

CHAPTER

# 9



## THE HOLY SPIRIT

*No one can say "Jesus is Lord"  
except by the Holy Spirit.*

—1 CORINTHIANS 12:3

### SCRIPTURE READING

*Either before you arrive or as you wait for class to begin, find this short passage from Sacred Scripture in your Bible or through an online search. Reading it will prepare you for this week's material.*

—John 14:15–17, 25–26

### OPENING PRAYER

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray:

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit,  
did instruct the hearts of the faithful,  
grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise  
and ever rejoice in His consolations.  
Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

### SESSION 9 VIDEO LESSON: THE HOLY SPIRIT

*As you watch the video lesson, refer to these key highlights. Feel free to use the space provided to take notes.*

- ♦ Scripture has a lot to tell us about what the Holy Spirit does in our lives.

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- ♦ The first proper name for this Divine Person is “Holy Spirit.”

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- ♦ The Holy Spirit is also associated with love.

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- ♦ A third name for the Holy Spirit is “Gift” because the only reason one gives a truly gratuitous gift to another, expecting absolutely nothing in return, is because of love.

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- The Holy Spirit really dwells in you like a temple, making you holy like he is holy.
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## *Wisdom of the Saints*

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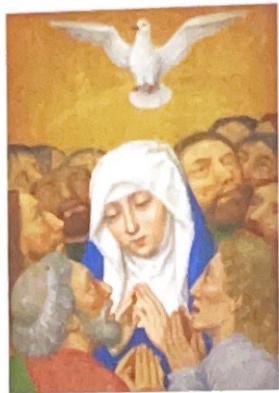
The Father says: “When [my Son] had ascended on high, and returned to Me the Father, I sent the Master, that is the Holy Spirit, who came to you with My power and the wisdom of My Son, and with His own clemency, which is the essence of the Holy Spirit. He is one thing with Me, the Father, and with My Son. And He built up the road of the doctrine which My Truth had left in the world.”

—St. Catherine of Siena (Message from God the Father)

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

*Take a moment to answer these questions with a partner or with the group.*

1. What are some of the actions that Scripture associates with the Holy Spirit's activity in our lives?
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2. The Holy Spirit is traditionally associated with love in God. What does that reveal to us about who the Spirit truly is?

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3. What is the Holy Spirit's place in the life of Jesus?

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4. What is the Holy Spirit's place in God's plan of our salvation, coming from Christ?

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## Catechism Connection



The communion of the Holy Spirit in the Church restores to the baptized the divine likeness lost through sin. He, then, gives us the “pledge” or “first fruits” of our inheritance: the very life of the Holy Trinity, which is to love as “God [has] loved us.” This love (the “charity” of 1 Cor 13) is the source of the new life in Christ, made possible because we have received “power” from the Holy Spirit. By this power of the Spirit, God’s children can bear much fruit. . . . “We live by the Spirit”; the more we renounce ourselves, the more we “walk by the Spirit.”

—CCC 734–36

### LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

*Discuss these questions with a partner or the group, or meditate on your own.*

1. How have you experienced the gifts or the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life?

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2. If you could ask the Holy Spirit for one special grace above all others, what would it be?

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3. The Holy Spirit is “love in person,” the love of God so infinitely perfect that he is a Divine Person. How can you center your life more and more on the love of God above all things?
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#### **WITNESS TO CONVERSION**

*After concluding your group discussion, return to watch the second video where converts to the Catholic faith discuss their conversion and how they live today as Catholics.*

