

# THE CAUSE

A Small Group Edge Night on the Holy Spirit

## SMALL GROUP EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE

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### Scripture

John 14:15-17, 25-27; Galatians 5:22-23



### Catechism

687-690, 729, 733-736

## GOAL

The goal of this Small Group Edge Night is to introduce the youth to the Holy Spirit and what He does.

## ENGAGE

The youth play a game where they have to get their core member to guess a random word that they hold to their forehead, one of the words being “Holy Spirit.” The purpose of this game is for the youth to have fun and for the core member to see how the youth try to describe the Holy Spirit.

## REFLECT

The core members discuss the following main ideas:

- While the Holy Spirit may seem mysterious, the Church reveals that He is the third person of the Trinity.

- Through different elements of the Church — Scripture, tradition, liturgy, prayers, and the sacraments — the faith of the apostles is passed down to us, and it is through the Church that we come to know the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit helps us understand who Jesus is, the things He taught, and the great love He has for us.

## RESPOND

The youth go around the church with their small group to look for symbols of the Holy Spirit or things that represent the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Small Group Edge Night ends with the Come, Holy Spirit prayer. The purpose of this activity is for the youth to begin to recognize all the ways the Holy Spirit is present and working in the Church.

## WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Find one thing this week outside of the church that represents the Holy Spirit.

## SUPPLIES

Each small group needs the following supplies:

- Ten sticky notes with a random word written on each (made before the Small Group Edge Night)
- Paper
- Writing utensils

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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## SMALL GROUP EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

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### ENGAGE

#### Introduction (10 min)

Welcome the youth, introduce any youth who are there for the first time, and begin in prayer. Give a brief overview of the Small Group Edge Night using the following as an example:

*Pentecost shifted history. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the apostles were transformed and went forth from the upper room boldly proclaiming the good news of the love of Jesus that brings us new life. The Holy Spirit not only caused a shift in the hearts of the apostles but continued to transform the lives of countless others through the apostles — to the point that many of the first followers of Christ, and even Christians today, were killed for their unwavering faith in Jesus. The Holy Spirit moves and works in our lives. If we trust in the Holy Spirit, He can be the cause of necessary and exciting shifts in our lives.*

#### Weekly Challenge Check In (5 min)

Ask any youth who are willing to share their experience with the weekly challenge from the previous Small Group Edge Night: Share your proclamation of Jesus' love with one person this week.

#### Prayer Assignment (5 min)

After beginning the small group in prayer, ask for one youth to volunteer to close the small group time in prayer at the end of the Small Group Edge Night. This prayer will be the Come, Holy Spirit prayer. By assigning this role at the

beginning of the small group time, you give the youth time to prepare and prevent them from being put on the spot.



#### Hispanic Inculturation

Keep in mind that some Hispanic/Latino youth may have learned the Come Holy Spirit prayer in Spanish. Allow the youth to lead the prayer in Spanish if they are more comfortable. Alternatively, have printed copies of the prayer in English for the youth to read from or allow the youth to pull it up on their phone if needed.

#### Holy Spirit Headbands (10 min)

Before the Small Group Edge Night, the youth minister or core members writes ten random words on sticky notes for each small group. The last sticky note in the stack must be "Holy Spirit." The core member should not see these words ahead of time.

1. The core member takes the first sticky note off the stack and puts it up to his or her forehead, so the word faces the small group.
2. The youth in the small group try to get the core member to guess the word without actually saying the word.
3. Once the core member gets the word correct, they move on to the next word.
4. Play until all of the sticky notes have been used or time runs out, but make sure to use the final word, Holy Spirit. (*Keep in mind the words the youth use to describe the Holy Spirit to inform you on what to focus on during the teaching and discussion.*)

Use the following words or create your own:

- Watermelon
- Youtube
- Flower
- iPhone
- Hydroflask
- School bus
- Fork
- Chair
- Elephant
- Holy Spirit

## REFLECT

### “The Cause” Teaching Reflection (20 min)

Use the following as a guide for a time of reflection:

#### The Cause

When significant events shift history, there is usually a reason and a group of people who put the change into effect. Most of the time there is a cause that people are fighting for, whether it is freedom, equal rights, or just the desire for new inventions that make daily life better. People rally around a common idea or goal, and they seek to make a change for their cause.

