

Sixth Sunday of Easter

I will not leave you on your own

INTRODUCTION

As Jesus shared the Last Supper with his apostles, he told them that soon he would be leaving them. They were frightened and upset by his words, but he promised to send someone to help them. He would not leave them on their own.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

As the candles are lit, the children listen to this reading by the prophet Isaiah:

The glory of God is shining on you! All other people will live in the shadows, but you will always have God's light to chase away the darkness. Other people will look at you and see the light of God's love shining out. (Isaiah 60:1-3)

SORRY

As we sing the words of the song, help us to be truly sorry if we have done wrong. Sing Sorry Song 1.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 4.

GOSPEL (JOHN 14:16-20)

One day Jesus said to his disciples, "I will not leave you on your own; I will ask my father to send you a helper who will stay with you always. The spirit of God will be with you and in you, though others will not be able to see him or know that he is there. He will fill you with wisdom and understanding. Soon the world will not see me again, but you will know that I am truly alive."

DISCUSSION

Jesus was going to leave his disciples and return to his heavenly father. Whom did he promise to send? A special helper: the Holy Spirit.

What would this helper look like? Jesus told them: "Others will not be able to see him or know that he is there." The Holy Spirit is one of the great mysteries of God. One way of describing

him is as being like the wind. Jesus said this about the Holy Spirit: "The wind blows wherever it pleases; you hear the sound it makes, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with the spirit of God." (John 3:8)

Why did Jesus send the Holy Spirit? Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus remained with the apostles, and he remains with us in the same way today. God sent his spirit to the apostles to begin the teaching of the Gospel throughout the world. The apostles knew that all the power and strength of their work lay in Jesus. They were useless without him and could not carry on with his work. Through the Holy Spirit he remained with them, and his work could continue.

When do we receive the Holy Spirit in a special way? At our baptism and confirmation. The spirit is God's gift to us, when he pours his love into our hearts. The word *spiritus* means breath or wind, and that is how we often describe God's spirit.

If someone asked you to describe the wind, what would you tell them?

—It cannot be seen, but we can see what it does, by making things move, trees bending and leaves blowing around.

—We can feel it as it blows against our skin.

—It can be very gentle or very powerful.

We cannot see the Spirit, but we can see what the Spirit does through the lives of people around us who allow him to guide their words and actions.

If you blew all of the air out of your body and did not breathe any more in, what would happen? Without breathing you cannot live. The Spirit is the breath of God, who fills us with life and makes us strong.

ACTIVITY

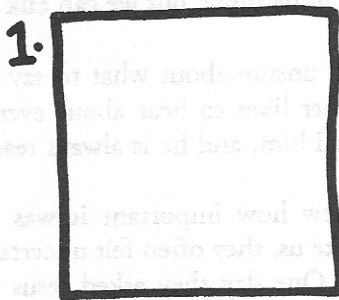
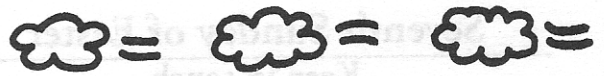
Help each child to make a windmill (pinwheel) to remind them that wind is one of the forms which the Spirit can take.

CREED

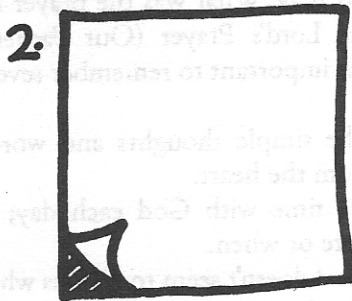
CLOSING PRAYER

Come, Holy Spirit,
and breathe your life into us,
so that we can bring Christ into the world
and touch the lives of others with his love.

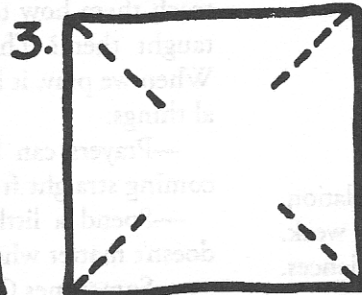
WINDMILL.



