



PENTECOST FAMILY RETREAT AT HOME



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PENTECOST FAMILY RETREAT AT HOME



WELCOME:

Hello families!

Welcome to your Pentecost Family Retreat at home!

You can make this as long or short of a time frame as you'd like.

Over the next two sessions your family will get to learn about times we hear about the Holy Spirit and how the Holy Spirit lives within us and is our Companion. We will also talk about Pentecost and what it means for us today!

OPENING PRAYER:

1

Together with your family start with this prayer to begin your retreat!

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit....

"Breathe in me O Holy Spirit that my thoughts may all be holy;

Act in me O Holy Spirit that my works, too, may be holy;

Draw my heart O Holy Spirit that I love but what is holy;

Strengthen me O Holy Spirit to defend all that is holy;

Guard me then O Holy Spirit that I always may be holy."

Amen

-St. Augustine of Hippo (AD 354-430)

OPENING SONG (SUGGESTION):

Song: Holy Spirit by Francesca Battistelli

- You can find this song on Spotify or Youtube
- You can sing together or even just listen while remaining still.... encourage everyone to close their eyes and invite the Holy Spirit to join you and be aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit
- Take a peak at this beautiful Chorus

*"Holy Spirit, You are welcome here
Come flood this place and fill the atmosphere
Your glory, God, is what our hearts long for
To be overcome by Your presence, Lord
Your presence, Lord*

LET'S PLAY A GAME!



"WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT... THAT"

While this is structured as a game - it's really about what we will discuss after!
You can inspire participation by offering a prize for the winner.

SUPPLIES:

- * Paper and pens for everyone

INSTRUCTIONS:

- * Give everyone a piece of paper and pen.
- * Set a timer on a phone for 2 - 3 minutes.

LET'S PLAY

ROUND 1:

- Have everyone write down a list of everything that they know about **"Fire"**.

ROUND 2:

- Have everyone write down a list of everything that they know about **"The Holy Spirit"**.

ROUND 3:

- Have everyone write down a list of everything that they know about **"Pentecost"**.
- This one will be more difficult and that's okay!

SCORING AFTER THE ROUNDS:

- Have everyone take turns sharing what they wrote on their lists.
- If someone has something that no one else has on their list and you all agree that it is related to the word (and not something totally random), that person gets a point.
- Go through each round and crown a winner for each round!

DISCUSSION:

Have a conversation together based on the three rounds above.

- Based on the answers that people shared during the game:
 - Is there anything that you learned or are curious about?
 - When was the last time you had a bonfire - what do you remember about it?
 - Do you have any story about the Holy Spirit in your life?

SESSION 1 CONTENT



THE HOLY SPIRIT AS OUR COMPANION

"But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us, by putting his seal on us and giving us his Spirit in our hearts as a first installment." — St. Paul

HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVE WITHIN US?

"Who is the Holy Spirit" I asked my son? "A bird" he said... I chuckled and asked him to be more specific if he could... he replied with "A dove maybe?" Keep in mind - he's only 5. But still he had a decent handle on a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

Do you remember a time in scripture when we hear about the Dove and what was happening? (Ask your children).

Maybe you remembered this important moment at Jesus' baptism ... let us quickly remind you what happened...

"After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened [for him], and he saw the Spirit of God

descending like a dove

[and] coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

- Matthew 3: 16-17

Could you imagine, you're sitting at a river and there are these men speaking to one another. You don't know who they are, but they seem to know each other.

Then you see one of these men completely DUNK the other man under water and when he comes back above the water there appears to be this connection from him into the clouds and beyond. Then you see this bird... a dove, come and be with him. Upon Him.

Then as if it couldn't get any more amazing - a voice... a loud booming voice coming from those clouds... Heaven! Here is a moment we can clearly experience with our senses the Trinity - God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit together.

This would be wildly exciting and unbelievable! I'd have so many thoughts and feelings, I wonder if you would too... take a moment to ask each other...

How would you feel? What would you be thinking? Does this feel believable?



PENTECOST FAMILY RETREAT AT HOME

SESSION 1



When was the first time we hear about the Holy Spirit in the Bible?