Jesus’ entire life had a cause: to redirect us from death to life by restoring our relationship with God. He invited people into this new way of life and then handed on this cause to all those who followed Him. The apostles and all followers of Jesus are given a new mission to give new life to others and encourage them to then invite others into the mission, as well. This mission is to make disciples of all nations by baptizing them and teaching them all Jesus taught. (Matthew 28:19-20)

- What is a cause you are currently passionate about or think a lot of people your age are passionate about?
- Do you think the apostles accomplished the mission Jesus gave them? Why?

The Holy Spirit was always with Jesus in His mission, and the Holy Spirit is always the one to ignite us in the cause that is given to us by God. The Holy Spirit was and is always actively working to bring about the plans of God for the salvation of the whole world. One of the main ways we can learn more about the Holy Spirit is through Scripture. The Holy Spirit never speaks in Scripture, but He is present through it all. The Holy Spirit was moving over the water during creation (Genesis 1:2), the Holy Spirit was there when Mary became the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:35), the Holy Spirit was present throughout Jesus’ ministry (Matthew 3:16), the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), and the Holy Spirit is continually at work in the Church. The Holy Spirit is always at work with God because the Holy Spirit is God.

Since the time of Pentecost, there have been countless, brilliant men and women within the Church who have diligently studied both Scripture and tradition to understand who the Holy Spirit is. The Church definitively teaches that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. The Trinity is the mystery of one God in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Trinity is a relationship of persons: the Father begets the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the love that is shared between the Father and the Son. They are three distinct persons but inseparable as one God.

- What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of the Holy Spirit?
- If you could have been present for any of the Holy Spirit moments we mentioned, which one would you choose and why?
- If you pray, do you usually pray to the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit? Why? If you do not pray, which person of the Trinity would be easiest for you to start praying to? Why?

## Our Cause, Too

The mission Jesus gave to the apostles is also our mission. We are a part of this cause to share the good news of Jesus' love and the new life He brings with the whole world. Just like the apostles needed the Holy Spirit to accomplish this mission, Jesus knew we would need the Holy Spirit, too. He knew we would not just need information about the Holy Spirit but actual, tangible ways to encounter the Holy Spirit as well as a way for the Holy Spirit to be poured out into our hearts like at Pentecost.

- What is your favorite movie that includes some sort of mission for the main characters?
- Have you ever considered yourself to be a part of the mission Jesus gave to the disciples?

It is through the Catholic Church that the faith of the apostles is passed down to us, and it is through prayer and the Church that we experience and come to know the Holy Spirit. We learn about the Holy Spirit through Scripture. In the stories of the Bible, we see the Holy Spirit moving and learn about the love of God and His plan to save us through the words and teachings of Jesus. One way to encounter the Holy Spirit is through reading the Bible, and one of the best places to start is the Gospels, specifically the Gospel of Mark.

Through prayer we also come to personally know the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is with us in our prayer and teaches us to pray. Prayer is central to our relationship with God, and through prayer we continue to grow in our spiritual life. If you struggle to pray or have never prayed, start with prayers like the Our Father and Hail Mary, or you can simply pray, "Come, Holy Spirit."

We also experience and come to know the Holy Spirit in a tangible way through the Church and the seven sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Holy Orders, Matrimony, and Anointing of the Sick). Each sacrament gives specific graces to those who receive it and puts those who

are receiving it in greater communion with God. You may have already received some of the sacraments and the graces that go along with them, or maybe you have seen others receive them. Mass is one of the best places for us to encounter the Holy Spirit and Jesus, which is why it is important that we go to Mass every week. Going to confession is another way to encounter the Holy Spirit and love of God. (*Let the youth know when confession is offered at your parish.*)

- What is your favorite thing to do with your friends?
- Do you think you can have a relationship with God just like you have a relationship with a friend? Why?
- What is one thing you can do this week to grow in your relationship with God?

## Daily Life

The Holy Spirit is present to us in many ways, transforming us just like the first apostles were transformed. The transformation the apostles experienced was not just a moment, as the course of their whole lives was changed. It was not just a really cool experience with the Holy Spirit; they understood that they were now a part of Jesus' mission and the Holy Spirit would always be with them. This is what the Holy Spirit does in our lives, too. He transforms us by reminding us of everything Jesus did for us and the love God has for us.

