

Link to Liturgy



Pentecost Sunday The Power of Pentecost

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Lessons and Discussions

Page 6 – Pentecost - “Receive the Holy Spirit”

Page 9 – The Power of Pentecost - “Receive the Holy Spirit”

Page 16 – Spirit of Truth - “But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth”

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Confirmation Series, Retreat, or Mission Suggestions

Please use any of the lessons above as well as the suggestions below for your retreat or mission. You may also want to go to the search option on the Member Login Page and type in "Confirmation"

1. If possible it would be important to have Reconciliation as a part of your retreat or mission. The following talks will help to prepare for this Sacrament.

Reality of Sin and need for repentance - *"And when he [Holy Spirit] comes he will convict the world in regard to sin and righteousness and condemnation"*

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson - Reconciliation (Bandana Skit)]

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson - Three Battles – fits with the Completes Baptismal Grace]

[See The Temptation of Christ Chart - fits with the Completes Baptismal Grace]

2. It is suggested that there be a talk on the Divine Mercy of God. If possible the Chaplet of Divine Mercy can be prayed while watching the Divine Mercy / Passion video.

God's Divine Mercy throughout time - *"the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth"*

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson - For the Sake of...(In the Old Testament)]

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson - For the Sake of...(In the New Testament)]

[See Pop Culture Connection – Divine Mercy and Passion]

3. If possible it would be important to have Mass at your mission or retreat. The following talks help to prepare for Mass and understand how we can "remain" with Christ. It is when we "remain" with Christ that we bear much fruit.

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson - The Seven Last Words and the Mass]

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson - Seven Words (Part I)]

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson - Seven Words (Part II)]

[14] CCC 697

[15] CCC 698

[16] CCC 699

[17] CCC 700

[18] CCC 701

[19] <http://www.loyolapress.com/symbols-of-the-holy-spirit.htm>

[20] John 16:12-13

[21] The trial of Saint Justin Martyr (165AD)

[22] Rite of Baptism

[23] <http://www.remnantapostles.com/index.cfm?load=page&page=793>

[24] Homily at the 23rd World Youth Day by Pope Benedict XVI – for the whole homily see, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/homilies/2008/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20080720_xxiii-wyd_en.html

[25] Pope Benedict [The Apostles](#) and newadvent.org

[26] Acts 12:1-2

[27] Acts 1:21-22

[28] Jude 0:20

[29] Fulton J. Sheen; The World's First Love; Ignatius Press; Page 268

[30] Homily at the 23rd World Youth Day by Pope Benedict XVI

[31] Jn. 16:13-14

[32] In the Conversation with God, Fernandez 2, 96.1

[33] In the Conversation with God, Fernandez 2, 96.1

[34] cf. footnotes Jn. 16:13 NAB

[35] cf. footnotes Jn. 15:26 NAB

[36] cf. Jn. 14:16

[37] J. Escriva, Christ is passing by, 135

[38] cf. 1 Cor. 12:3

[39] In the Conversation with God, Fernandez 2, 96.3

[40] cf. Acts 1:14

[41] Rite of Confirmation

[42] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 1288

[43] Modern Catholic Dictionary pg. 122

[44] Roman Catholic Daily Missal [1962]; page 1829

[45] The Church's Year pg. 301

[46] Roman Catholic Daily Missal [1962]; page 1841

[47] Gal. 5:22-23

[48] <http://www.remnantapostles.com/index.cfm?load=page&page=614>

[49] Baltimore Catechism No. 3 (Q. 696)

[50] Roman Catholic Daily Missal [1962]; page 1841

[51] Homily at the 23rd World Youth Day by Pope Benedict XVI

[52] 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 and Ephesians 1:11-14

[53] 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 (footnote) NAB

[54] 1 Peter 5:8-9

[55] Matthew 5:48

[56] 2 Timothy 1:6-7

Marian Antiphon – Regina Caeli – Simple Tone

6.

R Egína caéli * laetáre, alle-lú-ia : Qui-a quem me-
ru- ísti portáre, alle-lú-ia : Resurréxit, sic-ut dixit, alle-
lú-ia : Ora pro nó-bis Dé-um, alle-lú- ia.

V. Guade et laetare, Virgo Maria, alleluia.

R. Quia surrexit Dominus vere, alleluia

Let us pray. O God, who by the Resurrection of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, didst vouchsafe to make glad the whole world; grant, we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may lay hold of the joys of eternal life. AMEN

English Translation

Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia; For He whom thou didst merit to bear, alleluia, has risen as He said, alleluia: Pray for us to God, alleluia.

V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia!

R. Because the Lord is truly risen, alleluia!

“The End” Notes

- [1] Acts 2
- [2] Deut. 16:9
- [3] Modern Catholic Dictionary pg. 414
- [4] The Church’s Year pgs. 298-299
- [5] The Catholic Catechism pg. 208
- [6] Luke 1:46-55 (Magnificat)
- [7] Ezekiel 36:24-28 (Liturgy of the Hours; Week IV; Saturday, Morning Prayer)
- [8] Jn 19:27
- [9] The Church’s Year pg. 298
- [10] <http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=331>
- [11] CCC 694
- [12] CCC 695
- [13] CCC 696

Entrance Antiphon (Wisdom 1:7) –Roman Missal

Should be chanted three times so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred. The chant leader could chant the first time and then all can join the second and third. Another song can be substituted, but should have the same theme; this should not be the norm.

Spiritus Domini *Wis I: 7*

VIII

T HE Spirit of the Lord * has filled the whole world,
al-le-lu-ia; and that which contains all things, knows ev-
ery language spoken by men, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-
lu-ia.

Alternate options:

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest
Hail Thee, Festival Day
Veni Sancte Spiritus
Let the River Flow (Darrel Evans)
Alive in You (Remnant)
Light of the World (Remnant)

Collect –Roman Missal

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

O God, who by the mystery of today’s great feast sanctify your whole Church in every people and nation, pour out, we pray, the gifts of the Holy Spirit across the face of the earth and, with the divine grace that was at work when the Gospel was first proclaimed, fill now once more the hearts of believers. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in

the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

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

Gospel Reading – John 20:19-23 –Roman Missal

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John
- Glory to you O Lord

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Or

Gospel Reading – John 15:26-27; 16:12-15 – Roman Missal

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John
- Glory to you O Lord

Jesus said to his disciples: “When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth that proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me. And you also testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.

“I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming. He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. Everything that the Father has is mine; for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.”

