

Mission Together

Pentecost Liturgy: Sharing the message of Jesus



Introduction for Teachers

The Christian feast of Pentecost occurs on the seventh Sunday after Easter, and at the same time as the Jewish harvest festival, Shavuot. Jesus and his disciples would have been very familiar with Shavuot - a joyous time to honour God and give thanks for the first fruits of the year.

However the first Shavout after Jesus' death and resurrection risked being clouded with anxiety and confusion for the Apostles. Without Jesus' presence they were uncertain of their mission. That was until God's Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles, enabling them to go out and spread the love and Good News of Christ with all. Because of this, Pentecost is regarded as the birth of the Church's mission to the world.

This Liturgy focuses on the theme of Pentecost and how, guided and strengthened by the Holy Spirit, we become disciples of Jesus and share His love with the world.

Liturgy Plan

Entrance hymn or recorded music

Our suggestions: 'Colours of Day' or 'This is the Day'

Sign of the cross and lighting of a candle

Children's Introduction

Today we are remembering a special Christian feast day called Pentecost. Pentecost is sometimes called the birthday of the Church because at Pentecost we remember how God sent his Holy Spirit to the Apostles to give them the gifts needed to share His love with all.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not the kind usually shared at birthdays. They are much more important than toys or sweets. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit shared with the Apostles gifts like courage, understanding, and another very special gift. We will find out what that is soon.

The first Pentecost happened 50 days after Jesus died on the cross. Although Jesus had visited the Apostles since he had risen from the tomb, they still felt sad and worried about how they would cope when Jesus returned to God the Father in heaven. To encourage the Apostles, God sent his Holy Spirit to be with them at all times.

The Bible reading we will hear now tells us about this special event. Listen carefully to the reading; as you do, try to imagine that you are in the room with the Apostles when the Holy Spirit arrived. Think about how you and the Apostles might have felt.



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Bible reading – The Day of Pentecost Acts 2: 1-5 (adapted from The Jerusalem Bible)

For an interactive interpretation of this scripture scroll down to Appendix 1.

When Pentecost day came round, the Apostles had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting. Something appeared to them that seemed like flames of fire; these flames came to rest above the head of each of them. The Apostles were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech.

The Word of the Lord.

Follow up questions.

The Apostles had hid themselves in a small room because they were feeling worried and sad. Jesus had left them to return to God our Father in heaven and they were unsure how they would cope without him. How do you think the Apostles felt when God sent his Holy Spirit to help them?

They were encouraged and inspired to go back out into the world and share Jesus' love with others.

Like the Apostles, we can be sure that God's Holy Spirit is with us all the time, to help us when we are worried and sad. Like the Apostles, we can pray to the Holy Spirit for encouragement when we feel like hiding away. With the help of God's Holy Spirit we can grow in faith and start again, as the Apostles did.

The Holy Spirit gave the Apostles a special gift. Can you remember what it is? Here's a clue – this gift helped the Apostles to go out into the world and share Jesus' message of love with people everywhere.

The gift of speech and the ability to speak in different languages.

During his time with the Apostles, Jesus had instructed his followers to share God's love with the world. After the Apostles received the gifts of the Holy Spirit they did just this – often making dangerous journeys over hundreds of miles to do so. Thanks to their efforts, people across the world came to know the message of Jesus and the love of God. This is how our Church began to grow into a worldwide family, made up of people from every continent all trying to share love as Jesus instructed. How could we use the words we say and those we write to carry out this instruction too? How might we share God's love through our words?

Suggested responses: By speaking kindly. Saying please and thank you. Telling our family we love them. Saying sorry if we have upset someone or forgiving someone if they upset us. Through our prayers.

As well as these ways, we could learn words of welcome from other languages, so like the Apostles we can build friendships and share love with children from other countries and cultures.

Optional Activity – Sharing the message of Jesus (Appendix 2)

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Today the Pope, the head of the Church, has his own special charity for children to do what the Apostles did; it is called Mission Together. Mission Together encourages children from different countries to pray for and share with other children who are poor, or sick, or worried and need our help. In these ways, children help to share God's love with the world and children everywhere learn that they are loved by God. Mission Together has a special prayer that they ask children to say.

Let us say it together now:

May all children

In the world

Share love

Share friendship and live

In the peace

Of God's love

Now and forever.

Amen.

Are there any other prayers we would like to make today? Is there anything or anybody else we want to talk to God about?'

Invite all children to participate, looking out for children who may need help voicing their prayer.

Plenary

Today we have remembered the first Pentecost and how, through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles were able to let the world know how much God loves us all. Through carrying out Jesus' instruction to love, the Apostles helped God's Church to grow into a worldwide family.

Let us finish by saying the prayer that reminds us that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are very close to us always, enabling us to help one another.