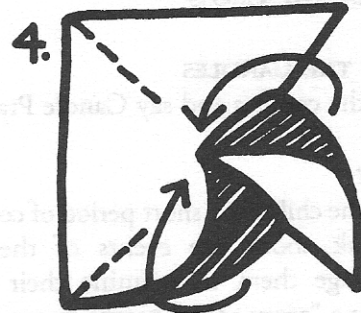
Two squares of differently coloured paper.



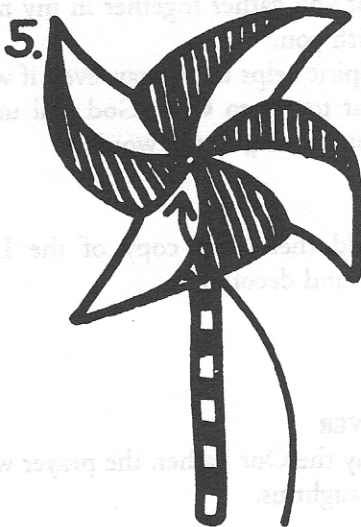
Stick the two sheets together.



Fold the paper diagonally and cut along the creases halfway to the centre.



Fold every other point into the middle of the square and glue.

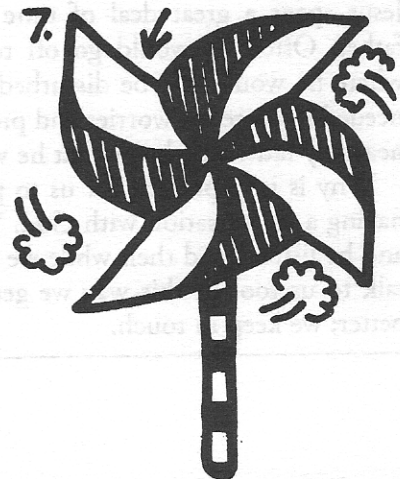


Push a butterfly pin through the middle and through a straw.



Open butterfly pin at back of straw.

Blow to make windmill turn.



FOCUSING: The Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, will be with us always.

Reflecting

"Good-bye. Have a good trip. We'll miss you. It's really sad to see you go." People leave for college, vacation, travel, or move to another town. There is always the fear and sadness that we will never see them again.

Jesus prepared the apostles for his leaving at his Ascension by telling them that they would never be left alone like orphans, but that the Spirit of Truth would come (Pentecost). It is this Spirit that helped them to know the presence of Jesus in their lives even when they were no longer able to see him with their eyes.

Jesus asked the apostles to love him and to follow his commandments, for this is the way to have life. This is the way to experience the love of the Father. There is only *one* commandment, the single command to love. If we love Jesus, then we have love for one another. When we live the values and commands Jesus lived in his own life—humility, joy, peace—we are doing the will of the Father.

It is also the Spirit of Truth who helps us to understand the presence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in our lives. Pentecost brings the Spirit and our confirmation seals us in that Spirit.

Talking

1. Talk about confirmation. Have each family or group member recall his or her own personal experience of this sacrament.
2. Share your answers:
 - What is your experience of how Jesus continues to reveal himself to us today?
 - What value that Jesus lived do you find the most attractive?
 - When is the promise of the Spirit of Truth most alive in you?
 - How comforting is it to you to live in the promise that the Holy Spirit will always be with us?

Doing

1. On a poster, make a list of the different commands that flow from the one single command to love.
2. Make your weekly Scripture symbol—a heart with a commandment table inside or a flame representing the Holy Spirit. Place it in your home display area or on your Celebrating the Gospels banner.

Praying

As a sign of the Spirit at our side, stand in a circle and place your hand on the shoulder of the person next to you. Offer a word of encouragement and support in living the life of the Spirit. Say the following prayer:

DEAR HOLY SPIRIT,
With your presence, we are not orphans.
Continue to enlighten us, protect us,
direct us and govern us always.
Amen.



BANNER SYMBOL

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Focus

A Bible open at today's Gospel reading and a jam jar with a night light burning inside.