Séq.
1. **V** Eni Sáncte Spí-ri-tus, Et emít-te caé-li-tus Lú-
cis tú-ae rá-di-um. 2. Véní pá-ter páuperum, Véní dá-tor
mú-nerum, Véní lúmen cór-di-um. 3. Conso-látor ópti-
me, Dúlciis hóspes á-nimae, Dúlce refrigé-ri-um. 4. In
labóre réqui-es, In aéstu tempé-ri-es, In flétu so-lá-
ti-um. 5. O lux be-a-tíssima, Réple córdiis íntima Tu-ó-
rum fidé-li-um. 6. Sine tú-o númine, Ni-hil est in hó-
mine, Ni-hil est innó-xi-um. 7. Láva quod est sórdidum,
Ríga quod est á-ridum, Sána quod est saúci-um. 8. Flécte
quod est rí-gidum, Fóve quod est frí-gidum, Rége quod est
dévi-um. 9. Da tú-is fidé-libus, In te confidéntibus, Sá-
crum septená-ri-um. 10. Da virtú-tis mé-ri-tum, Da sa-lú-
tis éxi-tum, Da perénne gáudi-um. Amen. (Alle-lú-ia.)

English Translation followed by Latin Gregorian Chant

Come, Holy Ghost, send down those beams, which sweetly flow in silent streams from Thy bright throne above.	Without Thy Godhead nothing can, have any price or worth in man, nothing can harmless be.
O come, Thou Father of the poor; O come, Thou source of all our store, come, fill our hearts with love.	Lord, wash our sinful stains away, refresh from heaven our bar- ren clay, our wounds and bruises heal.
O Thou, of comforters the best, O Thou, the soul's delightful guest, the pilgrim's sweet relief.	To Thy sweet yoke our stiff necks bow, warm with Thy fire our hearts of snow, our wandering feet recall.
Rest art Thou in our toil, most sweet refreshment in the noonday heat; and solace in our grief.	Grant to Thy faithful, dearest Lord, whose only hope is Thy sure word, the sevenfold gifts of grace.
O blessed Light of life Thou art; fill with Thy light the inmost heart of those who hope in Thee.	Grant us in life Thy grace that we, in peace may die and ever be, in joy before Thy face. Amen. Alleluia.

The Gospel of the Lord.

- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading

From the treatise Against Heresies by Saint Irenaeus, bishop

When the Lord told his disciples to go and teach all nations and to baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, he conferred on them the power of giving men new life in God.

He had promised through the prophets that in these last days he would pour out his Spirit on his servants and handmaids, and that they would prophesy. So when the Son of God became the Son of Man, the Spirit also descended upon him, becoming accustomed in this way to dwelling with the human race, to living in men and to inhabiting God's creation. The Spirit accomplished the Father's will in men who had grown old in sin, and gave then new life in Christ.

Luke says that the Spirit came down on the disciples at Pentecost, after the Lord's ascension, with power to open the gates of life to all nations and to make known to them the new covenant. So it was that men of every language joined in singing one song of praise to God, and scattered tribes, restored to unity by the Spirit, were offered to the Father as the first fruits of all the nations.

This was why the Lord had promised to send the Advocate; he was to prepare us as an offering to God. Like dry flour, which cannot become one lump of dough, one loaf of bread, without moisture, we who are many could not become one in Christ Jesus without the water that comes down from heaven. And like parched ground, which yields no harvest unless it receives moisture, we who were once like a waterless tree could never have lived and borne fruit without this abundant rainfall from above. Through the baptism that liberates us from change and decay we have become one in body; through the Spirit we have become one in soul.

The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and strength, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of God came down upon the Lord, and the Lord in turn gave this Spirit to his Church, sending the Advocate from heaven into all the world

into which, according to his own words, the devil too had been cast down like lightning.

If we are not to be scorched and made unfruitful, we need the dew of God. Since we have our accuser, we need an Advocate as well. And so the Lord in his pity for man, who had fallen into the hands of brigands, having himself bound up his wounds and left for his care two coins bearing the royal image, entrusted him to the Holy Spirit. Now, through the Spirit, the image and inscription of the Father and the Son have been given to us, and it is our duty to use the coin committed to our charge and make it yield a rich profit for the Lord.

Responsory – Office of Readings – Pentecost Sunday

I give you a new commandment: love one another as I have loved you.

– Whoever loves his brother lives in the light.

We can be sure that we know Christ, only if we keep his commandments.

– Whoever loves his brother lives in the light.

Pentecost - Lesson and Discussion

Today is a very special and important day of the Church. It is often referred to as the “birthday” of the Church. After Jesus died, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven to fulfill all that God had promised to His people, through the power of God the Father and Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit was sent to the Apostles and to all mankind.

What is Pentecost? It is the Feast celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles and Mary, the Mother of Jesus in a house at Jerusalem like tongues of fire.[1] The word “Pentecost” comes from Greek, which means fifty. This holy day of Pentecost is celebrated fifty days after the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. It also has a connection to our Jewish roots in that they too celebrated a Pentecost fifty days after the Passover, when the first fruits of the corn harvest were offered to the Lord[2], and the law of God given to Moses.[3] **Why would the Holy Spirit descend on the same time of the Jewish Passover?** As we recall, Jesus died close to the time of the Jewish Passover. Jesus fulfilled the Old Law of the Passover when He became the final Lamb whose blood saves us all. At Pentecost, the Jews celebrate the law given to Moses by God. By sending

which is the Vespers hymn for Pentecost (and often sung on and around Pentecost, as well as at Confirmations and priestly Ordinations).

Veni, Sancte Spiritus, known as the Golden Sequence, is sung during Mass on Pentecost Sunday. It is commonly regarded as one of the greatest masterpieces of sacred Latin poetry ever written. Its beauty and depth have been praised by many. The hymn has been attributed to three different authors, King Robert II the Pious of France (970-1031), Pope Innocent III (1161-1216), and Stephen Langton (d 1228), Archbishop of Canterbury, of which the last is most likely the author.

Are you the master who builds the eternal cathedral,
Which towers from the earth through the heavens?
Animated by you, the columns are raised high
And stand immovably firm.
Marked with the eternal name of God,
They stretch up to the light,
Bearing the dome,
Which crowns the holy cathedral,
Your work that encircles the world:
Holy Spirit God's molding hand!

Are you the one who created the unclouded mirror
Next to the Almighty's throne,
Like a crystal sea,
In which Divinity lovingly looks at itself?
You bend over the fairest work of your creation,
And radiantly your own gaze
Is illumined in return.
And of all creatures the pure beauty
Is joined in one in the dear form
Of the Virgin, your immaculate bride:
Holy Spirit Creator of all!

Are you the sweet song of love
And of holy awe
That eternally resounds around the triune throne,
That weds in itself the clear chimes of each and every being?
The harmony,
That joins together the members to the Head,
In which each one
Finds the mysterious meaning of his being blessed
And joyously surges forth,
Freely dissolved in your surging:
Holy Spirit eternal jubilation!

