

# The Birth of the Church

**Lesson Focus** | Ten days after he ascended into heaven, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to his apostles. This day, called Pentecost, is considered the birthday of the Church. It is the day on which the Church was made known to the world. Long before Pentecost, however, God began the work of building the Church. She was prefigured in the Old Testament by Israel and made manifest on earth when Christ was born.

## 1 | begin

- Pray the Glory Be with your child.
- Look up online the number of Catholics in various countries around the world. If you can, find a map showing the concentration of Catholics in various countries.
- Read Acts 2:1–11 aloud.

## 2 | summarize

**Summarize this week’s lesson for your child:**

Example: *The coming of the Holy Spirit was, in a way, the beginning of the Church. Pentecost was the origin in space and time of a Church that covers the entire globe. But that day was also an end—an end to God’s work of preparing the world for his Church.*

## 3 | review

**Review this week’s lesson by asking your child the following questions:**

1. Define deposit of grace. (*All the grace necessary for salvation, which Jesus merited for us by His death and Resurrection, and which is given to us through the Church.*)
2. Define deposit of Faith. (*The content of revelation entrusted to the Church by Jesus and handed on through Scripture and Tradition by the apostles and their successors.*)
3. Define vicar. (*A representative; one serving as an agent for someone else.*)
4. Define ekklesia. (*Greek word for “assembly”; used in the New Testament for “church.”*)
5. What are the three stages for God’s establishment of the Church? (*1. In the Old Testament, the Church is prefigured in God’s promises to Adam, Abraham, Noah, and Moses, the nation of Israel, and the kingdom of David; 2. In his life and death, Jesus laid the foundation for his Church; 3. From Pentecost forward, the apostles and their successors have had authority from Jesus to spread the gospel to all men.*)

### References

- Student Textbook: Chapter 2, pp. 15–18
- Sacred Scripture: Gen 3:15; 9:8–11; 17; Ex 3–25; 28:40; 2 Sam 22; Mt 21:1–9; Acts 2:1–11
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: 54–55, 62–63, 84, 128–30, 731–41, 758–69, 2003



## 4 | apply

Help your child apply this week's lesson by asking the following questions:

1. What similarities do you see between the nation of Israel and the Catholic Church?
2. Do you think the Church could have endured intact through so many centuries and spread to so many places without God's help? Why or why not?
3. How can you help the Church fulfill the Great Commission: to make disciples of all men?

## 5 | conclude

- With your child, pray the Our Father.

## 6 | follow up

During the week, do at least one of the following activities with your child:

1. Memorize Mark 1:17.
2. Make a map of the missionary journeys of the apostles in the early Church.
3. During your family's evening prayers, pray for Catholics around the world who face persecution for their Faith.

*And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men."*

—Mark 1:17

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