Introduction

The disciples knew that Jesus would soon be returning to his heavenly Father and they were afraid. Jesus promised them that they would not be alone and reassured them that he would ask his heavenly Father to send someone very special who would be with them for ever.

Gloria

Gospel Acclamation

Light the Gospel candle and sing Acclamation 3

Gospel

A reading from the Gospel of St John (14:15-21)

Jesus said to his disciples, 'If you love me, you will obey the commandments I have given you. I will not leave you on your own; I will ask my Father to send you a helper who will stay with you always. The Spirit of God will be with you and in you, though others will not be able to see him or know that he is there. You will not be alone, and I will come back to you. Soon the world will not see me again, but you will know that I am truly alive, and, because of this, you too will truly live! Anyone who loves me follows my commandments, and my Father will love them, just as I love them, and they will come to know me.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection

Take a balloon and, as you slowly inflate it, ask the children to describe what happens as it fills with breath. Watch carefully as it begins to change in shape and move – and almost seems to come to life!

Now ask the children to close their eyes and think about their own breathing. Get them to place their hands lightly on their ribcage or chests. As they slowly breathe in and out, encourage them to feel their chest rise and fall as their lungs fill and empty with breath. (They can now open their eyes.)

What happens if you let go of a balloon that is filled with breath? (Demonstrate!)

What happens when a person stops breathing?

Without breath, our bodies are starved of oxygen and we die. We become as lifeless as an empty balloon. The word 'Spiritus' means breath or wind, and it is God's Holy Spirit who breathes his life into our lives.

Look at the candle flame burning in the jar. What do you think might happen when the lid is placed on top of the jar?

(Place the lid on top and allow the flame to be extinguished).

Why did the flame go out?

Without oxygen the candle cannot continue to burn and the flame dies. Our hearts glow with warmth and shine with the light of God's goodness and love. The Holy Spirit keeps that flame of love alight and alive with his life-giving breath.

Activity

Let each child choose a coloured balloon (already inflated). Help them to write their name on a name tag before decorating it and attaching it to a length of ribbon or string tied to each balloon.

OR

Give a jam jar to each child, together with a piece of blutack or plasticene and a night light. Help them to make their own lanterns which can be decorated with self-adhesive shapes to remind them that the Holy Spirit keeps God's love alight and burning in our hearts.

Intercessions

As brothers and sisters in one loving family, together let us pray to our heavenly Father:

We pray for our brothers and sisters throughout the world; may the Holy Spirit help us to share what we have with those who have nothing.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for peace in our world; may the Holy Spirit give us the strength and courage we need to forgive and to be forgiven.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for anyone who feels alone or afraid; may the Holy Spirit help us to fill their lives with friendship and love.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for everyone who follows in the footsteps of Christ; may the Holy Spirit show us the way to love one another.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

