

## RCIA CLASS 7A – THE HOLY SPIRIT

I. "The One whom the Father has sent into our hearts, the Spirit of His Son, is truly God. Consubstantial with the Father and the Son, the Spirit is inseparable from them, in both the inner life of the Trinity and His gift of love for the world." Catechism of the Catholic Church 689.

A. The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, of the same nature as the Father and the Son, but distinct from them. Thus the Creed says that, "with the Father He is worshipped and glorified." (The new translation next year will render the Latin in the more precise terms, "adored and glorified.") Theologians often think of the Holy Spirit as the love between the Father and the Son so powerful and real that He is a person. Thus, we say that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. See, e.g., St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, Part I, question 37, art. 2.

B. The Trinity always acts together, except only that the Son alone became Incarnate. However, to distinguish between the persons, we often attribute creation to the Father, redemption to the Son and sanctification to the Holy Spirit. Or, as Pope Leo XIII put it, "The Church is accustomed most fittingly to attribute to the Father those works of the Divinity in which power excels, to the Son those in which wisdom excels, and those in which love excels to the Holy Ghost. Not that all perfections and external operations are not common to the Divine Persons; for the operations of the Trinity are indivisible, even as the essence of the Trinity is indivisible." Pope Leo XIII, Divinum Illud Munus 3 (1897) (quoting St. Augustine.)

B. At the Incarnation, when the Son became Man, the Holy Spirit came to the Blessed Virgin Mary and conceived Jesus in her womb. Luke 1:35.

C. At His Baptism, the Holy Spirit came to Jesus, and the Father's voice was heard from the heavens, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." See Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23

D. The titles Christ and Messiah are from the Greek and Hebrew terms for "the anointed one." And "the symbolism of anointing with oil signifies the Holy Spirit. . . . Its full force can be grasped only in relation to the primary anointing accomplished by the Holy Spirit, that of Jesus Christ. . . . There were several anointed ones of the Lord in the Old Covenant, pre-eminently King David. But Jesus is God's Anointed in a unique way: the humanity the Son assumed was entirely anointed by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit established Him as Christ." Catechism of the Catholic Church 695.

E. At the Last Supper and again before His Ascension, Jesus promised the sending of the Spirit upon His Apostles to guide them and the Church. See John 14:15-17, 25-27, 15:26-27, 16:12-16; Acts 1:8. He also told them to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. See Matt. 28:18. "At work since creation, having previously spoken through the prophets, the Spirit will now be with and in the disciples, to teach them and guide them into all the truth. The Holy Spirit is thus revealed as another divine person with Jesus and the Father." Catechism of the Catholic Church 243.

F. At Pentecost, the Spirit would come in fullness of power upon Mary, the Apostles and other disciples gathered in Jerusalem. Acts 2:1-12. "The Holy Spirit, whom Christ the head pours out on His members, builds, animates, and sanctifies the Church. She is the sacrament of the Holy Trinity's communion with men." Catechism of the Catholic Church 747.

1. Moses of old had prayed for a time when the Holy Spirit would come upon the people and make them an offering to God, sharing in the power of the prophets. See Num. 11:29-30. The prophets spoke of an era in which this prayer would be fulfilled. See, e.g., Is. 44:1-4; Ez. 16:16-21, 36:24-27; Joel 3:1-2.

2. Finally, at Pentecost, St. Peter declared that that long awaited era had begun and that, with Baptism, each Christian would receive the Spirit. See Acts 2:16-21, 38-39. Even after Baptism, there would be a laying on of hands (which we now call Confirmation) that would increase the power of the Spirit in new Christians. See, e.g., Acts 8:14-16, 19:6.

G. Pope Leo XIII even said that Jesus "gave as the chief reason of His departure and His return to the Father, the advantage which would most certainly accrue to His followers from the coming of the Holy Ghost, and, at the same time, He made it clear that the Holy Ghost is equally sent by-and therefore proceeds from-Himself and the Father; that He would complete, in His office of Intercessor, Consoler, and Teacher, the work which Christ Himself had begun in His mortal life." Leo XIII, Divinum Illud Munus 2 (1897.)

II. "The grace of the Holy Spirit confers upon us the righteousness of God. Uniting us by faith and Baptism to the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, the Spirit makes us sharers in His life." Catechism of the Catholic Church 2017.

A. One of the ways that the Holy Spirit acts in our lives is through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which help us think and act in the context of our relationship to God as His adopted sons and daughters. "The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. They belong in their fullness to Christ, Son of David.

They complete and perfect the virtues of those who receive them. They make the faithful docile in readily obeying divine inspirations." Catechism of the Catholic Church 1831.