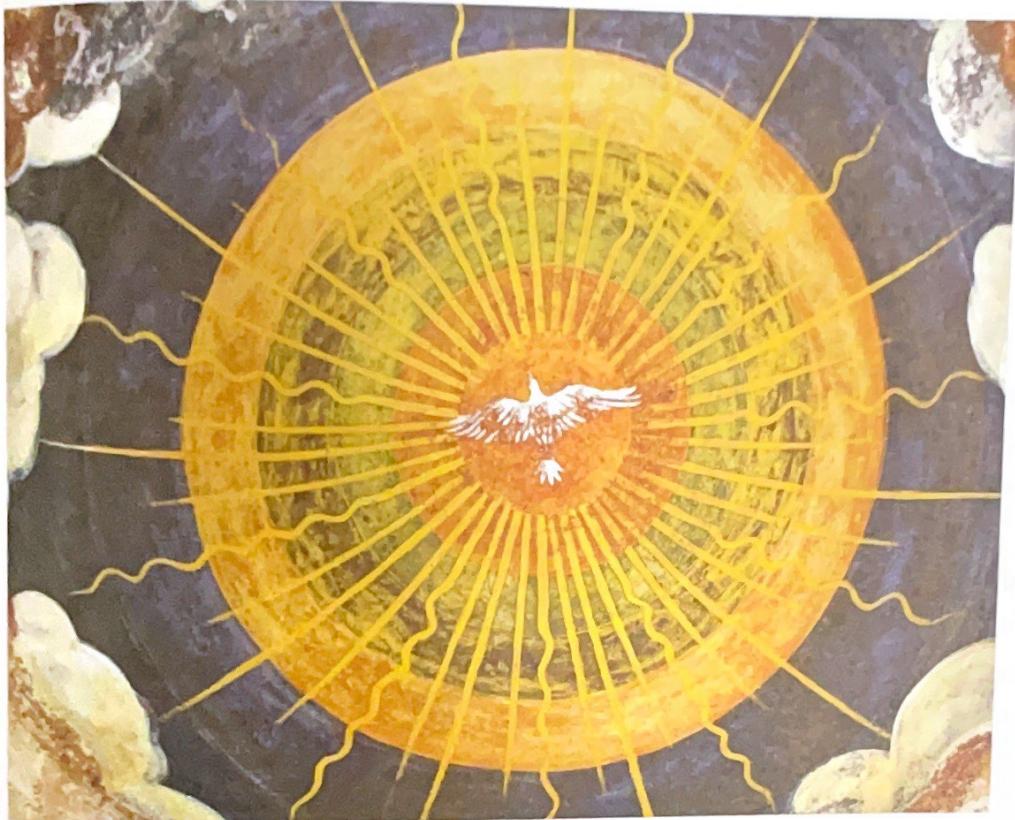


### *Rome to Home*

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The Holy Spirit as Love and Gift comes down, in a certain sense, into the very heart of the sacrifice which is offered on the Cross. Referring here to the biblical tradition, we can say: He consumes this sacrifice with the fire of the love which unites the Son with the Father in the Trinitarian communion. And since the sacrifice of the Cross is an act proper to Christ, also in this sacrifice he “receives” the Holy Spirit.

—Pope St. John Paul II,  
*Dominum et Vivificantem*, no. 41



### KEY TERMS

**Procession:** Literally, “to come forth.” Theologians began to use this term, which Jesus himself uses in John 8:42, to talk about how he “came forth” from the Father (“coming forth” in the Vulgate Latin translation of the Bible is “*processio*”). It then came to be used also for the Holy Spirit to designate how the Holy Spirit is “from” both the Father and the Son.

**Orthodox Churches:** The churches, mostly in the East (or what was formerly the Byzantine empire), that separated from the pope and the Catholic Church in the Great Schism of AD 1054. These churches are generally agreed to have apostolic succession with patriarchs, bishops, priests, deacons, and so forth, and to celebrate the sacraments, but they have some theological disagreements with the Catholic Church (the most famous is about the Holy Spirit) and are not in communion with the Catholic Church.

**“Gift in Person”:** The traditional name for the Holy Spirit that highlights how the Holy Spirit is eternally apt for being given to us. The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person and exists eternally and would be “Gift in person” even if no creatures existed to whom he could be given. Because he proceeds by way of love, he is eternally suited to being given, since love is the only reason why a true gift is given.

**“Love in Person”:** The name for the Holy Spirit that highlights how he proceeds from the Father and the Son as their mutual love; the perfect and infinite bond of love between them. As the Father knows himself in speaking his Word, he also loves himself (and the Son loves the Father) with a personal love who is the Holy Spirit.