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

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Veni Creator Spiritus

This is a famous Catholic Gregorian chant hymn, actually the sequence for the Mass of Pentecost. This is not to be confused with another of the Church's beautiful chants, Veni Creator Spiritus,

the Holy Spirit, God shown that the Old Law had ceased and the New Law was to begin. God also chose this time because the Jews who were coming together from all countries to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost, might witness the miracles, and come to hear and accept the New Law announced by the apostles.[4]) This period between Easter and Pentecost in the past was celebrated by not allowing anyone to fast and singing of Alleluia as much as possible.

Pentecost was also the completion of the Passover. It was the completion of the Church's cycle, which started with the Holy Spirit overshadowing Mary at the Annunciation. He then descended on the disciples at Jerusalem and gave the Apostles the power to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.[5] Pentecost is the completion of God's promise. In the Magnificat, Mary says, "He has remembered his promise of mercy." [6] The Canticle of Ezekiel says, "I will take you away from among the nations, gather you from all the foreign lands, and bring you back to your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you to cleanse you from all your impurities, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. I will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you, taking from your bodies your stony hearts and giving you natural hearts. I will put my spirit within you and make you live by my statutes, careful to observe my decrees. You shall live in the land I gave your fathers; you shall be my people, and I will be your God." [7] Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, we the people of God have the spirit of God within us and await with hope the land (heaven) that God has given our fathers.

MUSIC - "The Waiting" by Tom Petty - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 4:00

http://youtu.be/uMyCa35_mO

Sometimes waiting is the hardest part. Last week we read of the Ascension of Christ, and he instructed the Apostles to wait at Jerusalem. How difficult it must have been for the Apostles to sit in the upper room praying and hoping for the sign, which was promised to them. But as we know, good things come to those that wait. Their patience was rewarded with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Why was Mary at Pentecost? Mary was there to be with the Church, which at that time were only the eleven apostles. How beautiful it is to see Mary present at every major moment in our Church's history, from the conception of Jesus, to his death, resurrection, and now today we see her with the Apostles at Pen-

tecost. She did not need to be there to be filled with the Holy Spirit because she was already full of God's grace, and the Holy Spirit had already descended upon her at the Annunciation. Luke, who wrote Acts of the Apostles, shows us that when Jesus gave Mary to John and said, "behold your mother"[8], she was the mother of the Church and Jesus' people. She is there to calm them and be there for them. Likewise, Mary is still here for the Church today. She is still at our side leading us to her Son and the blessed Trinity.

Why is it known as the "birthday of the Church"? This day marks the first time the Church was announced to the world. On this day the apostles, being filled with the Holy Spirit, started the mission of the Church. It is the very beginning, the start, and the birth of the Church and its mission to proclaim and spread the Gospel to the entire world. It was the first time the Apostles had the courage to start proclaiming the Word themselves. Up to this point, Jesus himself had proclaimed it. It is also the day when over 3,000 people were brought into the Church where before there were only twelve.[9] There is a dramatic difference between Saint Peter before and after Pentecost. Before Pentecost, he did not have the courage to proclaim Christ to even one person. In fact, Peter denied Jesus three times when asked. Fifty days later, we find Saint Peter boldly proclaiming the Gospel to everyone in the city and 3,000 were brought into the Church. **When are the times do we find it hard to evangelize? Who are the people that we find it hard to evangelize too?** Calling upon the Holy Spirit can give us the strength we need, even if we have denied Christ previously. A short easy pray to memorize is the Come Holy Spirit Prayer. **How can these words help us have courage?** "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."[10]

Why did the Holy Spirit descend "like tongues of fire"? This symbolism represents the many languages the Holy Spirit imparted on them to be able to speak. As we recall, immediately after the descent of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles go out with Peter as their leader and began speaking. All who could hear them speak heard it in their native language. The description of fire also indicates the power of the Holy Spirit inflaming their hearts with the love of God and their neighbor.

Activity – Symbols of the Holy Spirit

Of nothingness, from which you raised it to the light.
You, nearer to me than I to myself
And more interior than my most interior
And still impalpable and intangible
And beyond any name:
Holy Spirit eternal love!

Are you not the sweet manna
That from the Son's heart
Overflows into my heart,
The food of angels and the blessed?
He who raised himself from death to life,
He has also awakened me to new life
From the sleep of death.
And he gives me new life from day to day,
And at some time his fullness is to stream through me,
Life of your life indeed, you yourself:
Holy Spirit eternal life!

Are you the ray
That flashes down from the eternal Judge's throne
And breaks into the night of the soul
That had never known itself?
Mercifully relentlessly
It penetrates hidden folds.
Alarmed at seeing itself,
The self makes space for holy fear,
The beginning of that wisdom
That comes from on high
And anchors us firmly in the heights,
Your action,
That creates us anew:
Holy Spirit ray that penetrates everything!

Are you the spirit's fullness and the power
By which the Lamb releases the seal
Of God's eternal decree?
Driven by you
The messengers of judgment ride through the world
And separate with a sharp sword
The kingdom of light from the kingdom of night.
Then heaven becomes new and new the earth,
And all finds its proper place
Through your breath:
Holy Spirit victorious power!

it of holy fear in God's presence. Guard what you have received. God the Father has marked you with his sign; Christ the Lord has confirmed you and has placed his pledge, the Spirit, in your hearts."

Saint Paul tells Saint Timothy, "I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control. So do not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord, nor of me a prisoner for his sake; but bear your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God."^[56]

We can make a comparison between Confirmation and chocolate milk. When we make a glass of chocolate milk we pour the chocolate syrup (Holy Spirit) into milk (soul). If we do not "stir into flame" the gift we have been given, it will settle at the bottom and our lives will not provide the rich taste of life that the world desperately needs. We must continually "stir into flame the gift of God" that we received by thanking God for our own Confirmation, recalling it in our mind, asking for the Graces that we were given at Confirmation and using them now in our life.

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Novena of the Holy Spirit

This prayer was written by Saint Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein). It is good to have parents, sponsors and confirmandi pray this prayer both before their Confirmation retreat and before Confirmation. It can be prayed nine days before each event and used as a novena. If used within the context of a lesson or discussion, ask each person to tell everyone which image of the Holy Spirit they like the most and why.

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

Who are you, sweet light, that fills me
And illumines the darkness of my heart?
You lead me like a mother's hand,
And should you let go of me,
I would not know how to take another step.
You are the space
That embraces my being and buries it in yourself.
Away from you it sinks into the abyss

Have the group break into pairs or groups of three. Hand them a Bible and Catechism, and see how many different symbols or ways the Holy Spirit is presented in Scripture and in the Catechism. They may also want to write down a list of symbols that they have been taught.