Closing Prayer:

The Sign of the Cross

Closing hymn or recorded music

'We are one in the Spirit' or 'Shine Jesus Shine'



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Appendix 1: The Day of Pentecost (adapted from Acts 2:1-5)



Interactive reading of 'The Day of Pentecost' – Teacher's Guide

This re-telling is designed to involve as many children as possible. Select up to five readers and invite twelve pupils to represent the Apostles. The Apostles are to stand together at the front of the hall/classroom and face their fellow pupils.

For this retelling you will need:

- Reading parts for pupils
- Cut-out card flames (see Appendix 4)
- A marker pen
- Drinking straws
- Cello-tape

Reader 1

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles. When Pentecost day came around, the Apostles all gathered in one room. They were feeling sad and worried about how they would manage, because Jesus had now returned to God the Father in heaven.

Invite the Apostles to look sad and worried.

Reader 2

Suddenly the Apostles heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting.

Invite all pupils to make a whooshing wind sound. Remind the pupils that the sound of the Holy Spirit filled the entire room, so their sound needs to be loud enough to fill the entire hall/classroom.

Reader 3

After the wind, something appeared to the Apostles that seemed like flames of fire. These flames hovered above the heads of each of them.

Provide each Apostle with a cut-out flame attached to a drinking straw (Appendix 4). They are to lift the flame above their head.

Reader 4

The Apostles were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech.

Ask the Apostles to turn their flames around. On the back of each is a greeting from a different language. If time and circumstances permit, invite one or more of the Apostles to read out their word. They will need help with the pronunciation.

Reader 5

God sent the Holy Spirit to be with the Apostles at all times and to help them share his love with the world. Let us remember that like the Apostles, we too can ask the Holy Spirit to help us do the same. God's Holy Spirit is always there to encourage us, especially when we feel worried or afraid.

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Appendix 2: Sharing the message of Jesus



Introduction

At Pentecost, God sent his Holy Spirit to encourage the Apostles and provide them with the gifts needed to share his love with the world. One of these gifts was the ability to speak in different languages, this enabled the Apostles to share Jesus' message of love with people from different countries. The Apostles did just this, often making difficult journeys over hundreds of miles to do so. Thanks to their efforts, people across the world came to know God's love. This is how the Church began to grow into a worldwide family, made up of people from every continent.

Today we are going to learn how to greet people in different languages, so that like the Apostles, we can help build friendships and share God's love with the world.

For this activity pupils will need:

- Speech bubble shape (Appendix 3)
- Scissors (if cutting out bubble shape)
- Coloured pens
- Mission Together Prayer Poster

Instructions

Below is a list of greetings from different countries. Select those applicable to the age and ability of your pupils and copy the selected greetings and translation on a whiteboard. Allocate or ask pupils to write one greeting on the speech bubble provided on Appendix 3.

Try and ensure that a greeting from every continent is copied by your class. Once copied, cut out the speech bubbles (or ask pupils to do so), and display the greetings around the circumference of our Mission Together Prayer Poster (these can be ordered for free via our website) or around a map/globe poster.

CHINESE MANDARIN: *Ni hao ma* – Hello, how are you?

FILIPINO: *Magandang araw* – Good/Beautiful day!

HINDI: *Namaste* – Hello (literal translation is 'I bow to the divine in you')

CZECH: *Dobrý den* – Good day

GERMAN: *Guten Tag!* – I wish you a good day!

ITALIAN: *Ciao!* – Hello (also goodbye)!

ARABIC: *As-salamu alaykum* – Peace be upon you

SOMALI: *Soo dhawoow* – Welcome

SWAHILI: *Jambo!* – Hello!

NATIVE SOUTH AMERICAN: *Rimaykullayki* – Hello

SPANISH (El Salvador): *Buenos dias* – Good day

CREOLE (Haiti): *Enchante* – Pleased to meet you

YABEM (Papua New Guinea): *Bibic ngayam* – Good day!

YUGARA (Aboriginal): *Gurumba bigi* – Good day

TONGAN: *Mālō e lelei* – Hello





A large, empty speech bubble shape with rounded corners and a tail pointing towards the bottom left, intended for writing a response.

A second large, empty speech bubble shape with rounded corners and a tail pointing towards the top right, intended for writing a response.

Appendix 4: Tongues of flame



Teachers instructions: This prop is used in the interactive re-telling 'The Story of Pentecost' (Appendix 1).

- Photocopy the flame template below on thin card (preferably yellow or red). You will need one flame for each Apostle in your re-telling.
- Cut out your flame shape.
- On the back of each flame, write an international greeting (see Appendix 2 for examples).
- Use cello-tape to attach each flame to a drinking straw.
- Once made, refer to script for use (Appendix 1).