## *God's Word*

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all.

—Ephesians 4:4–6

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

LEADER: Our Help is in the name of the Lord.

RESPONSE: Who made heaven and earth.

*All make the sign of the cross.*

**AT HOME REVIEW**

*Read this review of the material. Write down any questions you still have after doing so.*

**The Spirit of Truth**

We have talked about the Trinity, and about Jesus, the eternal Word sent by the Father to become man. But who is the Holy Spirit?

We profess in the Creed that the Holy Spirit is God, whom we adore and glorify just like we adore and glorify the Father and the Son. That is, the Holy Spirit is fully and truly God, equal to the Father and to the Son and consubstantial with them.

But we know the Holy Spirit in a different way than we know the person of Jesus Christ. Christ is made visible as man, whereas we principally encounter the Holy Spirit as he acts in the Church and in our own lives, in our hearts and minds and souls.

Holy Scripture has a lot to say about the Holy Spirit:

- **The Holy Spirit teaches us and “inspires” us.**

“The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you” (Jn 14:26).

- **He makes us wise, bringing understanding of the things of God.**

“We impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit. The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one” (1 Cor 2:13–15).

- **He gives us life, living water welling up to eternal life.**

Jesus says, “Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (Jn 4:14), and, “Now this

he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive" (Jn 7:39).

♦ **Dwelling in our hearts, he makes us holy, as a temple of the Holy Spirit.**

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God?" (1 Cor 6:19).

♦ **He teaches us to pray and intercedes for us with sighs.**

"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words" (Rom 8:26).

♦ **The power to forgive sins comes from the gift of the Holy Spirit in the Church.**

Jesus, on the evening of his resurrection, appears to his disciples and says, "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained'" (Jn 20:21–23).

♦ **He makes us adopted sons and daughters.**

"For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom 8:14–16).

♦ **He gives us zeal for the Gospel and the power to bear witness to Christ.**

"They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

- ♦ **We can only confess the name of Jesus by the Spirit.**  
“No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 12:3).
- ♦ **He is given to you at baptism—if you are in Christ, in a state of sanctifying grace, you have the Holy Spirit in you.**  
“And Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’” (Acts 2:38).
- ♦ **The Holy Spirit is what unites the Church into one body—the body of Christ—made spiritually alive by the Spirit of Christ.**  
“I . . . beg you . . . to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all” (Eph 4:1, 3–6).

With this wonderful catalog of the ways the Holy Spirit works, let’s now go a little deeper to understand *who the Holy Spirit is in himself*. St. Thomas Aquinas says that, above all, there are three proper names revealed in Scripture that help us understand what is proper to the Holy Spirit as a Divine Person.

First of all, he is the *Holy Spirit*. This is the most common name for him in the Bible, and it shows up all over the place in the New Testament. One meaning of the Latin word *spiritus* is “breath,” which gives a sense of motion, of life, of an impulse that can be powerful but that remains hidden to us. Something that is alive has a spirit of life, and the Holy Spirit is life itself.

Secondly, Scripture associates the Spirit with *Love*: “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us” (Rom 5:5). St. Thomas, following St. Augustine, thinks that gives us a very important clue to understanding how the Holy Spirit proceeds as distinct from the Son. For a theology of the Trinity, then, this title or personal name for the Spirit is extremely important.



The eternal Son is “generated” by the Father as his perfect Word. We can understand his “begetting” as a procession by way of intellect, as the Father understands himself and thus conceives or generates a perfect likeness of himself, his Word. But if the Holy Spirit is a distinct Person, he must proceed in a distinct way. He is *not* begotten by way of intellect. Rather, if we think about the Spirit as Love, then we begin to see that he proceeds from the Father and the Son by way of Love.

