding and experience of parish life. *What do they associate with parish, and what place does it have in their family lives? What connection do they make between the local parish and the parish primary school?*

Mary is celebrated in a variety of ways by the different cultures to which students belong. *What understandings, practices and devotions of Mary do students bring to this unit? What images do they have of Mary?*

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE

Acts 2: 1–8 The Day of Pentecost

Luke records the presence of the Holy Spirit, coming as wind and fire. The effects of the Holy Spirit will change the lives of the apostles forever. The work of the Holy Spirit is characterised by the enthusiasm of the apostles and their preaching. The extraordinary effect of the Holy Spirit is the ability to be open and communicate so that all might hear the Good News.

At Pentecost the apostles are prompted into action. They begin to spread the word of God and, most importantly, all nations understand it! Through this event one of the key themes of the gospel, 'universalism', is highlighted. Jesus Christ's message will cross all barriers of race and language.

In Gen 1: 1–2 the creative power of God's Holy Spirit is symbolised in the wind that is at work in creation. In the Old Testament, fire is a sign of the covenant established with

God and the people. In Ex 19: 18 God descends the mountain and wraps it in fire. Now the merging Christian community is wrapped in fire. The creative power of God's Holy Spirit is at work in these first believers who bring the Christian community into being. The wind and fire, symbols of God's Holy Spirit, express that the Church is the New Creation and the New Covenant.

POSSIBILITIES FOR PRAYER AND WORSHIP

- Pray a Litany to the Holy Spirit, e.g:
Holy Spirit of God,
Breathe your life in us
Spirit of Love,
Breathe your life in us
Spirit of Peace,
Breathe your life in us.
Spirit of...
- Stand in a circle to form a human 'rosary'. Pray one decade of the Rosary using a verse of Scripture before each Hail Mary, e.g. the decade The Visit of Mary to Elizabeth would use the text Lk 1: 39–45. This would be broken into 10 segments. The first child says: 'In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country. Hail Mary ...' The next child reads: '... where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. Hail Mary ...' This pattern continues around the circle.
- Pray the Angelus in *KWL*, 2nd edn, Year 3, Chapter 9, p. 73. The traditional time for this prayer is midday.
- Pray together the responsory prayer under 'Our Prayer', *KWL*, 2nd edn, Year 3, Chapter 13, p. 106.
- Set up a bowl, jug and towel in the prayer space as a symbol for the Washing of the Feet. Reflect on the ways baptised people are called to symbolically 'wash feet' by serving others in family life, parish life and beyond. Gather around the symbol for the sharing of prayer and the singing of 'The Servant Song' (Richard Gillard, *Gather Australia*, No 487).
- Students prepare a PowerPoint reflection of images, words and songs about what it means to 'serve' others. Conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving.

Related Chapters – *KWL*, 2nd edn, Year 3: Chapter 8, The Holy Spirit in Our Lives; Chapter 9, Mary, Mother of the Church; Chapter 13, To Serve One Another.

Faith concepts: Holy Spirit, Church, sign, community, change, discipleship, mission.

Seeking understanding:

What does it mean to be a Spirit-filled person?

What are the signs of the Holy Spirit in my life and in the life of the Church?

Understandings:

The Pentecost story tells how the presence of the Holy Spirit changed the life of Jesus Christ's followers.

The Church community continues the work of Jesus Christ and his disciples in the world today.

Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, and other individuals in our world today are Spirit-filled people.

We see the Holy Spirit at work in our own lives and in the life of the Church through our thoughts, words and actions.

Scripture Text: Acts 2: 1–8.

Unit specific learning:

Students will learn about	Students will learn to	Students will undertake to
<i>Knowledge and Understanding</i>	<i>Reasoning & Responding</i>	<i>Personal & Communal Engagement</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The story of Pentecost and the roles of the Holy Spirit, the apostles and Mary.• The significance of Pentecost for the development of the early Church, and Christians' lives today.• The qualities of a Spirit-filled person.• The work of parishioners in the local Church community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make connections between themselves, Mary and other Spirit-filled people.• Make connections between the life of the early Christian community in Acts and Christian communities today.• Identify Spirit-filled people in their own local context.• Express what it personally means for them to live as a Spirit-filled person.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose ways to live as a Spirit-filled person in the school community.• Participate in a prayer service to celebrate Spirit-filled lives.• Communicate to the school community what it means to be a Spirit-filled person.

