



# Parent Pages

## Preparing the environment of the Domestic Church\*

\* The term "Domestic Church" refers to the family, the smallest body of gathered believers in Christ. Though recovered only recently, the term dates back to the first century AD. The Greek word *ecclesiola* referred to "little church." The early Church understood that the home was fertile ground for discipleship, sanctification, and holiness.

# Family Feast of Pentecost

If your children have been in the Atrium for a year, they have experienced the Pentecost Celebration. In fact, your older children may delight in planning and leading this celebration for the family!

## Before the Celebration

- Red is the color for Pentecost. Your family prayer table may be covered with a red cloth. Use a red tablecloth or cloth napkin, a red placemat, or a red towel or scarf may be used. Your children can explore your house for the color red, the color of great love.
- A Bible opened to Acts of the Apostles 2:1-4. Who will proclaim? That person should practice reading these verses out loud.
- In the Atrium, we would have seven red candles, one candle for each of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We realize that you may not have any candles in your home, let alone seven red candles. If you have red ribbon, it could be tied around a white candle. Maybe your child(ren) could simply make a tag with red paper (approx. 3" x 1"), or using white paper, and color it red or decorate it with symbols of the Holy Spirit. The names of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are listed below:

**Wisdom  
Counsel  
Piety**

- You can make as many cards of each gift as persons in your family attending the celebration. Each set of cards with the same gift goes in front of each one of the seven candles (if you are able to find candles.)

**Understanding  
Fortitude (or Strength)**

**Fear of the Lord (or Awe)  
Knowledge**

## Family Feast of Pentecost

The celebration with the younger children is done in the following way:

There is a very short introduction:

"Jesus died and rose again from the dead. The disciples hadn't fully understood and so they were afraid and closed themselves up in their houses.



Jesus had promised that after his resurrection he would send the Holy Spirit.

In fact, while they were praying together, they saw something which seemed like flames of fire descending upon each of them. And they were transformed.

They went out to tell everyone that Jesus had risen.

In fact, fire transforms: what is cold becomes warm, what is hard becomes soft, what is dark becomes bright/luminous. The Holy Spirit transforms us with his gifts.

Today, we want to make a celebration. We will place a red tablecloth on the table. We will light seven candles. Each one of these represents a gift of the Holy Spirit. Afterwards each one of you will light a candle at the gift which you desire most to receive."

*Place the tablecloth and candles on the table. Place a card with the name of the gift before each candle and explain each with very few words. Give every child a candle and each one can light his candle at the "gift" of his choice. The names of the gifts can be repeated each time.*

*Sometimes, with very young children only the celebration can be done reminding them only: Sunday is the feast of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is like a fire. He gives us special gifts...*

## ***Gifts of the Holy Spirit***

*For the younger children, we simply announce the name of the gift. For the older child (ages 6-12) we begin by helping them think about the meaning of the gift and by finding what is most essential to share, maybe something similar to the following:*

**Wisdom** – The gift of knowing and recognizing God's goodness deep in our hearts. With the gift of wisdom comes knowing how to use the knowledge God has given us.

**Understanding** – The gift that sheds great light on us to know more about God. It helps us come closer to the mystery of God.

**Fear of the Lord** – This gift places us in the right relationship with God. Our place is before God, we are in front of the Mystery. This is a good fear, in Hebrew it would be "awe."

**Counsel** – The gift that helps us when we make good and loving decisions, so we know what should be done and how to do it.

**Fortitude** – The gift in our own spirit of becoming strong and faithful in God.

**Knowledge** – The gift of being able to know God more and more each day.

**Piety** – The gift of love, so we can love God and each other more and more each day.

## ***Prayers and Songs to the Holy Spirit***

*Offer any spontaneous prayers to the Holy Spirit. Sing songs to the Holy Spirit. See the songs available on our website.*

## *Living Pentecost at Home with the Family*

- Decorate your prayer table with a red cloth.
- Read the story of Pentecost found in the Acts of the Apostles 2:1-4 (for the 3-6 year old child) or Acts 2:1-11 (for the 6-12 year old child)
- Read Isaiah 11:2 – 3a. What does the prophet Isaiah have to do with Pentecost?
- Wear red on Pentecost Sunday (*May 31, 2020*)
- Take a photo of your family around your prayer table and share your family Pentecost photo on our CGSUSA Facebook page. Email your photo to [maryheinrich@cgsusa.org](mailto:maryheinrich@cgsusa.org)
- Since Pentecost is considered the “birthday” of the Church, celebrate with cupcakes or a cake (you are not obligated to have cake, but strawberries on top look like tongues of fire)
- Remember that gifts are given out of love to be enjoyed and used. How will our family enjoy these gifts individually and as a family? What will we need to remember when we use these gifts?
- At mealtime, discuss your “Holy Spirit Moments” of the day: when did you feel the presence of the Holy Spirit?
- When were you aware of the presence of a particular gift of the Holy Spirit at work in your day?
- If possible, enjoy the movement of the wind today, maybe fly a kite.