Below are several symbols:

Water^[11], Anointing^[12], Fire^[13], Cloud and light^[14], the Seal^[15], The hand^[16], the finger^[17], The dove^[18], and wind^[19].

A short catechesis can then be given on each of the symbols using the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

The Power of Pentecost – Lesson and Discussion

At the Last Supper, Jesus promised to send the Spirit of Truth, which would stay with the apostles and the Church forever. "Jesus said to His disciples: I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth."^[20] We can receive the power of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses for Christ and to testify before the world about the mystery of Salvation.

What does it mean to be a witness? Witness comes from the Greek word *martyros*, this is where we get the word martyr. To be a witness literally means that we are a martyr for truth. We are willing to not only die for truth, but also live it out in our life. Saint Justin Martyr proclaimed the creed of every Christian when he was martyred. At Saint Justin's trial, Rusticus the prefect said, "Let us, then, now come to the matter at hand, and which presses. Having come together, offer sacrifice with one accord to the gods." Saint Justin replied, "No right-thinking person falls away from piety to impiety."^[21] This has been also been translated as "No right-thinking person falls away from truth to falsehood." We should move from what is false into what is truth, but never abandon the truth, which the Holy Spirit guides us to, for the errors of falsehood. It is the Holy Spirit that helps us to stay true to our baptismal vows, "Do you reject all his [Satan's] empty promises."^[22]

What does the power of the Holy Spirit look like in real life?

The Holy Spirit, which proceeds from the Father (Source) and the Son (Mediator), is the only true source of real power. In the Creed we say that the Holy Spirit is the "giver of life".

What promises power in our world today, what do the powerful people have? How do we distinguish the power of the world, from the power of the Holy Spirit, is there a difference? (See also Link to Liturgy lesson: Receive the Power [23]) “But what is this “power” of the Holy Spirit? It is the power of God’s life! It is the power of the same Spirit who hovered over the waters at the dawn of creation and who, in the fullness of time, raised Jesus from the dead. It is the power which points us, and our world, towards the coming of the Kingdom of God. In today’s Gospel, Jesus proclaims that a new age has begun, in which the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon all humanity (cf. *Lk* 4:21). He himself, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, came among us to bring us that Spirit. As the source of our new life in Christ, the Holy Spirit is also, in a very real way, the soul of the Church, the love which binds us to the Lord and one another, and the light which opens our eyes to see all around us the wonders of God’s grace.”[24]

Activity - Power of Pentecost

This is a great activity to see the true power of the Church and how the Holy Spirit is guiding the Church. The question above is asking about power. Have your group mention or write down as many powerful countries (US, England, Russia, Rome, Greece, etc.), corporations (i.e. Apple, Windows, Facebook, Planned Parenthood, etc.), sports teams (Cowboys, Yankees, Celtics, etc.), people (Hitler, Napoleon, etc.), and inventions (iPod, Computers, phones, TV, etc.). Once there is several mentioned or written down ask them how powerful they really are. Also ask, where will these companies, people, things, etc. be in 2,000 years? Go to the “document” section on the packet page and chose the Power of Pentecost Activity Sheet. The activity sheet can be updated as well with more contemporary examples. **What companies and products have come out only in the last five years? How do those companies and products promote power and life?**

Remember that every king that has ever reigned, every navy that has ever set sail, every leader that has ever led, every team that has ever had a dynasty, were all “great” for a time, but where are they now? Everything has a limit and everything comes and goes. Over the past 2000 years, all of these things have passed away except the Church. **Why?** The Church has the only real source of power, of life, of endurance and that is the Holy Spirit. This is the same Holy Spirit that was given to us at Pentecost.

What do we need strength for?

Our relationship with God, our Father

We need a deeper love for God and to obey Him as a Father (Piety)

We need help in discerning the will of God in all things (Knowledge)

We need the strength to do the will of God in all things (Fortitude)

We need help to hunger and thirst for the things of God (Wisdom)

We need help directing our life and actions to the Glory of God (Wisdom)

Our relationship with Christ and the Church

We need a firm and lasting connection to the Body of Christ, the Church

We need help in knowing the mysteries of our Faith (Understanding)

Rejecting Satan, his empty promises and evil ways – the baptismal promises

We need to dread, despise, and hate sin (Fear of the Lord)

We need to be warned constantly of the deceits of Satan (Counsel)

We need to know clearly anything that puts our salvation in danger. (Counsel)

Living out the Faith which we profess

We need help in perfecting the Grace that was given at Baptism. Jesus says in, “be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.”[55] In 1 Thessalonians 5:23 Saint Paul says, “May the God of peace make you perfect in holiness.”

We need help bearing witness to Christ and professing our Faith in both word and deed, even unto death.

We need help with our minds, which have become darkened. Faith enlightens our mind

We need help with our wills, which have lost courage. Fortitude gives courage to our will

To those who have taken advantage of this great Sacrament and receive the gift, St. Ambrose says, “Recall then that you have received the spiritual seal, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment (counsel) and courage (fortitude), the spirit of knowledge and reverence (piety), the spir-

Three, we can open it up with the excitement and put the gift to use.

The fact is, if someone was confirmed because “my parents made me” that is a good thing. Our parents can make us receive this gift. In fact, if they have a sacramental marriage (Church marriage) they promised to raise their children up in the Catholic Faith, so if they do not have us receive it, they would be breaking their promise to us and to God. Our parents, however, cannot make us open it. In fact, no one can make us open it, not even God because of our free will. We have the responsibility to do the right thing with the gift, which has been given to us by our parents, by Christ and His Church.

How do we open up the gift of Confirmation? The ways are endless; we live the life of Christ and His Church. First and foremost we go to Mass, we pray, we grow in knowledge of the faith and morals and live them courageously being a witness for Christ. We can make a long list, there are many.

How does Confirmation give us strength? Jesus gave us the sacrament of Confirmation because He knew that we would need strength. Christ gives us the Sacrament of Confirmation so that all will have access to the strength necessary to reach Christian perfection. Saint Peter says, “Stay sober and alert. Your opponent the devil is prowling like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, solid in your faith.”[54] The word confirmation means, “to thoroughly make firm” or “to make solid”.

Blessed Pope John Paul II said, “The Grace conferred by the Sacrament of Confirmation is more specifically a gift of strength. This gift corresponds to the need for greater zeal in facing the spiritual battle of faith and charity in order to resist temptation and give witness of Christian word and deed to the world with courage, fervor, and perseverance. This zeal is conferred by the Holy Spirit.”

Confirmation strengthens and completes our baptismal vows. Let us take a look at what was done at our Baptism so we know what is being strengthened and completed. Christ knew that we would need this Gift of Strength mainly in the areas listed below. The Holy Spirit is the Gift of Strength that helps us with the needs below by giving us the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are in parenthesis.

