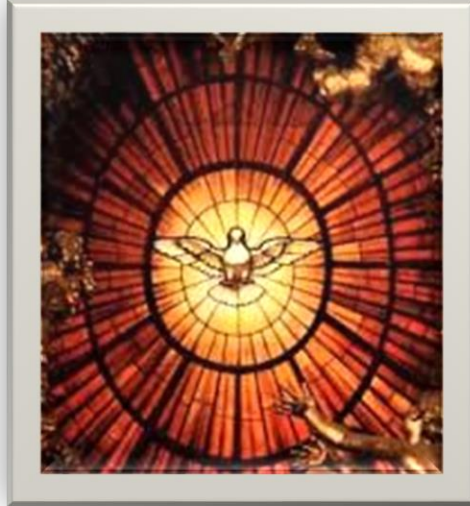


RCIA Lesson 7: The Holy Spirit and the Life of Grace



(Depiction of the Holy Spirit in the window behind the main altar at St. Peter's in Rome)

- **Opening Prayer** (see the “*Common Catholic Prayers and Devotions*” tab of your binder):

Come, Holy Spirit...

- **Song: O Breathe on Me, O Breath of God, MI 650**
- - **Catechism references for further reflection:**
 - The name of the Holy Spirit: CCC 691
 - Symbols of the Holy Spirit: CCC 694-701
 - The Holy Spirit as God's Gift: CCC 733-736
 - The Holy Spirit and the Church: CCC 737-741
 - Justification and Sanctification: CCC 1996-2000

- **Who is the Holy Spirit?**

† Holy Spirit is the one who reveals God to us. He inspires Scripture and Sacred Tradition, guides and protects the Church, and unites the Church both in heaven and on earth, especially in the celebration of the sacraments.

- (CCC 688) The Church, a communion living in the faith of the apostles which she transmits, is the place where we know the Holy Spirit:

- † In the Scriptures He inspired
- † In the Tradition, to which the Church Fathers are always timely witnesses
- † In the Church's Magisterium, which He assists
- † In the sacramental liturgy, through its words and symbols, in which the Holy Spirit

- puts us into communion with Christ
- † In prayer, wherein He intercedes for us
- † In the charisms and ministries by which the Church is built up
- † In the signs of apostolic and missionary life
- † In the witness of saints through whom He manifests His holiness and continues the work of salvation

Gen 1:1-2. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and *the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.*

Gen 2:7. ...then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and *breathed* into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

(CCC 727-730) Christ's whole work is in fact a joint mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

(CCC 728) Jesus does not reveal the Holy Spirit fully, until he himself has been glorified through his Death and Resurrection.

(CCC 731-732) On the day of Pentecost when the seven weeks of Easter had come to an end, Christ's Passover is fulfilled in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit....On that day, the Holy Trinity is fully revealed.

† **Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.**

- ☩ **Wisdom** – detaches us from the world in order to make the soul more responsive to the things of God.
- ☩ **Understanding** – helps us to grasp more clearly what the truths of our faith really mean to us and our salvation
- ☩ **Judgment (Counsel)** – helps our conscience distinguish what good to do and what evil to avoid and helps us to choose the good
- ☩ **Fortitude** – courage to seek God and reject everything that stands in our way, including ridicule, malice, and outright persecution (to include death)
- ☩ **Knowledge** – tells us the path of virtue and warns us of the dangers we face in seeking Heaven
- ☩ **Piety** – confidence in God that a child feels for a loving parent so we can serve God with joy
- ☩ **Fear of the Lord** – solemn respect of God that fills us with a horror and dread of offending Him, not because He is a God who will punish us with wrath, but because we would never desire to hurt the one who loves us so completely

† **Fruits of the Holy Spirit.**

- ☩ Charity (Love of God and neighbor)
- ☩ Joy
- ☩ Peace
- ☩ Patience
- ☩ Kindness
- ☩ Goodness
- ☩ Generosity

- ✎ Faithfulness
- ✎ Gentleness
- ✎ Self-Control
- ✎ Modesty
- ✎ Chastity
- ✎ Faithfulness

- Questions for Discussion:

- Who is the Holy Spirit? What are some of the ways the Holy Spirit is described in the Scriptures? What are some of the symbols we use to depict the Holy Spirit?
- What is the Holy Spirit's role in our salvation?
- The Holy Spirit gives us 7 gifts (see above) at our baptism and through God's grace, these bear fruit in our life. What experiences have you had with the Holy Spirit and these gifts in your life?
- How does the Holy Spirit "dwell in our hearts" and guide us as Jesus promised?
- How can we have a relationship with the Holy Spirit?
- What is the Catholic Church's teaching on "justification" and the relationship between "faith" and "works"?
- What does it mean that the "Holy Spirit builds, animates, and sanctifies the Church"?

- Weekly Gospel Reading: 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time (Lk 19: 1-10)

At that time, Jesus came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, who was about to pass that way. When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house." And he came down quickly and received him with joy. When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor,

and if I have extorted anything from anyone
I shall repay it four times over."
And Jesus said to him,
"Today salvation has come to this house
because this man too is a descendant of Abraham.
For the Son of Man has come to seek
and to save what was lost."

Lectio Divina

1. **Lectio:** Read the passage slowly, perhaps several times. Let a phrase or two catch your attention.
2. **Meditatio:** Reflect on the meaning of the words you have chosen. How is God speaking to you through this reading?
3. **Oratio:** Raise your mind and heart to God, using the message of this reading.
4. **Contemplatio:** Rest quietly in the presence of God.
5. **Actio:** Resolve to change your life in some positive way.

- **Closing Prayer:**

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.