PHASES OF STUDENT INQUIRY

Additional Reading for Teachers	Orientation to Inquiry <i>What do students already know, think or feel in relation to the topic? What are students' questions about the topic? What experiences and reflections can we offer students to become engaged with the topic?</i>	Assessment: for learning, as learning, of learning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heroes: Journal Activity Before developing a class definition of the term 'hero', students write their own definition in their journals. This can be used as a reference point for both student and teacher. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – As a class define the term 'hero'. Display this definition in the classroom for the duration of the unit. Students list people whom they consider to be heroes. Explore these people by asking questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Why are these people heroes? – What qualities do they display? <p>Create a hero board with articles and pictures. This can be added to as the unit progresses.</p>	<p>Assessment for Learning Journal entry: This task will indicate students' prior knowledge of heroes.</p>
<p>A Spirit-filled person is one who manifests the qualities of peace, patience, faithfulness, gentleness, joy, self-control, love and kindness towards others. Spirit-filled people often devote themselves to service of neighbour (see Gal 5: 22).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spirit-Filled People: Journal Activity Repeat the above Journal activity for Spirit-filled people. Create a class definition of the term 'Spirit-filled people'. Compare this definition with the hero definition. In what ways are they similar? How do they differ? Create a Spirit-filled people board in the same way as 	<p>Assessment for Learning Journal entry: This task will indicate students' prior knowledge of Spirit-filled people.</p>

<p>The Holy Spirit builds God's people: to see how the Holy Spirit assigns us different roles in worship just look at how the Eucharist is celebrated in an assembly consisting of the people led by the priest, assisted by deacons, readers, servers, choir, commentators, ushers, etc.</p> <p>The Holy Spirit animates God's people: animate comes from the Latin word for soul, the vital life principle. The life of the Church is directed to a purpose, the mission of charity, justice, peace, mercy, reconciliation and, in our situation, education. Look at your children, reflect on how their different gifts are all used by the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>The Holy Spirit sanctifies God's people, making us holy. The natural reaction to this is: 'But I don't feel holy ... what, me, holy?' Here we should make a distinction:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">We are not holy because of anything we ourselves have done, but because we are members of the Body of Christ, a holy people 'set apart' to praise and glorify God. We are therefore called to holiness in life, to grow in prayer, spirituality, intimacy with God. Vatican II reiterated this call to <i>all the members</i> of the Church, not simply those in religious life: <i>All the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord, each in his own way, to perfect holiness</i> (Lumen Gentium #11).</p>	<p>the hero board.</p> <p>Compare and contrast heroes and Spirit-filled people using Venn diagrams or Compare and Contrast charts (for other graphic organisers see <i>The Thinking Platform</i>).</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KWL Chart What do you Know? What do you Want to know? What have we Learnt? Students use this graphic organiser to write what they know about this topic and compose questions. 	Assessment for Learning The KWL Chart will indicate what the students know, and illustrate what they want to find out.
Additional Reading for Teachers	Development <i>What experiences and religious texts will provide new learning for students? What skills will students need in order to work with these resources? What strategies and tools will enable students to think and reflect on these experiences and texts? How will students process their thinking and learning?</i>	Assessment: for learning, as learning, of learning
<p>The word Pentecost is from the Greek, meaning fiftieth. It is the Jewish festival of weeks occurring fifty days after Passover. It originally marked the end of the wheat harvest. It also commemorates the day God gave the Law to Moses. It was at the time of Pentecost that Jesus Christ's disciples, gathered together in prayer after his Ascension, experienced the powerful presence of God's Holy Spirit with them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensory Experience Tell students the story of Pentecost, beginning with the Ascension. Use props such as a bright light and candles in a darkened room, a fan blowing on them, suitable noises and waving of long red cloths. Another alternative is using a suitable meditation on fire, e.g. 'Fire' in <i>Creative Meditations</i>. Students complete a Y-chart (see, hear, feel) of their impressions. Students create a storyboard on Pentecost to record their experience. 	