A company that has power in the modern world is Starbucks. In 2006, Starbucks had been in business for 35 years and had grown from a few employees to around 150,000 employees. They went from 1 store to just over 13,000 stores worldwide. If someone were to go to places like New York, they would literally see Starbucks stores right across the street from each other. That is significant power and growth.

But who is more powerful, Starbucks or the Church? Look at the numbers:

The Church in 33AD was led by St. Peter and ten apostles, all who had locked themselves up in the upper room out of fear. Most of them were uneducated simple workers. Eleven grown men scared and locked in an upper room does not seem very powerful or a sign of potential growth.

Thirty-One years later, the Catholic Church had grown so fast and so large in number that the most powerful man in the world, Emperor Nero, felt threatened by the Christians. It is a fact that Nero burned a portion of Rome down and blamed it on the Christians. Nero knew that the Christians had power, and he wanted them gone. **Where did this power come from that challenged the most powerful man in the world?**

Rome had about two million people in 64AD, and Christians were about ten percent of the population, that is 200,000 people. So from 11 in 33AD to 200,000 in 64AD, and that was just in Rome. By 64AD, the Catholic Church was also found in Jerusalem, Antioch, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Greece, Italy, India, Africa and Spain, basically all parts of the known world.

You can use the second page of the Power of Pentecost Activity Sheet to see what modern cities would have the population of Rome and the population of just the Christian community in Rome.

Just as all people know about Starbucks today...all people would have known about Christ and the Christians back in the day. So did the Church or Starbucks grow faster?

	Employees or Members	Stores or Churches
Starbucks in 35 years	150,000	13,000 all over the world
Church in 31 years	200,000	All over the world

Starbucks has grown remarkably fast, and it is a powerful company. It is a staple among coffee drinkers. However, The Church grew just as fast. There are two more things to consider:

Starbuck had assistance to grow; marketing, the stock market and people who actually wanted it to grow and welcomed the stores in their cities, states and countries. The Church had massive persecution the first 300 years of its existence. It had to grow in hiding with absolutely no support from the government and no money. The next question is, “will Starbuck be around 1900 years from now?” The Church is still around and still growing.

The Church grew for one reason and one reason alone, Pentecost! Pentecost is the birthday of the Church, the power of the Holy Spirit, which is the power of the Father, and the Son, which is a power that is not temporary and shallow, but a power that is eternal and life giving.

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses.” Acts 1:8 (theme of World Youth Day 2008)

Where did the apostles go after Pentecost? The power of Pentecost gave all the Apostles the courage to not just leave the upper room, but to go to the ends of the known world. Here is a list of the Apostles and where they had traveled[25]:

MAP – Where the 12 Apostles Died – POP CULTURE CONNECTION

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=201812973222981115902.0004a34723ee4dfea9853&ll=34.307144%2C44.648438&spn=49.886688%2C74.707031&z=3&source=embed>
This is a google maps image of where tradition has our apostles

their hearts as their helper and guide at Confirmation, and who daily grow in His gifts of grace through the Holy Eucharist. At each Mass, in fact, the Holy Spirit descends anew, invoked by the solemn prayer of the Church, not only to transform our gifts of bread and wine into the Lord’s body and blood, but also to transform our lives to make us, in His power, “one body, one spirit in Christ”[51].

Christian initiation is complete with Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. In the early Church, Confirmation was received after Baptism and can be seen as a second installment. The third installment is the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ. In Baptism, we become adopted children of the Father. In Confirmation, we receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit with its gifts and fruits. In the Holy Eucharist, we physically receive Jesus’ Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. The Sacraments of Initiation are Trinitarian and give us the Divine Life in participation with the Life of the Blessed Trinity.

“But the one who gives us security with you in Christ and who anointed us in God; he has also put his seal upon us and given the Spirit in our hearts as a first installment.”[52]

What do the words security, seal, and installment mean? “The commercial terms gives us security, seal, first installment are here used analogously to refer to the process of initiation into the Christian life, perhaps specifically to baptism. The passage is clearly Trinitarian. The Spirit is the first installment or ‘down payment’ of the full messianic benefits that God guarantees to Christians.”[53]

Confirmation: The gift of strength – Lesson and Discussion

How is Confirmation a gift? Confirmation is a gift. We are able to open physical and spiritual gifts for ourselves at Confirmation. We now need to ask ourselves, “What am I now going to do with the gift of the Sacrament of Confirmation?”

We could do one of three things once we receive the gift from the Bishop:

One, we could throw it away.

Two, we could take it, but ignore it. Maybe we put it in the closet as far back as possible letting it gather dust. We could have the attitude that it is not that important but I might want it later.

The following prayer is a witness to this goal of perfection, which the Sacraments of Initiation help us achieve. “Lord, may everything we do begin (Baptism) with your inspiration, and continue (Confirmation and Eucharist) with your help, so that all our prayers and works may begin in you and by you be happily ended. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

God gives us the Sacraments of Initiation so that we can have a beginning (Baptism) and the strength to continue through life (Confirmation and Eucharist) toward our ultimate end, heaven. Our spiritual life is similar to our physical life. We have organs, but they must be protected, strengthened, and nourished to continue.

Every life has to have an origin, development, and nourishment. **What is the origin, development, and nourishment of the Spiritual life?** The Spiritual life has an origin (Baptism), development (Confirmation), and nourishment (Eucharist). The human body also has organs, a skeleton, and needs nutrients. Confirmation is like the skeletal system of the soul, which gives support and strength.

Here is a breakdown:

Without Baptism: we are flour blown around by Satan
With Baptism: water and flour are mixed and become dough

Without Confirmation: We are just dough (Confirmation completes Baptismal Grace)
With Confirmation: The fire of the Holy Spirit turns dough into bread

Without the Eucharist: We are not one in body and spirit and do not have nourishment
With the Eucharist: We are one in body and spirit, are nourished, and in Christ, give our life to the world

At World Youth Day 2008, the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, during the final Mass, when he confirmed young people said, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you”. These words of the Risen Lord have a special meaning for those young people who will be confirmed, sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, at today’s Mass. But they are also addressed to each of us – to all those who have received the Spirit’s gift of reconciliation and new life at Baptism, who have welcomed Him into

dying in the world. Some Apostles have multiple locations because we are not 100% sure with some. You can use this map along with the context below.

Peter: He was able to bring the Church ultimately to Rome and establish his chair there. Before that, he held the council of Jerusalem and traveled to Antioch, Corinth, and made his way to Rome where he was crucified upside down upon his request.

James the Greater: He is mentioned concerning his death in the book of Acts.[26] He had a high position with the Church in Jerusalem. Tradition holds, he traveled as far as Spain during his life to evangelize. Other traditions believe his body was sent there after his death. Either way, he now rests in Santiago de Compostela, which is one of the oldest and most popular pilgrimages in the Church.

