


UNIT THREE: I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

CONFIRMATION
YEAR ONE

LESSON 2: The Holy Spirit and Jesus: A Divine Partnership

CONTENTS OF LESSON:

1. The Holy Spirit and Christ work together in a divine partnership. Theirs is a 'joint mission'. 'When the Father sends his Word he always sends his Breath.' [CCC 689]
2. What was the Spirit's part in this 'joint mission'? [CCC691-704]
 - i. He prepared the way for Jesus. The Holy Spirit 'has spoken through the prophets', preparing the people for the coming Messiah. In John the Baptist this preparation was complete. [CCC718]
 - ii. By His power Jesus was conceived in Mary's womb. [CCC695]
 - iii. He led Simeon to recognize Jesus: [CCC695]
 - iv. The Father anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit.: The very name 'Christ' means anointed. Like oil on the surface of the body, there is no distance between Christ and the Spirit. [CCC690]
 - v. He 'drove' Jesus into the desert. Jesus faced the same temptations as us and overcame the devil's temptations for us. [CCC540]
 - vi. He sent Jesus out on his mission. Jesus himself acknowledges that it is the Spirit who sent him out to proclaim the Good News, set prisoners free, and announce God's favour. [CCC695]
 - vii. He empowered Jesus as he preached, healed and delivered people. [CCC695]
 - viii. He raised Jesus from the dead. [CCC695]
3.  *As Christ was empowered by the Spirit, we too can do what God asks of us with the help of the Spirit. We can continue Christ's mission with the power of the Spirit.*

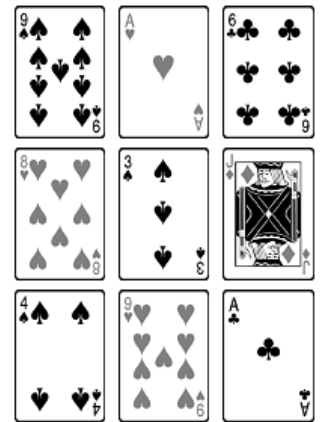
REFERENCES: Matthew 12:28; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 1:15-17; 35; 2:25-32; 4:16-21; Romans 8:11.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts; Pack of playing cards.

I. STARTER:

[Prepare two students (A and B) beforehand to play the following card trick:]

- **A** introduces **B** as a 'mind-reader' and sends him out.
- He asks for a volunteer to shuffle the pack. Then he lays out the top 9 cards as shown here. He keeps rest of the pack in his hand.
- The audience is asked to select any card. **A** places the tip of his thumb on the corresponding position on the pack he is holding. E.g. If the card selected is the top right hand one, he places the tip of his thumb on the top right hand corner of the pack.
- **B** is called in. As he enters he quickly glances at **A**'s thumb and then pretends to 'read the minds' of the audience, finally picking the right card.



[The trick could be repeated, but quickly, to avoid wasting time. Ask the 2 students to keep the secret of the trick so that it can be used in following years.]

II. DEVELOPMENT:

- Can you tell me who worked the magic? Who read your minds and discovered the card you chose? [Using the responses of the students, bring out:]
- Actually the trick worked because both students were in partnership. We won't tell you how they did it, but **A** (*name*) introduced **B** (*name*) and also in a hidden way helped him to find the card.
- Today we are going to look at another great partnership. These two partners had a much bigger task than just playing a magic trick. Their job was to save the world! Who do you think the two partners are? [Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The Father was the one who sent them on the mission.]
- Many people don't realize what a big part the Holy Spirit played in Christ's action. Let's see what we can find out about it from the Bible.

[Give out the handouts and work on the 8 statements. The students look up the Bible references and fill in the missing word in the captions. The words can be found in the grid. After all the words have been struck out, the remaining letters are used to form the missing words at the bottom Ask different groups to explain each sentence briefly. Sum up as follows:]

1. He PREPARED the way for Jesus: Just as A(name) introduced his partner B (name) in the card trick, the Holy Spirit introduced Jesus to the Jews. He began to speak through the prophets describing Jesus and preparing the people for his coming. Finally he spoke through John the Baptist, who was filled with the Holy Spirit even before he was born.
2. Jesus was CONCEIVED in Mary's womb by the power of the Holy Spirit: God became a human being! When Mary asked how this great miracle would take place, the angel said, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you."
3. He led Simeon to RECOGNIZE Jesus: The Bible says that the Holy Spirit told him that he would see the Messiah before he died. Then he guided him into the temple just as the holy family was entering it. Simeon was able to recognize God in the little baby.
4. The Father ANOINTED Jesus with the Holy Spirit: That's why we call Jesus 'Christ'. We already learned that Christ means anointed. St. Gregory says that when oil is poured onto a human body, there is no distance between the body and the oil. If you touch the body, you touch the oil. So, he says, there is no distance between Jesus and the Holy Spirit. If you touch Jesus, you touch the Holy Spirit.
5. He DROVE Jesus into the desert: Why do you think the Holy Spirit did this? Why did Jesus have to go and spend forty days all alone? Perhaps to be with his Father and to prepare for his public ministry. The Catechism tells us that it was to face the same temptations that we face and to defeat Satan for us.
6. He SENT Jesus out: Jesus read a passage from the scriptures and said that it was about himself! In other words, Jesus himself said that the Holy Spirit was sending him out to preach the Good News, heal and set people free.
7. He EMPOWERED Jesus as he healed and delivered people from evil spirits: People saw that power came out of Jesus. It was the power of the Holy Spirit that healed the blind and lame and caused the evil spirits to flee.
8. He raised Jesus from the dead: In Saint Paul's letter to the Romans we read that it was the Holy Spirit who worked that ultimate miracle of raising Jesus from the dead. So from the beginning of Jesus' life on earth, and long before it, right up to the end, the Holy spirit was active. He and Jesus worked in partnership. That's why the Catechism calls this partnership a JOINT MISSION. (This is the answer to the puzzle.)

III. INTERIORISATION/PRAAYER:

- A practical question before we reflect and pray: Can you speak without using your breath? Try it. Block the air by closing your throat muscles, then try to speak. [Students experiment.] It is impossible to speak without our breath. That's why the Catechism says, "When the Father sends his word, he always sends his Spirit." Jesus is the Word, the Holy Spirit is the Breath of God.
- Each of us has a mission too: the same mission as Christ. God asks you and me to be Christ in the world; to fight the devil's temptations, to bless, to give the Good News, to heal and rescue those in bondage.
- But God doesn't expect us to fulfill this mission by ourselves. He gives us his power, his Holy Spirit.
- Let us breathe deeply and quietly invite the Holy Spirit, the Breath of God to fill us and give us the power to be Christ in the world. Ask him to prepare the way for you.

HOMWORK CHALLENGE: During this week try at least once to do something that Jesus did. Look out for opportunities. Remember to ask the Holy Spirit to work through you. Next week we report about what we attempted. [Ask the students to suggest what they could do:]
E.g. Pray for healing; speak about God's love; help someone to fight temptation; Help someone who is poor, weak, old etc.