Level: 4
Title: PENTECOST – CELEBRATING THE SPIRIT
Strand: CHURCH: Body of Christ, community of disciples, witness to unity and justice.
Suggested Duration: 5 weeks

Unit Focus
This unit explores the liturgical celebration of Pentecost as the coming of the Spirit to the followers of Jesus. Students will develop an understanding of fire, wind and tongues as the symbols of Pentecost taken from the Old Testament. The students will develop an understanding of the promise Jesus made to his disciples to send the Holy Spirit to help them carry on his mission.

Level Outcome
By the end of Level Four students should be able to:

Describe the Church as being empowered by the Holy Spirit to be a sign of hope, reconciliation and service to the world.

Unit Outcomes
By the end of the unit students should be able to:

1. Identify the meaning of the feast of Pentecost.
2. Identify the role the Holy Spirit played in the lives of early Christians.
3. Describe the ways in which the Holy Spirit is active in today’s world.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRAND</th>
<th>DOCTRINAL CONCEPTS</th>
<th>CATECHISM REFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jesus Christ</td>
<td>2. In His life, death and resurrection Jesus reveals the saving love of God and gives hope to the world.</td>
<td>653, 654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. The Holy Spirit, gift of Jesus, inspires and renews the Church community to live as Jesus did.</td>
<td>737</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>1. The Church is empowered by the Holy Spirit and founded on the living faith of the early Christians.</td>
<td>764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. At Pentecost the Church celebrates her beginnings and renews her mission to live the Reign the God</td>
<td>767</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Understandings for Students
- Pentecost comes from the Greek word, “fiftieth.”
- Pentecost is celebrated on the 50th day after Easter.
- The origin of the time of Pentecost in the liturgical calendar seems to be linked with the Jewish Feast of Weeks.
- Pentecost celebrates the coming of the Spirit to the followers of Jesus.
- The historical Jesus has departed but his presence is alive through the energy of the Spirit.
- Symbols of Christian Pentecost are:
  - Fire: sign of God’s presence.
  - Wind: Breath of God - Ruah - a creative force.
  - Tongues: Speaking so that people of different languages can understand.
- The Spirit empowers people of every race and culture to understand the Good News.

Curriculum Links - VELS
Victorian Essential Learning Standards
Pentecost-Celebrating the Spirit can be used to assess a range of VELS. The table below gives examples of how Level 4 standards could be assessed. Those Standards identified with (P) are possible outcomes depending on work undertaken by students.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Key elements of Standards Students…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical, Personal and Social Learning</td>
<td>Interpersonal Development</td>
<td>Building Social Relationships</td>
<td>“They accept and display empathy for the points of view and feelings of their peers and others.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civics and Citizenship</td>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td>“students demonstrate understanding of the roles and responsibilities of leaders, and of democratic processes, when engaging in school and community activities.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Interdisciplinary Learning”</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Listening, Viewing and Responding</td>
<td>“students ask clarifying questions about ideas and information they listen to and view. They develop interpretations of the content and provide reasons for them.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presenting</td>
<td></td>
<td>“students summarise ideas and organise ideas and information logically and clearly in a range of presentations”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“identify features of an effective presentation and adapt elements of their own presentation to reflect them.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Design, Creativity and Technology (P)</td>
<td>Investigating and Designing</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Individually and in teams, they use a range of methods to collect data and generate ideas in response to design briefs”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Producing</td>
<td></td>
<td>“select and work safely with a variety of materials/ingredients and systems components to produce functional products and/or systems”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“operate tools and equipment competently, showing consideration of safety and hygiene”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“select and work safely with a range of tools and equipment”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analysing and Evaluating</td>
<td></td>
<td>“students reflect on their designs as they develop them and use evaluation criteria, identified from design briefs, to justify their design choices.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td>“develop their own questions for investigation. They collect relevant information from a range of sources and make judgements about its worth”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“generate imaginative solutions when solving problems”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“use a broad range of thinking processes and tools and reflect on and evaluate their effectiveness.”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note (P) = possible, depending on work undertaken by the student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum Framework Context</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Level 5</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Celebrating the Gift of the Spirit</td>
<td>Pentecost - Celebrating the Spirit</td>
<td>The Church, Then and Now</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Context

By Level Four, students see themselves as members of a community that extends well beyond their family and immediate surroundings. They have some understanding of the notion of other times, other places and other kinds of societies. They enjoy stories of past and present events. Students will be able to identify with introductory historical concepts and symbols found in the Old and New Testaments.