John: He is noted by St. Paul as one of the “pillars”, the other being Peter. He was responsible for supervising the first Christians. He was also sent to Samaria and is the only apostle not to die a martyr’s death. He wrote his Gospel as an old man looking back on the history and growth of the Church and in it he mentioned numerous details not mentioned in the first three Synoptic Gospels.

Andrew: He was known as the apostle of the Greek world. He later was crucified at Patras. He though, like his brother Peter, did not want to be crucified like Jesus. Instead, he was crucified on a diagonal or X-shaped cross, which has now come to be known as “St. Andrew’s cross”.

Thomas: He is believed to have traveled the furthest distance. He first evangelized in Syria and Persia then went on to Western India, from where he finally reached Southern India. To this day, most Indians from the South of India are Christian. For many years those who were from India and were Christians were known as “Thomas Christians”. Indians who live North of where Saint Thomas died are usually Hindu or Muslim.

Bartholomew: We have no precise information about his whereabouts and where he went. Fourth century historian, Eusebius discovered traces of Bartholomew’s presence in India. In the Middle Ages, the popular tradition was that flaying killed Bartholomew. In Michelangelo’s painting “Last Judgment”, in the Sistine Chapel, Saint Bartholomew is shown holding his own

skin in his left hand on which the artist left his self-portrait.

James the Lesser: James is extremely important after Pentecost. He helped bridge the gap between allowing pagans into the Church, and the Jews who were converting. He also helped with the issue of circumcision. It is thought that he stayed in Jerusalem for most of his life. A high priest betrayed him and turned him in to be stoned to death.

Matthias: We only know he was chosen to take the spot of Judas. We also know he was a witness to all of Jesus' earthly events[27] because that was part of the criteria which the other eleven set for selecting an apostle to take Judas' place.

Philip: He is said to have evangelized first in Greece and then Frisia where he is supposed to have died, in Hierapolis, by a torture described as a variation of crucifixion or stoning.

Matthew: He is credited with not only preaching, but also writing one of the first gospels in his Hebrew language. He preached in Persia, Macedonia, Syria, and Ethiopia to the south of the Caspian Sea (not the country in Africa). We are not sure how he died, but we do know he was a martyr.

Simon: He is often associated closely with the Apostle Jude. There is little known of exactly where he preached. Some have him going as far as Britain, the Black Sea, in Egypt and in Northern Africa. He is believed to have been crucified, and his body then sawed into many pieces.

Jude Thaddeus: It is believed he went and preached in Judea, Samaria, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Libya. He is the author of his letter in the Bible in which he wrote, "But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit." [28]

Paul: St. Paul, although he describes himself as "least among the apostles" because he was called last by Jesus after his Resurrection, was the most active and missionary of all the apostles. He took multiple missionary trips across the Mediterranean area. He returned home to Antioch. He was in Jerusalem at the Apostolic Council. He went to Cypress, Pamphylia, Asia Minor, Ephesus, and Derbe just to name a few of the places. He was later imprisoned. He was sent to Rome and was eventually be-

the Church, and our places to study, pray, discern, and worship. We will never have enough time in our lives to learn everything there is to know in the Catholic Church, but that does not mean we are to stop learning about our faith. We must continue to dive into Sacred Scripture, the writings of the Church Fathers, and the Doctors of the Church, attend Mass at least every Sunday and Holy Day of obligation, pray without ceasing, and do whatever else is necessary to grow in our Faith. Our ultimate graduation prize is hopefully making it to Heaven.

Confirmation: Completes Baptismal Grace – Lesson and Discussion

This lesson and discussion go with the Spiritual Reading in this packet; please read the Spiritual Reading first.

Flour without water can be easily blown and scattered. In the analogy that Saint Irenaeus gives, we are the flour. Satan is continuously prowling around like a lion, looking for someone to devour. Our souls, like flour, are susceptible to being blown around and scattered by Satan. Sin is separation; separation between man and God. If our souls were like the tiny pieces of flour, Satan would like to separate and scatter them. Flour with water is bound together (baptism).

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson - Three Battles

[See The Temptation of Christ Chart

To prevent separation and scattering, we are baptized. In the waters of baptism, we are brought together into God's family and protected from the snares of Satan as we renounce Satan and embrace Christ.

Flour with water is simply dough. Although bound together, it is still weak and without purpose. Dough must be put in the fire, rise, strengthen, and become the perfection that it was meant for. "According to the Council of Trent, this Sacrament [Confirmation] makes us perfect Christians." [50] With Baptism, we become dough, safe from the winds of Satan, which threaten to scatter us. Without Confirmation, we remain simple dough; weak, without purpose, not reaching perfection. With Confirmation, we are baked into bread and like Christ, the Bread of Life, are given to the world.

penance. King – we are a leader, leading others to Salvation, we have a good character, one that can withstand bad examples (peer pressure) and seduction, and we have a strong personality. [See Link to Liturgy Lesson – Jesus: Priest, Prophet, and King] [48]

We are given a mission and sent out with a purpose, just as Christ was sent by the Father and just as Christ sent the first apostles. We are called, we are chosen. Every baptized person, confirmed by the Spirit has a mission to bring others to Christ. This is to be done with the help of others, a collective witness, and the body of Christ.

We have a Confirmation patron, a Saint who gives us each an example of holiness and we are assured of their constant intercession for life.

We are weak without Confirmation. Confirmation is not to be taken lightly; in fact, it is a sin to neglect Confirmation, especially in these evil days when faith and morals are exposed to so many and such violent temptations.[49] The gift of strength is such a great gift; it must be cherished and embraced for it is the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of Life who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Is confirmation similar to graduation in the Church? Yes and no. It is similar to graduation in that when we graduate from school, we go out in the world to start our career and work in this world. Confirmation is the final Sacrament we receive in the Sacraments of Initiation. We then begin to seek out a much higher calling that a job, which is our Vocation. We seek where God wants us to serve Him in our everyday life. We remember that there are seven Sacraments. To be fully initiated into the Church we receive Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist; also known as the Sacraments of Initiation. We live the life of Christ to the full with these Sacraments. When we fail to live life to the full, we have the Sacraments of Healing, Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick. At Confirmation we receive in a deeper way, the Holy Spirit, which the Creed says is “the Lord, the giver of Life”. There are two Sacraments that help perpetuates life. Matrimony aided by the Holy Spirit, perpetuates natural life. Holy Orders, aided by the Holy Spirit, perpetuates spiritual life. Confirmation is not like graduation because when we graduate from school we leave and never return again to the place of study. For the Church, we have just begun to open the doors of

headed.