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scripture Inquiry: Acts 2: 1–8 The Day of Pentecost
Read the scripture passage (<i>KWL</i>, 2nd edn, Year 3, Chapter 8). Use a thinking skills strategy such as De Bono’s Six-Hat Thinking to support students’ understanding of this account (see <i>Teaching Thinking Skills in the Primary Years</i>, p. 11). Note: highlight who was present, including Mary.

Students share insights gained. Complete this with a prayer and song, e.g. ‘Holy Sacred Spirit’ by Monica Brown (<i>KWL</i>, 2nd edn, Year 3, Chapter 8, p. 65). | |
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The Holy Spirit filled **Mary** with new life at the Annunciation, and Mary gave birth to Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit filled Mary and the disciples with new life at Pentecost, and they immediately gave birth to a new era (the Church) through their preaching and example.

Little is known of the personality or the specific details of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ. Her greatness comes through her joyous and faith-filled response to the action of God in her life, not from her outstanding personal characteristics.

That **Mary** should have been chosen as mother of the longed-for Messiah would have seemed surprising to the people of Jesus' time. Mary did not come from Jerusalem, the centre of religious and political power, but from the Galilean town of Nazareth. Galilee was adjacent to the Gentile regions of the north, little respected by religious leaders. Moreover, she was an unmarried village girl.

Mary is principally mentioned in **the Infancy Narrative** in the Gospel of Luke. This gives an account of the story of the conception and birth of Jesus Christ. Mary is mentioned briefly in the Infancy Narrative of Matthew, and appears in John's Gospel at the marriage at Cana. Other references to her are very brief before she re-enters the story at the crucifixion and resurrection of her son Jesus

- **Mary as a Spirit-filled Person**

Using Bloom's Graphic Organiser or Levels of Thinking, explore the statement 'Mary lived as a Spirit-filled person'.

Mary as a Spirit-filled person

1. Knowledge: Write/draw about Mary's life. If necessary, use sentence starters (read *KWL*, 2nd edn, Year 3, Chapter 9).

2. Comprehension: Write or draw what you like about Mary.

3. Application
Imagine that you met Mary. What would you notice about her? Use a play kit to tell the story of your encounter with Mary.

4. Analysis
How is Mary's life an example of a Spirit-filled person?
Create a concept map of Mary using words taken from students' definition of a Spirit-filled person.

5. Synthesis
Make a prayer card to celebrate Mary's qualities as a spirit filled person.

6. Evaluation
Write up or present an oral school report on Mary and how she has shown to be a spirit-filled person.

Christ.

<p>Yet Mary is called Mother of God, Queen of Heaven, Star of the Sea and many, many other titles, and has been depicted in thousands of images in the history of the Church. This is so because, in her obedience and openness to God, Mary was the first and most faithful disciple of her son Jesus Christ.</p>		
<p>The early infant Church in Jerusalem is shown in quite an idealistic light. The members were united and shared everything they owned. They were given great respect, and money was distributed to those in need. But the author of the Acts of the Apostles is realistic and honest. Two chapters later we read of tension within the community over the distribution of food (Acts 6: 1–6). Later Paul and Barnabas had a disagreement and parted company with each other. It is important to see all these texts in context and to realise that human nature was the same then as it is now.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The early Christian community and Christian communities today. Read Acts 2–4: The Coming of the Holy Spirit. A student-friendly bible text may be valuable, e.g. <i>Break Through! The Bible for Young Catholics</i>. <p>Identify the main activities of post-Pentecost Christians, e.g. How did they gather? What did they do?</p> <p>Beside each activity students identify how and where they see this in their current school and parish.</p> <p>Students present their comparisons using a Compare and Contrast chart with words, pictures and symbols</p>	<p>Assessment of Learning The discussion and chart will indicate how students interpret Acts 2-4 in their own local church context.</p>
<p>The word Church refers to the <i>people</i> rather than the building. The first Christian communities were called <i>ekklesia</i>, which means ‘assembly’ or ‘gathering’. So a Church is the gathering of all the baptised people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation: How Does the Holy Spirit Work Within Our Local Church? Invite speakers from various parish groups to talk about the role of their groups within the parish community. Students prepare questions beforehand that they can ask each speaker in order to compare the work of each person. 	<p>Assessment as Learning This KWL chart will allow the students to reflect on and monitor their learning throughout the unit.</p>