Students should be able to use the processes of inquiry with more precision as they reflect on what they have learnt. In practical terms, they can gather and organise evidence from print materials, compare, summarise and present conclusions. It is important to remember that students need to be able to master the tasks set for them.

Theological Background for Teachers

- The word Pentecost means fiftieth day from the Passover. Counting the Sundays at each end of the seven weeks, it is the fiftieth day from Easter.
- The origin of the time of Pentecost in the liturgical calendar seems to be linked with the Jewish Feast of Weeks (Shavuot). In Exodus 23:16 we read of the harvest festival which commemorated the conclusion of the harvest season. In Jewish rituals this feast gradually began to be regarded as a festival for giving thanks for the giving of the Law and a renewal of the covenant. The synagogue was decorated with harvest symbols such as plants, wheat and flowers. Prayers were recited as thanksgiving for the law and the covenant made to Abraham, Noah and Moses on behalf of the Hebrew people.
- Later, Christians included in their worship the Old Testament reading from Numbers 11:24-30, the incident of the Spirit resting upon the seventy elders of Israel when they were wandering in the wilderness with Moses.
- The Hebrew people used the word Ruah to describe the Spirit, a word meaning spirit and breath. They identified the Spirit as the life-giving breath of God. The same spirit is active in the Church today.
- With Pentecost came a special outpouring of the Spirit, as the fruit of Christ’s death and Resurrection.
- The experience of the Holy Spirit is described as being like the rush of a mighty wind and as of fire, distributed and resting on each of them (Acts 2).
- The Spirit empowers and teaches the disciples, and reveals to the Church the mysteries of God, inspires prophecy, is the giver of wisdom, encouragement, joy, hope and love.

Scripture

Teacher References NRSV

**Isa 42:1-4 The Servant, a Light to the Nations**

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice on the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

Student References NRSV

**Ex 34:22**

You shall observe the festival of weeks, the first fruits of wheat harvest, and the festival of ingathering at the turn of the year.

**Deut 16:10-11 The Festival of Weeks Reviewed**

Then you shall keep the festival of weeks for the LORD your God, contributing a freewill offering in proportion to the blessing that you have received from the LORD your God. Rejoice before the LORD your God—you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female slaves, the Levites resident in your towns, as well as the strangers, the orphans, and the widows who are among you—at the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name.

**Jn 14:16-17 The Promise of the Holy Spirit**

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him.
You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

**Acts 2:1-4 Pentecost**

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

**Acts 2:42-47 Life Among the Believers**

They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

### Suggested Assessment Tasks

Assessment strategies for this unit may include:

**Outcome 1 Identify the meaning of the feast of Pentecost.**
- Locate and record information on the festival of Shavuot (Festival of Weeks).
- Construct a concept map about the feast of Pentecost, drawing on the events described in Scripture and from other sources.

**Outcome 2 Identify the role the Holy Spirit played in the lives of early Christians.**
- Interview a member of an early Christian Community for a current affairs program based on the reading – Acts 2:42-47
- Students identify how the Holy Spirit was at work in the Community as presented in Acts 2:42-47. List the activities of the early Christians and name which Fruits of the Spirit (appendix 1) are evident in their actions.

**Outcome 3 Describe the ways in which the Holy Spirit is active in today’s world.**
- Students write an exposition in response to the statement: “Like the early Christians, the Catholic Church continues ‘Jesus’ mission today.”