Can the power of the Holy Spirit be stopped? Saint Bonaventure said that the second most powerful force in the universe is free will. We have the free will to receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit; it will not be forced upon us. The power of the Holy Spirit cannot be stopped, because it is God, but it can be rejected by the free will of individuals. The apostles went to many places where the Spirit was accepted and gave life to those areas, but over time, individuals can also say no to the same Spirit that their ancestors once said yes to. We must in every age say yes to the Holy Spirit because if we do not we not only hurt our own soul, but our neighbors and our countries. One example of how things can change is the story of North Africa, which was once one of the strongest areas of the Catholic Church, but since the rise of Islam has diminished both in number and influence. Islam “... crushed Christianity, reducing the number of bishops in Africa from seven hundred and fifty in the seventh century to only five in the eleventh century, so that Africa now has to be re-evangelized.”[29]

How many bishops are there in America and could this same thing happen in our country? As of 2011, there are 283 active bishops in America, if the same statistics occurred in America today, as they did in Africa in the seventh century, we would be reduced from 283 bishops to two. **What would that do to us, the faithful, to the reception of the Sacraments? What effects would it have on us?** We must be willing to lay down our life for the faith, so that the faith in our land, our cities, our homes, is always preserved, strong and a powerful force building a civilization of love.

MOVIE – Spider-Man/Great Power.... - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 1:50
<http://youtu.be/8DfztIIqbT>

With great power comes great responsibility. Confirmation gives us great power but also gives great responsibility. Uncle Ben tells Peter Parker to be careful, “These are the years that a man changes into the man he will become the rest of his life, just be careful who you change into” We can take both Uncle Ben’s and Pope Ben’s (Benedict XVI) advice. In a few moments, we will celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation. The Holy Spirit will descend upon the confirmands; they will be “sealed” with the gift of the Spirit and sent forth to be Christ’s witnesses. What does it mean to receive the “seal” of the Holy Spirit? It means being in-

delibly marked, inalterably changed, a new creation. For those who have received this gift, nothing can ever be the same! Being “baptized” in the one Spirit (cf. *1 Cor 12:13*) means being set on fire with the love of God. Being “given to drink” of the Spirit means being refreshed by the beauty of the Lord’s plan for us and for the world, and becoming in turn a source of spiritual refreshment for others. Being “sealed with the Spirit” means not being afraid to stand up for Christ, letting the truth of the Gospel permeate the way we see, think and act, as we work for the triumph of the civilization of love.”[30]

Spirit of Truth – Lesson and Discussion

“But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth”

At the Last Supper in John 15:26-27 and 16:12-15, Jesus not only gives us the Sacrament of the Eucharist, but also promises the coming of the Holy Spirit. By allowing the Holy Spirit to come, Jesus allows us to enter into the sacredness of the Kingdom of God. When the Holy Spirit descends on the Apostles like tongues of fire, it “signifies the new brightness which the Holy Spirit sheds on the doctrine of Jesus Christ: ‘When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth...He will glorify me, for He will take what is mine and declare it to you’[31]”.[32]

Why does Jesus “breathe” on the Apostles? “In the Old Testament the action of the Holy Spirit is often intimated by the word *breath*. This expresses both the gentleness and the strength of divine love. There is nothing subtler than the wind, which manages to penetrate everywhere, even to reach inanimate bodies and give them a life of their own. The rushing wind of the day of Pentecost expresses the new force with which divine love invades the Church and souls.”[33]

MOVIE - Twister: Cow Scene - POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 1:17

http://youtu.be/uJIPTU_kmk

MUSIC - Summer Breeze by Jason Mraz – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 3:30

<http://youtu.be/wJoLG3JQj6>

We often see the power of what wind can do. It can spawn vicious storms but also bring relief. Think of a hot day when all you want is a little breeze to cool off. This is what the Holy Spirit provides. The Holy Spirit is powerful enough to create something

to keep walking during hard times and to lead others to walk on the road of faith toward heaven.

We are given the gifts of Fortitude that strengthens us to do the will of God in all things despite fear and obstacles. Wisdom which gives us a longing and love for the things of God and directs our whole life and all our actions to His honor and Glory; Understanding enables us to know more clearly the mystery of faith; Knowledge which enables us to discover the will of God in all things (what should I do?); Piety which makes us love God as a Father and obey Him because we love Him. This helps us to have reverence and to pray well (As we pray, we believe); Fear of the Lord which fills us with a dread of sin, and a dread of offending, hurting God and others through our sin; Counsel which warns us of the deceits of the devil and of the dangers to our salvation.

Activity - Gifts of the Holy Spirit Survey

Please see the Activity Sheet “Gifts of the Holy Spirit Survey” in the document section on the Packet Page.

We are also given the fruits of the Holy Spirit including Charity, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Fidelity (Faith), Modesty, Self-Control and Chastity.[47]

[See Link to Liturgy Lesson - Fruits of the Holy Spirit

We have claim or title to divine assistance for the rest of our lives; this means that we can always call upon God to help us. We can remind God that through Confirmation He promised us strength that we can always call upon and use This gift is perpetual which means it is not just for one day, but is there whenever you need it. The strength available at all times will help you to courageously confess the name of Christ and carry your Cross. Psalm 92 says, “To me you give the wild-ox’s strength; you anoint me with the purest oil (we are anointed at Confirmation and the Bishop says be sealed with the Holy Spirit). My eyes looked in triumph on my foes; my ears heard gladly of their fall.” You are given the strength to do battle against the enemies of Salvation

We are strengthened in our role as prophet, priest and king, which we were given at baptism. Prophet or teacher – we adhere to the true faith, profess the faith we communicate the faith. Priest – we accept suffering as Christ did, we are willing to do

the difference between playing baseball in the minor leagues and making it to the big leagues, like the difference between playing Junior Varsity or starting for Varsity.

“Confirmation makes the Christian a soldier, and marks him with a new character which is, as it were, the military credentials of the souls in perpetual warfare with God’s enemies. This character will remain in the life to come, ‘just,’ says St. Thomas, ‘as the status of a soldier remains after the victory, to the glory of the conquerors and the shame of the conquered.’”[46] We think of the Church as a country. Those that are baptized are the citizens, those confirmed are the soldiers and those that ordained are commanders. The commanders are to direct all the faithful but especially the soldiers (the confirmed). The soldiers should protect and defend the citizens (all the baptized). **How do the confirmed protect and defend the baptized?** By living and teaching the faith and morals, by avoiding evil and scandal and pursuing good, the call of holiness.