When you truly love someone, you are united by love to your beloved. In a sense, there is in your heart a kind of imprint of the one you love, which your will is attracted to and takes as its object. But now you must think of God knowing himself—that is, generating an image of himself—and seeing its goodness, loving himself. Aquinas thinks this helps us grasp something of the Holy Spirit's procession. As the Father conceives his Word, he is “in himself” by way of knowledge, and as he loves that Word, he is “in himself” by way of love; a love which is in fact the mutual love of the Father and Son, the love that proceeds from them both.

Third, from the name “love,” another proper name for the Spirit unfolds: he is also *Gift* in person, because the only reason one gives a truly gratuitous gift to another, expecting absolutely nothing in return, is out of love. “Gift” is in fact a deeply scriptural name for the Holy Spirit, who is the greatest gift that we can receive. Jesus says that the Father will give him to us, and also promises himself to give us the Spirit. And St. Paul explains in a beautiful passage in 1 Corinthians 12 that a great variety of spiritual gifts are given to the Church by the Holy Spirit. As a result, St. Thomas says that the Holy Spirit is, in a sense, the Divine Person closest to us, because every spiritual gift is given to us through him.

The perspective that this opens up for us on the Gospel is very profound and beautiful: just as the Son proceeds from the Father as his Word, so the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son as their mutual Love and as Gift. And this pattern of processions is reproduced *in time*, in God's wonderful plan of salvation:

- ♦ The Father sends the Son into the world as man and endows him as man with the fullness of the Holy Spirit.
- ♦ In the power of the Spirit, then, Jesus Christ teaches his disciples, works miracles, and ultimately goes to the Cross out of love for sinners, moved by the love of the Holy Spirit.
- ♦ After his resurrection, the first thing Jesus does when he appears to his disciples gathered in the upper room is to give them the Holy Spirit. And then at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit is poured out in full for the evangelization of the whole world.

Whether the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father or from the Father *and* the Son became a point of disagreement between Catholics and the Orthodox churches. We don't have need to enter into all the details of that controversy, but Aquinas argues for this traditional Catholic belief for two reasons.

First, it is a scriptural truth. We frequently hear in Scripture that the Holy Spirit is sent from the Father and also that he is sent by or given by the Son. And this is to teach us that the Spirit proceeds in eternity from both the Father and the Son. We receive the Spirit as the gift of the Son, who received the power to breathe forth the Spirit from the Father.

Second, Aquinas argues that it is necessary to say this because otherwise we could not distinguish the Spirit's procession from the Word's procession. Since both the Son and Holy Spirit are true God, and since the Divine Persons are relations in God, the Son and Holy Spirit can only be distinct Persons if they have different relations to the Father. And this is possible only because the Son is from the Father and, with the Father, breathes forth the Holy Spirit.

Thus, the Father is the source without a source, the principle of both the Son and the Holy Spirit. By contrast, the Son is from the Father, and is also a source of the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit is from the Father and from the Son. This means that the pattern of relations is distinct for each of the three Persons, and only in this way can we affirm that the Persons are really distinct.

There is one final but extremely important point to make: when the Holy Spirit is given to you, *he really dwells in you in person*, and he makes you like himself. When you receive the Holy Spirit, you are really made holy like he is. What is more, he is Love in person, and so he imprints in your heart the very personal property that is distinctive about him. That is, he is the model or supreme example of the love of God—he is like a stamp or a seal that impresses its pattern of divine love on your soul *so that you begin to love God above all things and to love your neighbor for the sake of God, just like God loves himself and loves his creatures.*

And because the Holy Spirit is the spirit of Christ, the spirit of the Son, who is given to us by the risen Christ, *he also configures us to Christ, even to*

*Christ as man, in his life, death, and resurrection.* The new life that the Holy Spirit gives to us is the very life of Christ!

This is why it is important to pray to the Holy Spirit (which many people often forget to do) and to pray that you will receive a greater share in the Spirit's gifts. *If you have been baptized and are living in friendship with God, you really do have the Spirit dwelling in you with his gifts!* So you should ask him for his help and rely on the promise of his aid and his strength. "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit" (Gal 5:25). What a great privilege and joy this is!

#### I STILL HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

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Martinez, Luis M. *The Sanctifier*. Pauline Books & Media, 2003.