**N.B.** Outcomes 1 & 3 lend themselves to reporting in the dimension of Knowledge and Understanding.

### Suggested Teaching & Learning Experiences

**Focusing Activity**

Display the word “SPIRIT” in large letters on a poster. Brainstorm or mindmap what we mean by Spirit using discussion of school spirit, team spirit, love of country, the spirit of a person shown in what he/she does and so forth.

- A unit of work is available at: [http://www.culham.ac.uk/Pentecost/index.html](http://www.culham.ac.uk/Pentecost/index.html)
  
  This extensive investigation of Pentecost is based on the English curriculum and special encouragement is given to the use of ICT, with links to all recommended sites. Activities include:
    - Explore Jewish traditions associated with Pentecost (Exodus 34:22 and Deuteronomy 16:10-11).
    - Use this link to find information on the Festival of Shavuot (Festival of Weeks).

- Use a website such as Bible Gateway - [http://www.biblegateway.com/cgi-bin/bible](http://www.biblegateway.com/cgi-bin/bible) - or a Concordance, to find references in the Old Testament to ‘flame’ and ‘wind’. Write them down and compare the occasions when they were used. Discuss what the writers were trying to ‘say’ when they used these words?

- Imagine being one of the people gathered in the upper room awaiting the gift of the Holy Spirit. Write an account of the event from a personal perspective.
In order to retell the story of Pentecost students Create a Liquid Picture of Acts 2:1-4.

Read Acts 2:42-47. Find out how the Holy Spirit was at work in this early Christian community. Be a reporter and write an article for a newspaper describing the actions of the Christian community. Name the fruits of the Spirit evident in the way they lived.

Use Rina Wintour’s chorus play Love and Be Loved to bring out the message of Acts 2:42-47 linking it to the mission of Jesus and therefore the mission of all Christians.

Read John 14:16-17. Respond to following questions: What promise did Jesus make? Why did he make that promise? What does it mean for you? How did Jesus keep that promise?

How do Christians carry out the mission of Jesus in our world? How do we see the Holy Spirit working in our world today? Students create tableau’s depicting the Holy Spirit at work in the playground/wider community. Use digital images to create a photo story. Share this with families.

Research people who have lived, or are living, Spirit Filled Lives as in Acts 2:42-47. For example: Thomas Barnardo, Mother Teresa, Oscar Romero, Mary MacKillop

Acts 2:1-4 To PREPARE TO HEAR the Word – Luke uses the symbols of wind and fire to convey the presence of the Spirit among the disciples. Pentecost marks a change in the Apostles as they go out to spread the Gospel. Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles about 50 years after the event of Pentecost

Acts 2:1-4 To ENCOUNTER the Word after reading the text from the Bible, use Godly Play materials to tell the story

Acts 2:1-4 To ENCOUNTER the Word after reading the text from the Bible, use the Dramatised Bible, to retell the story

Acts 2:1-4 To RESPOND to the Word – identify the gifts and or fruits of the spirit among their peers using an appropriate teaching and learning strategy.

Acts 2:1-4 To RESPOND to the Word – Using a reflective journal students recall the times when they too have been moved and inspired to respond to a need.

**Prayer and Ritual**

Read Acts 2:42-47. Students reflect on the images found in the text. Draw the image on a flame shape and write a few words about the image. Place the images around a prayer focus of candles. Have a silent time for students to consider all the images drawn, whilst listening to quiet music. Conclude with a prayer:

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.

Response: And kindle in them the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

Response: And you will renew the face of the earth.

**Resources**

For resources to support this unit, refer to the online planning tool. For additional resources, refer to the Resource Centre Catalogue: [http://www.ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au](http://www.ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au) and follow links to Resource Centre.

**Appendix 1**

Joy, Love, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Generosity, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self Control.

Awakenings December 2007
These are the qualities that we can recognise in people who are filled with the Holy Spirit, e.g., the Kindness and generosity of those people who have helped the Tsunami victims, the Kindness of the members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul or the Love and Patience of carers who look after elderly people or small children.