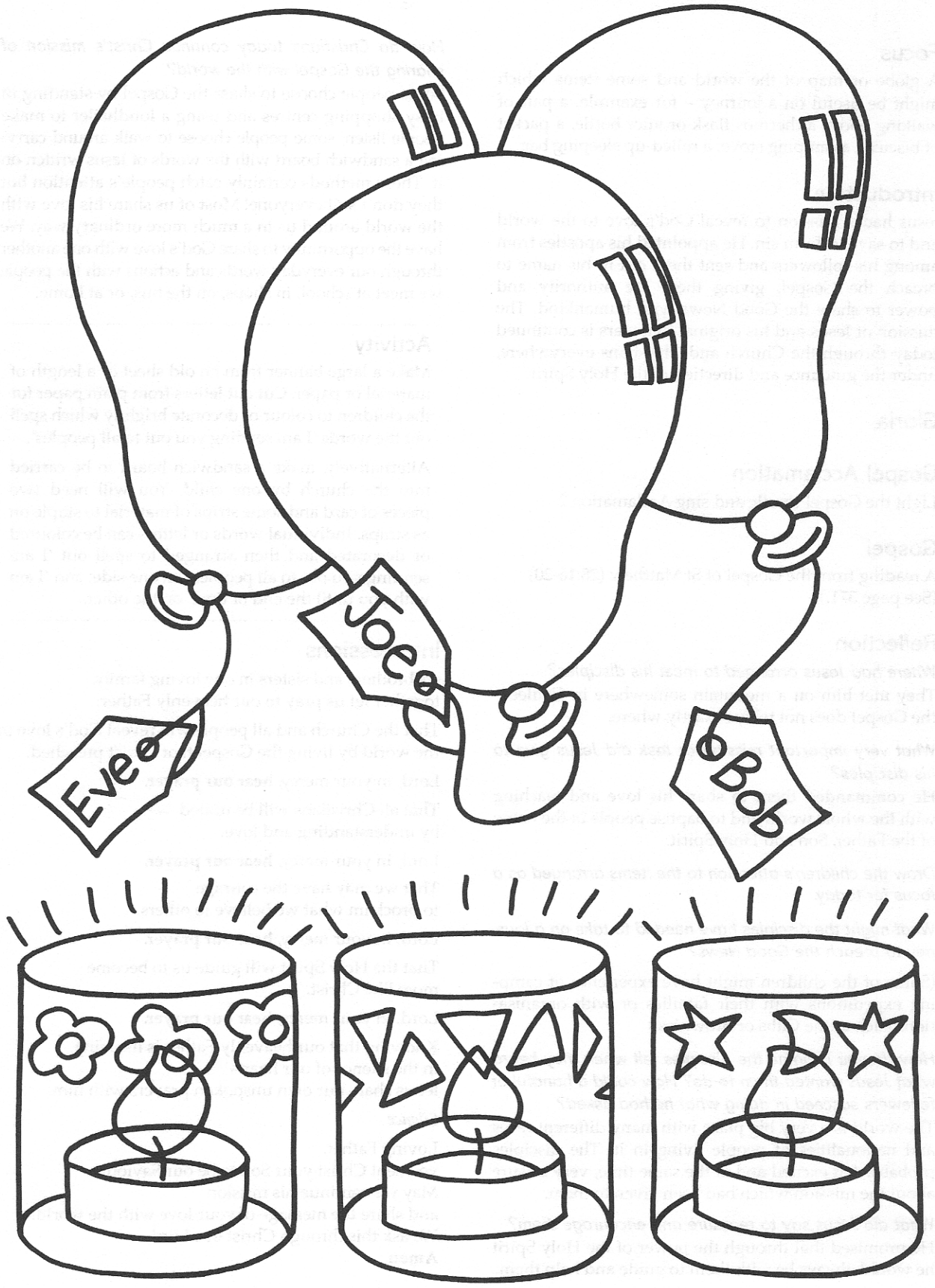
Knowing that our heavenly Father is listening, in the silence of our hearts, let us share our own unspoken prayers with him.

Silence

Loving Father,
let your Spirit fill us with your life
and make our hearts burn
with the flame of faith and love.
Grant this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Ascension of the Lord (Years A, B and C)