The first mention of the Holy Spirit occurs in the Book of Genesis where it describes the Spirit of God hovering over the waters during the creation of the world.

This means that the Holy Spirit was always there, along with God in the beginning!

This passage symbolizes the presence and power of God actively participating in the act of creation. Sometimes understanding the Holy Spirit is like discovering a vital part of the divine puzzle. We cannot simply pick up one piece of a puzzle and know exactly what we are building. We need more and more pieces and as we have more pieces, the pictures becomes way more clear.

The Holy Spirit is often spoken about as the **unseen force of God's presence**, guiding, comforting, and empowering believers. An unseen force! How amazing is that... especially in those moments when we feel alone - nope. Not only are God and Jesus there - that incredible unseen force of power known as the Holy Spirit is there too, guiding and helping us.

In the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, we encounter more clear references to the Holy Spirit.

Jesus promises his disciples that the Holy Spirit will come to them as a helper and advocate after his departure. This divine presence is not just a distant force but a personal companion on our journey of faith. Learning about the Holy Spirit is an invitation to deepen our relationship with God and embrace the spiritual guidance offered to us, especially during difficult or hard times.

Let us focus on this point today - that **the Holy Spirit is a personal companion** on your faith journey. That God has given you someone to be with you in every aspect of your life.

As a child who goes to school and has a fight with a friend and feels left out.

As a pre-teen or teen who is trying to figure out who they are and what type of friends they want to be around.

As a caregiver/parent or grandparent who is trying their best despite their own exhaustion, expectations and anxieties.

God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit - would you be with all of us.

Let us finish this session with a story!

SESSION 1



STORY TIME...

At one of our retreats for grade 8 students, we were leading a certain activity but there were these two girls who did NOT want to participate.. I repeat DID NOT!

Both my team member and I felt that it was okay. Normally, we would encourage students to participate, and they would then realize it was a good thing for them to try these activities. However, we both felt that we had better just leave them to talk. They had a certain look on their face, where they looked both sad, angry, lost, scared and helpless.

As a team, we all sensed that there was something going on, but we couldn't just ask, the time didn't really allow for it. But we all felt like the Holy Spirit was trying to speak to us and for whatever reason - we didn't understand!. But **we were ready and we were alert!**

Towards the end of the retreat, we were ending in a time of prayer. We asked the students to write down their prayer requests, and told them that we would take these prayers and pray them with our team.

I walked past these same two girls and one of them called me over. She asked if I could put her prayer request up at the front for her because she really didn't feel comfortable going up. Of course I did, but I noticed that her letter was folded in this beautiful shape of a flower! How impressive. I decided I would place this letter at the very bottom on the basket so I could pray RIGHT after the retreat for her.

The day wrapped up and I ran to the basket - found the flower note, opened it up and read the note. My face must have changed to a shade of white as the entire team asked what was on that letter... I can't share but I can tell you that **by the guidance, the courage and strength of the Holy Spirit**, this girl wrote down exactly what she needed help for.

We had to involve the school to get her the help that she needed.

But if we weren't alert, if we weren't listening to the Holy Spirit, we would and could have missed her. That day, God watched over her with an unconditional love.

Why do I share this story specifically? We all have these situations where we know people (or maybe ourselves) that are hurting, or sick, or anxious, or struggling.

Let's embrace the Holy Spirit as our companion, enabling us to discern God's will for us.

Let us be aware of what's happening with the people around us and look for opportunities to help them. If we are all helping each other, then on the day we need help, others will also be listening to the Holy Spirit and God will be there with them to help us.

SESSION 1



CLOSING PRAYER

“Heavenly Father,
As we gather in Your presence, we are reminded of Your eternal power and grace, which have been present since the dawn of creation. Just as Your Spirit hovered over the waters, bringing forth light and life, may Your Holy Spirit continue to dwell among us, guiding us on our journey of faith.

Lord, we thank You for the promise of the Holy Spirit, the unseen force that sustains us, comforts us, and empowers us. As followers navigating the complexities of life, we seek Your Spirit to be our constant companion, leading us on paths of righteousness and truth.