	<p>Refer back to class definition of a Spirit-filled person. Does this person meet the definition? Does the definition need to be refined? Fill in ‘Learned’ column of KWL chart with learnings.</p> <p>In reflection and following the research into parish groups the students reflect on today’s Church.</p> <p>Invite them to add any further ideas to the Compare and Contrast chart in the previous activity based on new learning in the investigation.</p>	<p>Assessment as Learning Adding to the Compare and Contrast chart will allow students to reflect on further developments in their learning.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Week In The Life Of A Spirit-filled Year 3 Student (Part 1) Create a wall display of ways in which a Year 3 student is able to display Spirit-filled qualities, e.g. to play with someone in the yard who they see is lonely. Collect as many ideas from the students as possible. 	
<p>Additional Reading for Teachers</p>	<p>SYNTHESIS <i>How will students demonstrate their understandings, beliefs, values, skills and feelings in relation to the topic? How will students take action based on their learning? What strategies and tools will enable students to discern their action, to plan and implement action and to evaluate their action?</i></p>	<p>Assessment: for learning, as learning, of learning</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Week In The Life Of A Spirit-filled Year 3 Student (Part 2) The students are challenged to reflect on the ideas created on the wall display and apply them in their lives over the period of a week. As they feel that they have achieved each of the tasks, they collect a star from a central place and put it on the card with that particular activity. 	
	<p>At the end of the week give students the opportunity to analyse the wall display and discuss which tasks were easier and more popular than others, and why.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal At the end of the week students describe one way in which they were a Spirit-filled person. 	<p>Assessment of Learning This journal entry will indicate the students' understanding of the qualities of a Spirit-filled person and how they understand what this means for their own life.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing Their Actions Students are divided into four groups to present their findings on what it means to be Spirit-filled people: report for school newsletter; multi-media presentation, e.g. concept map using <i>Kidspiration</i>; brochure; a poster to advertise around the school. 	<p>Assessment of Learning This report or presentation demonstrates the students' understanding of what it means to be a Spirit-filled person in the early Christian community and in the contemporary local community.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prayer Service Conclude this unit by celebrating Spirit-filled people through a prayer service. As part of this, students record on a strip of card the ways they can be Spirit-filled people. Place these on the prayer cloth. These actions 	

become the focus of prayer in the classroom.

RESOURCES

To Know, Worship and Love, 2nd Edition

Year 3: Chapter 8, The Holy Spirit in Our Lives; Chapter 9, Mary, Mother of the Church; Chapter 13, To Serve One Another.

Teacher Resources

Brown, T, Keller-Scholz, R, Pomanowski, J 2006, *Break Through! The Bible for Young Catholics*, St Mary's Press, Winona, MN.

McDougal, T 2003, *In Full Bloom*, Hawker Brownlow Education, Australia.

O'Brien, K & White, D 2001, *The Thinking Platform*, KD Publications, NSW.

Pohl, M 1997, *Teaching Thinking Skills in the Primary Years*, Hawker Brownlow Education, Australia.

CDs & Music

Brown, M 2000, 'Holy Sacred Spirit', in *Holy Ground*, Emmaus Productions.

Gillard, R 1995, 'Servant Song' in *Gather Australia*, GIA.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STANDARDS

This unit may be used to assess some of the Level 3 standards.

Students identify with biblical characters and people in the past and present Church by making inferences about their actions, feelings and motives.