*Read John 14:25-26.*

The Holy Spirit helps us remember that God loves us and always takes care of us. It is through the Holy Spirit that we are ignited in the cause that Jesus has handed down to us to not only redirect our lives from death to life by restoring our relationship with God but also invite others to do the same. The Holy Spirit gives us the courage to do this; when we trust in Him, we learn how to make purposeful shifts in our lives that lead us closer to God. These shifts could be small like shifting around your time so you can read the

Bible or pray, or it might be shifting the way you view your siblings and treating them with more kindness and love. It could even be bigger shifts like giving up a sport that made it hard for you to go to Mass on Sundays or shifting away from friends who are a bad influence. When we know and understand the promises of God, we can come to trust God and His plans for our lives in the small actions as well as the big plans for our future.

- What movie or TV show represents love best? Why?
- What difference does love make in our lives?
- Would trusting in God change the way you live your life? How so?

The Holy Spirit is present to us each day and transforms our lives through the love of Jesus. The Holy Spirit reminds us that we are loved. He reminds us of everything Jesus said and did for us. Even though the Holy Spirit may seem mysterious, He is real and powerful. The Holy Spirit is a great gift that has been given to us by Jesus to help and guide us each and every day. If you are struggling in your faith, ask the Holy Spirit to help you; if you are unsure of what to do in any given situation, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you; if you are doubting the love and goodness of God, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth to you. Through the Holy Spirit we are restored, transformed, and called forward, always toward the goodness and love of Jesus.

- If you could have one person by your side at all times, who would you choose?
- In what area of your life do you need the Holy Spirit most right now?
- What is one way your daily life could change if you asked the Holy Spirit for help?



### Hispanic Inculturation

At times, well-meaning people will say things that are hurtful or create more confusion in the lives of Hispanic/Latino youth who are caught in between cultures. Some youth may have heard something like, “We are Catholic first, and [insert race/ethnicity] second.” This can create more tension in those who deeply identify with a particular ethnic group because it suggests that their identities as children of God and Hispanic/Latino are in conflict with each other. Whether or not the youth have heard this exact statement firsthand, help combat these confusing narratives by reminding them that a relationship with the Holy Spirit will never require them to deny their culture, language, or race/ethnicity; instead, it will guide them to integrate those aspects of who they are into their lives as children of God.

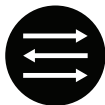
## RESPOND

### Hidden Presence Activity (20 min)

Take your small group into the church sanctuary or around the parish campus to see how many things they can find that have to do with the Holy Spirit. They can be more obvious things like pictures of the Holy Spirit, but challenge the youth to think about the hidden realities where the Holy Spirit is at work, particularly in the sacraments (e.g., the baptismal font, the oil for anointing, the altar where the Eucharistic sacrifice takes place, the ambo where God’s Word is proclaimed, the priest, the statues or images of Mary who was filled with the Holy Spirit).

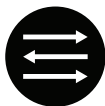
They should write down what they found at each place that has to do with the Holy Spirit and be able to explain why.

After the youth have spent 15 minutes searching, gather as a large group and invite each small group to share their list. Award a prize to the small group that found the most items or the small group who had the most creative answers.



**Suggestions**

Before the Small Group Edge Night, go around the church and make a list of how many things there are and give the youth a target to reach such as, “We found at least ten things, can you find that many or more?”



**Suggestions**

If you are unable to go with your small group to your parish for this activity, lead the youth through a time of visio divina using the art piece “If we surrender to him, the Holy Spirit will fill our souls with light, love, purity, peace, and power” by Elizabeth Wang. Allow them to take some time to look at the image and then discuss how the different elements in the artwork represent who the Holy Spirit is.



**Step It Up**

Create a scavenger hunt with clues that lead the youth to each element in the church.

**Come, Holy Spirit Prayer (5 min)**

End the Small Group Edge Night by allowing the youth who was chosen at the beginning of the small group time to close in prayer, using the Come, Holy Spirit prayer below. Following the prayer, give the youth their weekly challenge.

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.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ, our Lord, amen.

**Weekly Challenge**

Find one thing this week outside of the church that represents the Holy Spirit.

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