Grant us the wisdom to recognize Your Spirit at work in our lives, in the gentle whispers of our hearts and the moments of divine inspiration. May we be open to Your guidance, trust in Your plan for our lives and surrender to Your will.

Help us, O God, to deepen our relationship with You through the Holy Spirit, drawing closer to Your divine presence with each passing day. Fill us with Your love, peace, and joy, that we may reflect Your light to the world around us.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.”

TIME TO TAKE A BREAK



TIME TO TAKE A BREAK AND REFLECTION ON EVERYTHING YOU'VE HEARD.

(Don't forget to prep for session two if you are going to play the game.)

Together as a family or alone, you can take a moment to:

- GO FOR A WALK
- EAT A DELICIOUS SNACK
- PRAY A ROSARY
- PRAY A DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET
- PRAY TOGETHER
- PRAY ALONE
- JOURNAL
- ATTEND MASS
- TAKE A NAP (YES, WE DID JUST SAY THIS)
- LISTEN TO PRAISE & WORSHIP MUSIC
- PAINT OR DRAW A PICTURE



SESSION 2



OPENING PRAYER:

"Come, Holy Spirit. Spirit of truth, you are the reward of the saints, the comforter of souls, light in the darkness, riches to the poor, treasure to lovers, food for the hungry, comfort to those who are wandering; to sum up, you are the one in whom all treasures are contained. Come! As you descended upon Mary that the Word might become flesh, work in us through grace as you worked in her through nature and grace. Come! Food of every chaste thought, fountain of all mercy, sum of all purity. Come! Consume in us whatever prevents us from being consumed in you."

—St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi

SONG SUGGESTION TO ENTER INTO SESSION 2

Song: Set a Fire by Jesus Culture

SESSION TWO INTRODUCTION

Welcome back families to the second session of our at-home retreat, where we dive deeper into the significance of Pentecost in our lives. As we gather together once more, we embark on a journey of reflection and discovery, exploring the profound meaning behind this sacred occasion. Pentecost, often hailed as the birthday of the Church, marks the momentous outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, empowering them to spread the message of love and salvation to all corners of the earth. But Pentecost is not merely a historical event; it is a living, breathing reality that continues to shape our faith and ignite our spirits today. Join us as we explore how the transformative power of Pentecost resonates within our families, inspiring us to live as vessels of God's grace and agents of change in our communities. Focusing on how to soften our hearts through this transformation.

OPENING GAME:

A scavenger hunt for the family.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Print and cut out the pictures of the flames (on the next page)
- Have one person hide pictures of the flames around your home or wherever you are having this retreat.

GOAL:

- Find as many flames as you can! The person with the most wins.



SESSION 2 - TRANSFORMATION OF HEART



SESSION 2: TRANSFORMATION OF HEART DURING PENTECOST

Let's dive into the significance of Pentecost, a moment in the life of the Church that marks the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples. Cardinal Cantalamessa beautifully encapsulates the essence of Pentecost when he said,

"Pentecost is the moment when a heart of stone is shattered and a heart of flesh takes place."

This quote reminds us that Pentecost is not merely about external manifestations or experiences, but it signifies a deep inner transformation of the heart. Let's explore how the Holy Spirit softens our hearts, fills us with love, and enables us to live with greater compassion, mercy, and humility.

Cardinal Cantalamessa's words paint a vivid picture of the spiritual reality of Pentecost. Our hearts, often hardened by sin, selfishness, and worldly desires, resemble stones incapable of receiving and reflecting God's love. However when the Holy Spirit descends upon us, He breaks through our hardness, shattering the barriers that separate us from God and others. In this moment a profound transformation occurs - **our hearts of stone are replaced with hearts of flesh**, tender and receptive to the movement of God's grace.

Inner Transformation: Imagine your heart as this tough, unyielding stone, weighed down by doubts, fears, and all kinds of things. But then, when the Holy Spirit comes rushing in like a tidal wave on Pentecost, it's like that stone is shattered into a million pieces. And in its place blooms this tender, beating heart of flesh - alive, vibrant, and overflowing with God's love.