1. Wisdom is the ability to see all things together from the standpoint of heaven, to see people and events as God sees them. Thus, as St. Thomas Aquinas says, love is affiliated with charity. See St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica Part II-II question 45 article 2.
2. Understanding is the ability to comprehend the depth of divine and sacred things, such as Scriptures, the sacraments, and virtues, as opposed to comprehension more from the outside. Thus, understanding builds upon faith. See St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, part II-II question 8, article 2.
3. Knowledge allows us to judge created things according to their rightful value and use from the standpoint of holiness. Thus, for example it leads to a rightful appreciation of nature as God's artwork and a rightful attitude toward wealth and talents as temporary loans from God. See, e.g., Ps. 19:1-3, Matt. 6:19-21, 25:14-30.
4. Counsel allows us to make decisions in cases where the right answer is not obvious. We are guided by the Spirit to a higher level of intelligence, in the ways of heaven. See Matt. 10:16; St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, part II-II, question 52.
5. The gift of fortitude builds upon the virtue of fortitude, but makes it greater, giving us strength from our union with Jesus and the whole company of heaven. See John 16:33; Rom. 5:3-5; Heb. 12:1-2.
6. The gift of piety gives us a delight in prayer and in serving God, seeing in this worship and service a joining in the family of God and the order of His love. See Psalms 146-150; Heb. 12:22-24; St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica Part II-II question 121 article 1.
7. The gift of fear of the Lord gives an overarching sense of God's majesty and holiness and a corresponding aversion to all sin because it is ugly and offending to God. This fear comes not from the threat of punishment, but rather from the passionate desire to make oneself and one's society completely pleasing to God. See, e.g., Sir. 1:8-18; Rev. 14:7, 15:4.

B. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are the results of living with Spirit in one's life. St. Paul includes among them love, joy, peace,

patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. See Gal. 5:23. As a tree bears fruit according to its kind, and one can know a tree by its fruit, so too one can distinguish an authentic spirituality from an illusionary one in large part by whether it results in these fruits of the Spirit. See Matt. 12:33-37. These results of the action of the Holy Spirit are the beginning of everlasting glory. See Catechism of the Catholic Church 1832.

C. The Holy Spirit gives both graces common to all, especially in the context of the virtues and gifts and fruits of the Spirit, and special gifts to specific people for the sake of their roles on earth. See, e.g., 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 13:1-13. "Grace is first a foremost the gift of the Spirit wh justifies and sanctifies us. But grace also includes the gifts that the Spirit grants to associate us with His work, to enable us to collaborate in the salvation of others and in the growth of the Body of Christ, the Church. There are sacramental graces, gifts proper to the different sacraments. There are furthermore special graces, also called charisms. . . . Charisms are oriented toward sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church. They are at the service of charity which builds up the Church." Catechism of the Catholic Church 2003.

D. "The Holy Spirit is the living water welling up to eternal life in the heart that prays. It is He who teaches us to accept it at its source: Christ. Indeed in the Christian life there are several wellsprings where Christ awaits us to enable us to drink of the Holy Spirit." Catechism of the Catholic Church 2652.

III. "What the soul is to the human body, the Holy Spirit is to the Body of Christ, which is the Church. . . . The Holy Spirit makes the Church the temple of the living God." Catechism of the Catholic Church 797.

A. After Pentecost, the Holy Spirit guided the Church to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world. See, e.g., Acts 4:31, 44-48, 13:2, 1 Cor. 12:1-13; Eph. 4:1-6. "The Church is one because of her soul: It is the Holy Spirit, dwelling in those who believe and pervading and ruling over the entire Church, who brings about that wonderful communion of the faithful and joins them together so intimately in Christ that He is the principle of the Church's unity." Catechism of the Catholic Church 813.

B. The Holy Spirit guides the Church to offer prayers beyond the ordinary level of human abilities. As St. Paul says, "We do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us." Rom. 8:26. Thus, when the Church gathers together, "the liturgical assembly derives its unity from the communion of the Holy Spirit who gathers the children of God into the one Body of Christ. . . . The assembly should prepare itself to encounter its Lord and to become a people well disposed. The preparation of hearts is the joint work of the Holy Spirit and the assembly, especially its minister. The grace of the Holy Spirit seeks to

awaken faith, conversion of heart, and adherence to the Father's will." Catechism of the Catholic Church 1097-1098.

- C. "The Spirit and the Church cooperate to manifest Christ and His work of salvation through the liturgy. Primarily in the Eucharist, and by analogy in the other sacraments, the liturgy is the memorial of the mystery of salvation. The Holy Spirit is the Church's living memory." Catechism of the Catholic Church 1099.