THINK and **LOOK** ahead

• STEP BY STEP •

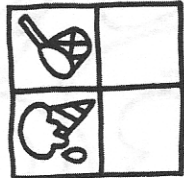
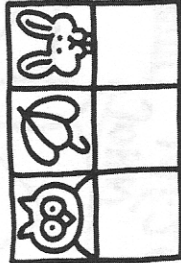
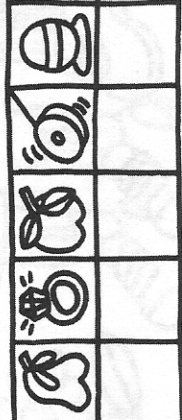
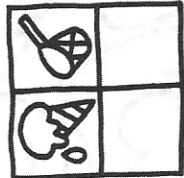
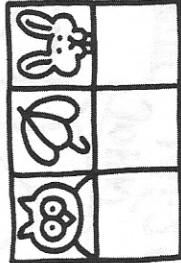
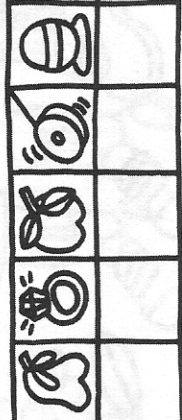
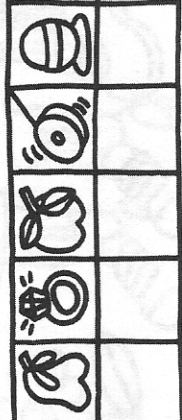
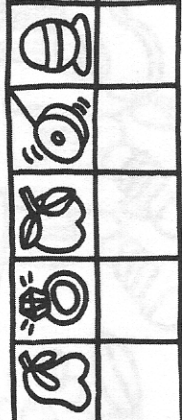
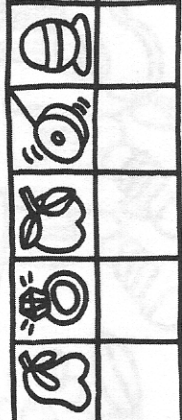
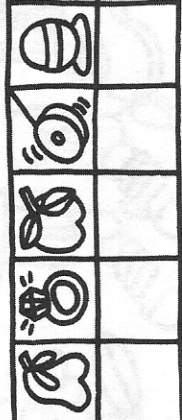
SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER, YEAR A

You will not be alone

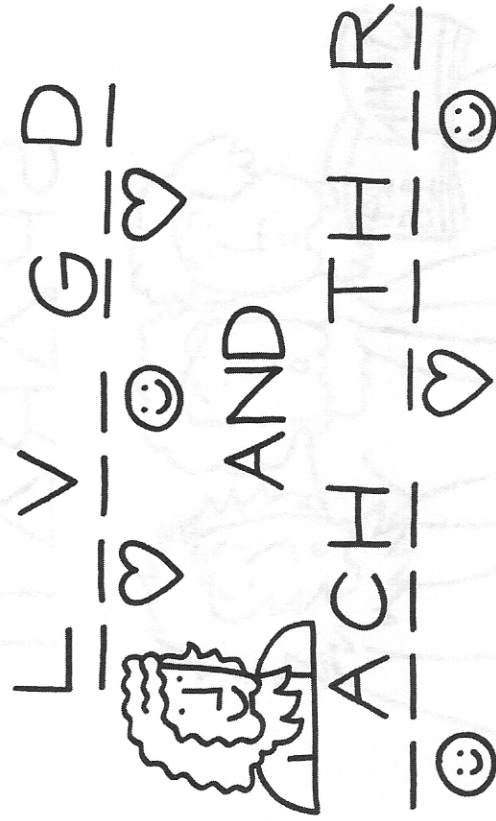
JOHN 14:15-21

How do we talk to Jesus?

Write the letter of each picture in the box

Use this code to find out what Jesus wants us to do



Jesus would not leave the disciples alone!

Who would he send?

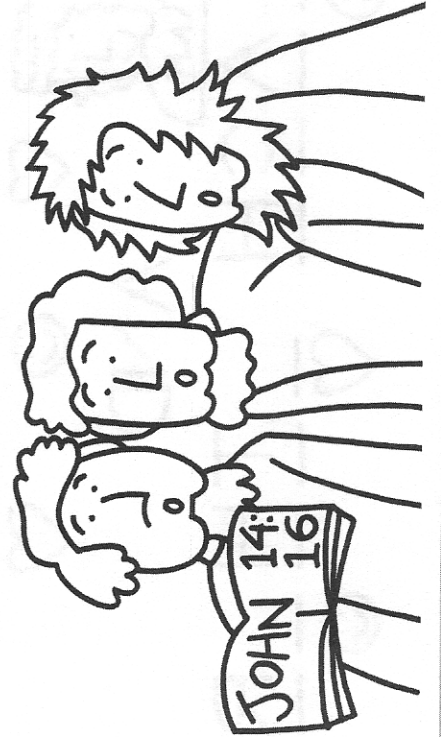
Match the letters and shapes



T E E

□ O L Y

S P △ R A T I



Through the Holy Spirit
Jesus lives in us!

Color this picture