We are sealed with the Holy Spirit, this means that we are sealed, marked for eternal life; we are anointed for a purpose, for God, for heaven. We have an indelible mark forever on our soul, the same permanent mark that is given at baptism and holy orders. At Confirmation, an indelible mark is put on the soul. This is a mark that is permanent and eternal. The faithful also have an indelible mark put on the soul at Baptism. We can imagine the autopsy of a soul, if there is one indelible mark it means the soul was baptized, if two they were baptized and confirmed. **What if there are three?** This means that the baptized and confirmed soul also was ordained. The indelible marks are link ranks. The faithful are all equal in dignity but our roles different as our ranks differ.

We must get confirmed to enter into a sacramental marriage. Can. 1065 §1. Catholics who have not yet received the sacrament of confirmation are to receive it before they are admitted to marriage if it can be done without grave inconvenience.

The imparting of the Spirit is given to us; this means we have the infused virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. Faith, Hope and Charity direct your whole life. Hope is the goal, helping you keep your eyes on the finish line, heaven. Faith is our tool and guide; it is the right road which takes us to heaven and charity, is the action of having the courage to actually walk on the road,

incredible, but also comes to us as a cool breeze to enlighten and empower us on our journey.

COMMERCIAL – Allstate: Tree Branch Mayhem – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 0:32

<http://youtu.be/4G8JZwh5ZH>

Think of how important wind is for the life of a tree. If there are dead branches on the tree, it is the wind during the next storm that will break the dead, useless branches off the tree. The branches need the wind to stay strong and grow properly. Our legs need exercise to stay strong, grow, and function properly. Wind is the exercise that keeps branches in motion, so they stay strong, grow and function properly. Remember Jesus tells us that we are the branches. The branches need the Holy Spirit to survive and the branches produce fruit, the fruit of the Holy Spirit. We can think of the activity of the Holy Spirit as exercise for the soul. The activity of the Holy Spirit helps our soul stay strong, grow, and function. It is the gust of the Holy Spirit that breaks off the dead and useless areas of life (sin) so that we are no weighed down.

Why does the Holy Spirit have to come after Jesus? The Holy Spirit did not just come once at Pentecost, but continually descends on the Church and sanctifies every soul. The Holy Spirit has obviously been a part of this world and has worked through people. For example, the Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary at the Incarnation. This event in salvation history is remembered in the gestures of the priest at the consecration during Mass. Just before the priest says, “take this, all of you, and eat of it” and “take this, all of you, and drink from it”, he slightly bows. This slight bow causes a shadow to be over the body and blood. This action represents the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. However, the Holy Spirit was not yet present in His fullness, prior to Pentecost Jesus had to establish the Kingdom of God before the Holy Spirit could work in it. Jesus said, “But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming.” This was regarding the interpretation of what had already occurred and been said by Christ.[34]

As we profess in our Creed, the Holy Spirit “proceeds from the Father”. We know this because Jesus tells us that the Holy Spirit is sent from God the Father, but is requested by Christ.[35] Both the Father and Son send the Spirit for God’s mission: the Kingdom of God and saving souls.

How is the Holy Spirit “the truth”? The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity, thus the Holy Spirit is fully God. The Holy Spirit is the same full truth that Jesus testifies that He Himself is[36], and the same truth as God the Father. Jesus speaks of the truth of the Good News and that it will be fully expounded when the Spirit comes. Once it is appointed to them, the Apostles will then go and spread the Good News and the Holy Spirit to everyone.

How does the Holy Spirit act in us today? The Holy Spirit is ever present in our lives. “...it is the Holy Spirit who, through his inspirations, gives a supernatural tone to our thoughts, desires, and actions. It is He who leads us to be receptive to Christ’s teaching and to assimilate it in a profound way. It is He who gives us the light by which we perceive our personal calling and the strength to carry out all that God expects of us.”[37]

“The Paraclete never ceases to act in our soul. Not a single aspiration do we say that is not inspired by the Holy Spirit[38], as St. Paul tells us in the second reading of the Mass. He is present and moves us in prayer, as we read the Gospel, when we discover new light through a piece of advice we have received, as we ponder upon a truth of faith which already perhaps we have often considered. We realize that this clarity does not depend upon our will. It does not come from us, but from God. It is the Holy Spirit who leads us gently to the Sacrament of Penance to confess our sins, to raise our heart to God at an unexpected moment, to carry out some particular work. It is He who suggests to us to make some small sacrifice, or finds for us the right words to inspire someone to be better.”[39] We can also do this by having a close relationship with our Mother Mary, who was filled with the Holy Spirit at the Incarnation and again at Pentecost where with the Apostles devoted themselves to prayer.[40]

Confirmation: Personal Pentecost – Lesson and Discussion

During the Rite of Confirmation just before the laying on of hands, the confirmandi profess a renewal of baptismal promises. All the statements are similar to the basic renewal of vows except the statement of the Holy Spirit. It says, “Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who came upon the apostles at Pentecost and today is given to you sacramentally in Confirmation?”[41] It is essential that we believe that the power of the Holy Spirit, who is the giver of life, is the same yesterday,

today and forever. We are receiving a personal Pentecost when we are confirmed, the same as the apostles. “From that time on the apostles, in fulfillment of Christ’s will, imparted to the newly baptized by the laying on of hands the gift of the Spirit that completes the grace of Baptism. For this reason in the Letter to the Hebrews the doctrine concerning Baptism and the laying on of hands is listed among the first elements of Christian instruction. The imposition of hands is rightly recognized by the Catholic tradition as the origin of the sacrament of Confirmation, which in a certain way perpetuates the grace of Pentecost in the Church.”[42]

What is Confirmation? Confirmation is the sacrament in which, through the laying on of hands, anointing with chrism, and prayer, the Holy Spirit strengthens those who are already baptized, in order that they may steadfastly profess the faith and faithfully live up to their profession.[43]

How is Confirmation our Pentecost? Just like at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles, at our Confirmation we receive the same Holy Spirit. We too receive the same graces, virtues, gifts, courage, and strength the Apostles received 2,000 year ago. Simply put, Confirmation is the Gift of Strength; it “strengthens the divine life within us.”[44]

What does the Holy Spirit do for us? He enlightens us so that we may know the truths of religion and salvation, and the beauty of virtue; The Holy Spirit moves us to desire, and seek with love these things; He renews our hearts by cleansing our sin, and finally gives us His supernatural gifts and fruits of holiness by which we can become sanctified.[45]

Why do we need to be confirmed? What do we get from Confirmation? Another way of asking this question is what am I missing out on if I don’t get confirmed? Here are some of the things we would be missing out on if we don’t get confirmed.

We become fully Catholic, and receive full admission into the Church. Without Confirmation, a person is not fully initiated into the Catholic Church. If we are not a full member, then we cannot receive the full benefits of belonging to the Body of Christ the Church. We are partially Catholic, maybe sixty percent or thirty percent. It would be like going to boot camp for the Marines and not completely all thirteen weeks. If someone completed only eleven weeks, they cannot say they are a Marine. It is