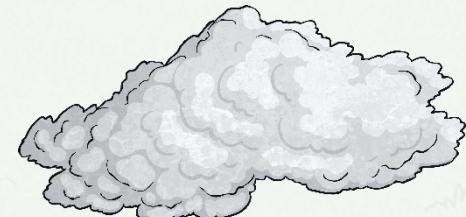




Symbols of the Holy Spirit

Symbols of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is represented in the Christian Church through different symbols.



A Dove

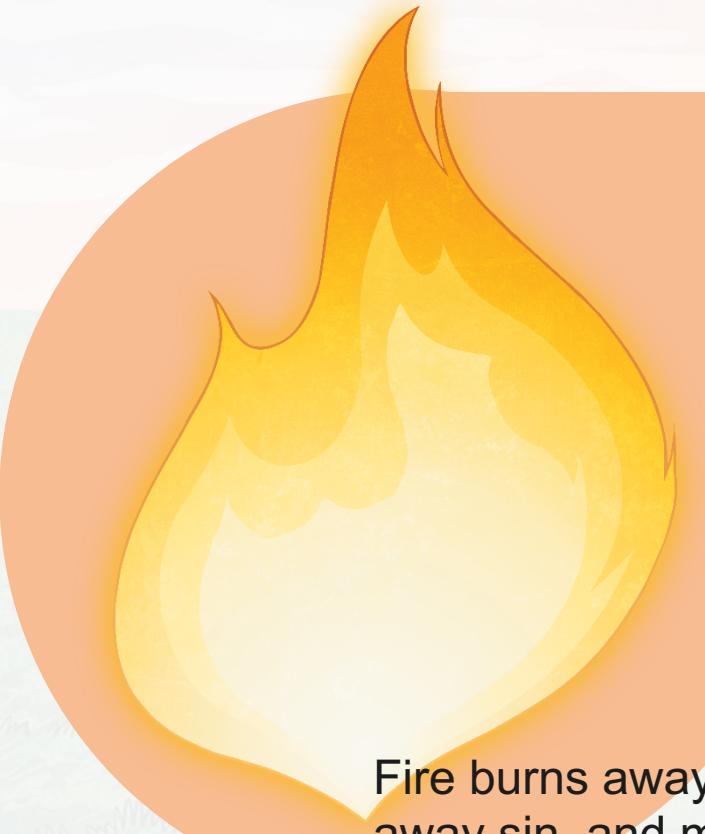
When Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan, a dove appeared. The dove was a physical sign of God's presence.

The dove also represents God bringing peace to mankind through Jesus and his sacrifice.

The dove is a gentle and does no violence
The dove is easily shooed away
The dove is white, a symbol of purity



Fire



When the disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit, flames appeared on their head as a sign they were filled with the transforming energy of the Holy Spirit. This energy would help them in the work ahead, teaching others about Jesus and encouraging more followers.

Fire burns away rubbish (purifies) – the Holy Spirit burns away sin, and makes us turn away from evil and sin.
Fire can change materials from one form to another – the Holy Spirit can change us to be different people.
Fire warms – the Holy Spirit gives us comfort and joy.
Fire gives light – the Holy Spirit teaches us what is right.



Wind

When the Holy Spirit was sent to the disciples, it arrived with a great wind rushing through the room.

The symbol of the wind also represents the breath of God breathing new life into the Church.



Wind is invisible – you can't see if it's there, except by its effects on things. You can't tell where the Holy Spirit is, except by its effects – peace, joy, courage, wisdom, patience and loving-kindness.

Wind is free. You can't catch the wind or hold onto it. You can't hold onto the Holy Spirit and you catch it for yourself. It comes and stays because it wants to.

Wind is unpredictable – you don't know what it's going to do next. People filled with the Spirit are free and unpredictable like this as well. ←

Water



Water is used as a symbol of cleansing and as a source of power.

Water is used for many practical purposes like washing and bathing. It is also very powerful and is very strong when used in force.

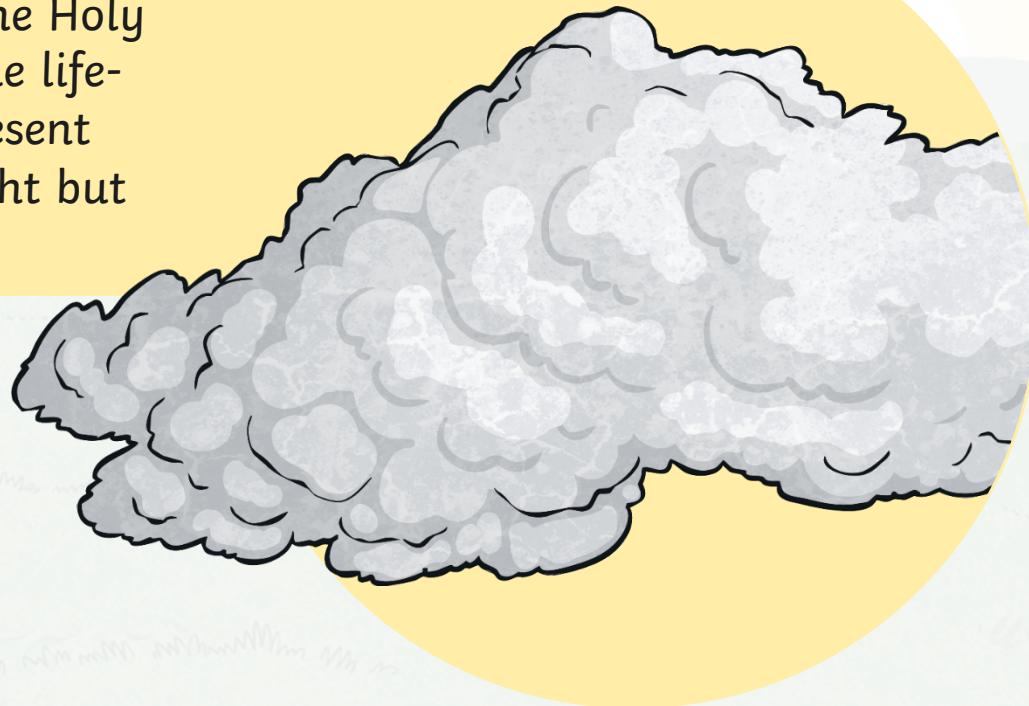
Water is used in baptism and is vital for all life. In the same way, it is believed by some Christians that water used in baptism represents the receiving of the Holy Spirit and that it has a life-giving quality.

Water gives life - things grow and change because of water
Water cleans and washes dirt away
Water refreshes, when things are tired and hot



Cloud

A cloud combined with light is often used as a symbol of the Holy Spirit because clouds provide life-giving water and they represent God who is hidden from sight but is always there.





Anointing Oil

In the Bible, oil is used to anoint people rather like a blessing. It represents Jesus being given the Holy Spirit to perform certain actions in God's name, like healing people and doing good deeds.

Oil is also a sign of the power of the Holy Spirit.

Oil soothes wounds and sores – the Holy Spirit heals illnesses and sin.

Oil nourishes and gives strength- the Holy Spirit gives strength and courage.

Oil is precious and expensive – the Holy Spirit is very valuable, because it from God.

Oil keeps fire burning – the Holy Spirit keeps the love of God burning in our hearts.

