

**Focus:** Spreading the Good News

**Materials:**

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth  
CD: Alive in Christ  
Bible: The Beginner's Bible  
Book: O Happy Day!  
Red/Green cards

**Gathering** (children find/sit on a carpet square)

*Say: Good Morning everyone, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. Last week we talked about how prayers are special conversations with God. We learned that we can pray anywhere we happen to be, not just in church. This week Jesus tells us that he wants us to tell others about him. He wants us to spread the good news near and far.*

**Opening Prayer**

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

*Say: Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

*Let us pray.*

*Dear God, thank you for sending you the Holy Spirit to us so we can spread the Good News all over the world. We pray in Jesus' name.*

*Amen.*

**Song/Movement**

*Alive in Christ*, track: 21, from [Alive in Christ 1-3](#)

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc.

*Chorus:*

*We are alive in Christ, [clap, clap]*

*We are alive in Christ, [clap, clap]*

*He came to set us free.*

*We are alive in Christ, [clap, clap]*

*We are alive in Christ, [clap]*

*He gave his life for me.*

*We are alive in Christ, [clap, clap] [clap, clap]*

*We are alive in Christ, [clap, clap, clap]*

*God the Father had a plan*

*To send his son, the Anointed One*

*To make his kingdom come.*

*Thru his saving grace*

*I came to be alive in you*

*And he alive in me.*

*Chorus*

*In the water of new life*

*We are baptized*

*And so we are his body now on earth*

*Holy Spirit helped me to see*

*That I should live as he once did*

*In peace and charity.*

*Chorus*

**Memory Verse**

Say: *Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

*Tell other people about me.*

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *Jesus taught us how to live as God's people. Baptism welcomes us into God's family. God wants us all to be his family, living in love and peace with each other. Jesus wanted us to teach others about him. God sent the Holy Spirit to help us do that. The Holy Spirit is with us always.*

*We receive the Holy Spirit at our baptism. The Holy Spirit helps us to make right choices and follow Jesus.*

**Gospel Story**

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of Matthew.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *"Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it."*

**Read:** The Beginner's Bible, pp. 496-499, *Jesus Goes Home*

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

**Discussion Starters:**

- *What are the disciples supposed to do after Jesus leaves?*
- *Where did the friends go after Jesus ascended into heaven?*
- *Why were the disciples filled with joy?*
- *What things did they remember about Jesus?*
- *What did Jesus promise them he would do when he came back?*

**Reflection on Reading:**

*Jesus' mission was to suffer, die and rise again; once his mission was accomplished he knew there was no need for him to stay. Jesus knows it's time to return to his Father. He wants to be sure his work continues. He tells the disciples that they are to tell people about Jesus and his message. They are told they should wait in Jerusalem until the Spirit comes. The Apostles are still not exactly sure what the kingdom is like where Jesus is going, but they are happy to do what Jesus asks.*

*Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to stay with us forever. Jesus and the Holy Spirit and the Father are one God, the Holy Trinity. Where one is, they all are. Jesus is still with us in the Holy Spirit.*

*The disciples were filled with joy, because they knew the love of God. Knowing love is the greatest joy there is. When we experience the love of God we are filled with joy too.*

## Gospel Activity

### Activity 1:

#### **The Holy Spirit Comes**

Read the book—*O Happy Day! The Story of Pentecost*—

When the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles, on the feast we celebrate today—Pentecost—their hearts were opened and their faith became strong. Not just those who followed Jesus but everyone from near and far understood that the Holy Spirit was their guide.

This is the story of how the apostles first experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit. It isn't usually so forceful. We experience the Spirit when we feel the love of God. Sometimes it is in a prayer in church; sometimes it is when your mom or dad give you a hug and a kiss on the head before bedtime. God's love comes in many quiet ways.

What do you think the apostles told others about Jesus? Acknowledge appropriate responses.

When we are baptized we receive the Holy Spirit. After we are baptized we learn about all the ways that the Holy Spirit helps us to be good children of God.

### Activity 2:

The Holy Spirit helps us make good choices. Let's practice making good choices that help us be good children of God and show God's love to others so they can be happy too.

All good things come from God. Without God there is no goodness. Who would want to live in a world without goodness? Those who love God are filled with his love and goodness.

Even the simplest prayer or smallest kindness to someone else, if it is done in the name of Jesus, becomes an act of love for God.

Let's play a game to see if we know how to be kind to someone else.

#### **Red Light-Green Light**

(Use the colored paper squares-or use thumbs up/thumbs down) Have children raise Red for a bad idea (STOP), Green for a good idea (GO). These are just a few examples. Please make up some more of your own.)

- You see a friend crying so you just walk right by.
- You hear your parents talking so you wait patiently before asking a question.
- It is very late and you are tired, so you cry loudly and complain about everything.
- You don't really like peas, but you eat two more bites for mom.
- Time for bed, so you stomp your feet and say, "NO!"
- It is morning and everyone is waking up. You still feel tired, but you give a big smile and a hug good morning to your mom and dad.
- You give your unused toys to the homeless shelter
- A friend asks to play with your new game and you won't share.
- You help your mom and dad deliver food to the food bank
- A child at the playground makes a mistake and you make fun of them.
- There is a new kid at school and you ask him to play with you on the playground.
- You throw a temper tantrum when you don't get what you want

- Before you go home from a play date you help clean up
- Listen to your parent when they tell you it's time to clean up your room
- You don't pay attention at the grocery store and you hit someone with a shopping cart
- You run or skate around inside a store
- Visit someone in a nursing home
- Make a card for a sick friend
- You get mad and hit your brother or sister

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

### **Closing Prayer**

(Children respond: "I Believe!")

Ask: *Do you believe in God, who sent Jesus to teach us?*

*Do you believe in Jesus, who wants us to tell others the Good News of his Love?*

*Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us to do the work of Jesus in our world?*

### **Sending Forth**

*Say: Jesus sends us to spread God's love in the world like Jesus did. While we can't heal all those who are sick, we can still show them God's love. We can make/send them a card, comfort them, read a story with them or just give them a hug. All these things show God's love. We can forgive others when they say they are sorry. We can tell others Jesus loves everyone and wants everyone to be his friend.*

### **Lining Up/Closing Song**

Play "God is so Big" track 2 from Alive in Christ 1-3 while children put away any materials and lineup. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.