



The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

PENTECOST



FOCUS AREA/THEME: "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability." (Acts 2:4 NRSV)

Greetings and best wishes to you from your Christian brothers and sisters in the Diocese of Jerusalem.

Christians, who are descendants of the early Christian Arabs mentioned in the Bible story about the first Pentecost, still live in the Land of Jesus today. These Arab Christians, living as a tiny minority among the Jewish and Muslim majorities in the region, are the vital roots of Christianity at its place of origin and are often called the 'Living Stones' of our faith. Today, the Christians of the Diocese of Jerusalem offer this story and understanding for you.

SONG/GAME: Regionally appropriate song or game of your own choosing.

SHORT BIBLE READING INTRODUCING FOCUS AREA FOR DAY: Acts 2:1-12

LEARNING/STORY: "...Cretans and Arabs ..." Arabs have historically lived in the Middle East before and after the time of Jesus. They were some of the first Christians. The Arabic Speaking Christians of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem keep the ministry of Jesus alive through active ministries in Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. As Arab Christians, these faithful people sponsor schools, hospitals, medical clinics, rehabilitation and vocational centers, and community, outreach and interfaith programs for their Muslim and Jewish neighbors.

Living as Jesus advised, the Arab Christians are active in their practice of hospitality, generous in their love, and faithful to God. Each day, they walk the land that Jesus walked with an intimate understanding of the geography and culture in which Jesus' stories and parables are set. The Arab Christians of today maintain the Christian faith in spite of hardships from regional strife, mobility and residential restrictions, and economic struggles. They are a tiny minority amidst two strong majorities, Muslims and Jews. With strength from God and instruction from Jesus, they teach forgiveness, embrace reconciliation, demonstrate mutual respect, and work tirelessly for peace. As a Diocese that covers five political regions with different laws, customs, languages, and histories, the Diocese of Jerusalem lives in the Holy Spirit, inspired by the first Pentecost. Visit them online at www.j-diocese.org.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

Construction paper or other brightly colored paper that can be written on. Scissors, poster board, glue, and a map.

CRAFT ACTIVITY: Find the Diocese of Jerusalem on the World Map. Then cut shapes of flames of fire from the colored paper. Glue them on the poster board as a big Pentecost fire of the Holy Spirit. Go back to the passage in the Bible and write the names of every group mentioned that was present at the First Pentecost. Label the poster "These are the first Christians who share their faith with us so we could be Christian too."

END WITH PRAYER: *Thank you God for giving us your son, Jesus, who teaches us how to live God's way. Bless Christians all over the world as they live their faith in God and follow Jesus. Help me to follow Jesus too.*

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