But here's the most interesting part: this transformation doesn't just happen once and then we're done. No way! It's like a never-ending adventure, where the Holy Spirit keeps working in us, day after day, filling us to the brim with His love and setting our hearts on fire.

When you've got a heart on fire for God, **it changes everything**. Suddenly, you see the world through new eyes - God's eyes. You start to notice the people around you in a different way, with a love that's not just your own but God's love flowing through you. You find yourself reaching out to others with kindness, compassion, and mercy, because that's exactly how Jesus would do it.

SESSION 2



It's like your whole life becomes this amazing adventure of faith, where every day is a chance to love a little more, give a little more, and become a little more like Jesus. And yes, it's not always easy. There will be ups and downs, struggles and doubts. But through it all, God's love never wavers. It's like this steady, **unwavering anchor that holds us close**, no matter what.

Let's embrace this journey of inner transformation with open hearts and open arms. Let God's love wash over us, fill us up, and set our hearts ablaze with passion for Him. When we give our hearts to God, there's no limit to what He can do in and through us. And that's a journey worth taking.

Living with Compassion, Mercy, and Humility: What happens in our lives when we have the Spirit of Pentecost burning bright within us? It's like a power that makes us love like Jesus loves.

When we're filled with the Holy Spirit, something amazing happens: we start seeing people the way Jesus does. Suddenly, we're not just focused on ourselves anymore. We notice the ones who are hurting, the ones who are overlooked, the ones who need a little extra love. And **we don't just notice them - we do something about it.**

Forgiving those who hurt us? Yes, it's tough. But with the Holy Spirit's help, we find the strength to let go of grudges and extend forgiveness, just like Jesus did on the cross. What about serving others? It's not about earning points or looking good in front of others. It's about having **a heart that beats with the same love and compassion that Jesus** showed to everyone He met. It's about being there for others, even when it's inconvenient or uncomfortable, because that's what Jesus would do.

Let's rise to the challenge of Pentecost. Let's live lives filled with compassion, mercy, and humility, just like Jesus did. Because when we do, we're not just living for ourselves - we're living out God's love in a world that so desperately needs it.

Dear friends, as we reflect on Pentecost, let us open our hearts to the transformative power of the Holy Spirit. May we allow Him to shatter our hearts of stone and mold us into vessels of His love, mercy, and compassion. Let us embrace Pentecost not just as a historical event, but as a lived reality that continues to shape and transform our lives today. And may we, empowered by the Spirit, be instruments of God's grace and agents of His kingdom in the world.



*During the Last Supper,
Jesus says to the apostles:
**"But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I
go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not
come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you."***

John 16:7

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit...

"Lord, as we gather in reflection of your profound words spoken during the Last Supper, we are reminded of the promise you made to your disciples. You spoke of the coming of the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who would guide and strengthen them in your absence.

We thank you for your unwavering love and for the gift of the Holy Spirit, who continues to dwell among us, guiding us on our journey of faith. We recognize the importance of your departure, as it allowed the Advocate to come and dwell within our hearts, lighting our path with divine wisdom and grace.

Grant us the humility to surrender ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, that we may be receptive to its promptings and teachings. Help us to discern your will in all things and to follow the path that leads us closer to you.

May the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives empower us to be witnesses of your love and truth in the world, bringing hope and healing to those in need.

We offer this prayer in gratitude for your sacrifice and in anticipation of the continued guidance of the Advocate in our lives.

Amen."

Continue through this retreat by participating in an activity, craft and celebration found on the next few pages.

FAITH ACTIVITIES



Here are a few ideas or activities to celebrate Pentecost.

Choose one or more activities from the list below to do together to continue to reflect on Pentecost.

IDEAS:

- **Prayer Vigil:** Hold a family prayer vigil, where you take turns praying for various needs, thanking God for His blessings, and inviting the Holy Spirit to guide and empower you.
- **Pentecost Banner:** Design and decorate a banner with symbols of Pentecost, such as flames, doves and wind. Hang it in a prominent place in your home as a reminder of the Holy Spirit's presence.
- **Acts of Kindness:** Perform acts of kindness as a family, inspired by the love and compassion shown by the early Christians in the book of Acts. This could include visiting elderly neighbours, donating to charity or volunteering together.
- **Family Worship:** Gather as a family for a time of worship, singing songs of praise and worshipping God together.



PENTECOST CRAFTS



Here are a few craft ideas to celebrate Pentecost.

While you are making your craft, take the time to talk about how your family can grow closer in faith together.

CRAFT IDEAS:



- **Flame Crowns:** Create crowns using yellow, orange and red construction paper to represent flames. Decorate with glitter or sequins for added sparkle.



- **Dove Ornaments:** Cut out dove shapes from white felt or paper. Decorate with markers, paint, or feathers to symbolize the Holy Spirit descending like a dove.



- **Pentecost Wind-streamers:** Decorate paper tubes with symbols of wind and flames. Attach ribbons or streamers to the bottom for movement, symbolizing the rushing wind of the Holy Spirit.



- **Tongues of Fire Sun Catchers:** Cut out flame shapes from colored tissue paper. Glue them onto clear contact paper to create vibrant sun catchers that represent the tongues of fire from Pentecost.



- **Holy Spirit Prayer Sticks:** Write prayers or blessings on colorful paper strips. Roll them up and tie with ribbons or yarn. Place them in a jar or basket as a visual reminder to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

These crafts can help engage children and adults alike in reflecting on the significance of Pentecost and the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

CLOSING THE RETREAT



It's time to end this mini-retreat.

We would suggest closing this experience with a wonderful Pentecost Feast!

Prepare a special meal or feast as a family, incorporating foods and dishes that are significant to the Pentecost celebration.

HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS:

- **Red Foods:** Since the colour red is often associated with Pentecost to symbolize the flames of the Holy Spirit, you could include red foods in your feast. This could be red fruits like strawberries, raspberries or watermelon, or savoury dishes with red sauces like marinara or salsa.
- **Dove-shaped Bread:** Bake or purchase bread in the shape of doves to symbolize the Holy Spirit descending like a dove at Pentecost. You could serve this as a side dish or appetizer.
- **Flame-colored Desserts:** Create desserts with flame-like colors, such as red, orange, and yellow. This could be a fruit salad with strawberries, oranges, and pineapple, or a layered cake with flame-colored frosting.
- **Harvest Foods:** Pentecost is sometimes associated with the Jewish holiday of Shavuot, which celebrates the wheat harvest. You could incorporate harvest foods like grains, dairy products and fresh produce into your feast.
- **International Cuisine:** Since Pentecost is often celebrated as the birth of the Christian Church and commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, you could incorporate foods from different cultures to symbolize the diversity of the global Christian community.

These are just a few ideas to inspire your Pentecost feast. Feel free to get creative and tailor your menu to suit your family's tastes and traditions!



Thank you for participating in this at home experience.

We hope that it gave you a mini-retreat experience to reflect and pray through Pentecost.

WHAT NOW? STAY IN TOUCH

Are you wanting more moments of spiritual connection, more opportunities to dive into the depths of your faith?

If so, we invite you to consider joining us for another transformative retreat experience or perhaps even an in-person gathering hosted by HopeStone.

Stay connected with us to stay in the loop! Join our mailing list by simply dropping us an email at info@hopestone.ca

Follow us on social media platforms at [@hopestonecf](https://www.instagram.com/hopestonecf) to keep up with our latest updates, events, and inspiring stories.

Yet, there's more to our mission than just events and gatherings. We're committed to making a tangible difference in the lives of underprivileged communities and schools through life-changing retreats.

If you feel moved to be a part of this noble cause, to be the hands and feet of love in action, consider supporting us through donations.

Reach out to us at donate@hopestone.ca or visit our website at www.hopestone.ca/donate to contribute to our mission.

Your generosity ensures that thousands of youth, who might otherwise be deprived of these soul-stirring experiences, can draw closer to the Divine.

Without the unwavering support of individuals like you, our mission would not be possible. Together, let's continue to spread hope, love, and faith, one heart at a time. Join us in this journey of transformation and impact. Your involvement makes all the difference.



PENTECOST FAMILY RETREAT AT HOME