

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Third Divine Person of the Holy Trinity, the bond of love between the Father and the Son.

The Holy Spirit is God—equal in being with the Father and the Son, of the same divine nature as they are (consubstantial with them)

Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to build, animate, and sanctify the Church

Just before his Ascension, Jesus said these words to the Apostles:

“You will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, [in all] Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

The Acts of the Apostles shows how the Holy Spirit transformed the Apostles from being fearful disciples, huddling behind closed doors, into courageous witnesses.

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. (Acts 2:1-4)

These words of Christ to the Apostles are also addressed to each of us.

The Holy Spirit comes to us as a **teacher** of the meaning and depth of Revelation. He also fills us with power, the grace to **understand** the Church's teachings and the **wisdom** to see how they apply to our lives. Finally, the Spirit puts **courage** into our hearts so that we can witness what we believe to believer and unbeliever alike. When we learn how to be open to the Holy Spirit, he shares with us the gift of **understanding** that contains the power to know Jesus and to give witness to him.

The traditional list of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, piety, fortitude, and fear of the Lord (see Isaiah 11:1-3).

The Gift of Knowledge helps us to grow in our relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Just as a child grows in knowledge of his parents, so will a Christian, through the Gift of Knowledge, grow to know the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit more deeply and intimately.

The Gift of Understanding helps us to comprehend the divine mysteries. This applies to doctrines, dogmas, and scriptural passages and events, but also those things that occur in a person's life.

The Gift of Wisdom is seeing the thoughts and ways of God. When a Christian sees God's ways, he or she can follow God's will, not his or her own. The best way to know the ways of God is to read Sacred Scripture, in particular the Gospels (in which Jesus Himself teaches us about the ways of God).

Gifts that guide our action, helping us to make the right choices:

The Gift of Fortitude gives us strength to stand up for our faith and for what is good in the face of danger. It makes us willing even to suffer for the truth.

The Gift of Counsel helps Christians know what they should or should not do in situations that demand a moral decision. Through the gift of Counsel, the Holy Spirit guides us in what is right and wrong. He helps us to live the commandments.

Gifts that move us to relate to God in prayer and love:

The Gift of Piety guides us to worship God through the Holy Spirit. It also rightly aligns our relationship with God as His sons and daughters. With Piety, we can worship God as He wants to be worshipped.

The Gift of Fear of the Lord gives us the capacity for awe. As the Lord expresses Himself through Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, this gift allows us to be profoundly moved by the Lord's presence and mystery. This gift also helps us to stay close to God as we fear both His just punishment for sin and offending His love.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are permanent (lasting) dispositions (inclination or even orientation) in the soul, making it more docile or submissive to God's promptings.

The fruit of the Holy Spirit are
love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
gentleness and self-control

At our Baptism, the Spirit works through the waters which take away Original Sin and actual sins and give us new life with the Triune God.

At Confirmation, the Holy Spirit is conferred by the anointing with the Chrism, by which the bishop seals us so that the Holy Spirit can strengthen us to pursue the mission of Christ to transform the world.

At every Mass, the Holy Spirit changes the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ by the ministry of the priest.

The Holy Spirit is dynamic, transforming our bodies into temples of God and our souls into dwelling places for Christ.

Sometimes called the Paraclete, advocate or consoler, the Holy Spirit wants to fill us with inspiration and encouragement.

We may not have to do great things, but we are called to do everyday duties with great love.

The Holy Spirit is essentially Love.

Love can change those we meet and change ourselves in each encounter.

Because of the Holy Spirit our whole being, mind, heart, soul, and body can be permeated with Love.

The Old Testament proclaimed the Father clearly,
but the Son more obscurely.

The New Testament revealed the Son and
gave us a glimpse of the divinity of the Spirit.

Now the Spirit dwells among us and grants us a clearer vision of himself.

CCC, no. 684,

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit is hidden but is at work.

Both the Hebrew word and the Greek word for the Spirit originally meant a “breath,” or “air,” or “wind.” The Spirit was thus understood to be the source of inspiration, life, and movement within God’s people.

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”

The Holy Spirit anointed prophets to speak God’s Word, priests to intercede for the people, and kings to lead Israel against the enemies of God.

The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon the Messiah and endow him with spiritual gifts (cf. Is 11:1-2)

The Gospels show us the dynamic action of the Holy Spirit.

A rich example of the Holy Spirit's transforming power can be seen in the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus.

She is God's masterpiece, transformed by him into a luminous witness of grace from the moment of her conception. The angel Gabriel rightly addressed her as "full of grace."

It is also by the power of the Holy Spirit that Mary conceived Jesus, the Son of God.

The Holy Spirit appears in the form of a dove over Jesus at his baptism in the Jordan.

He leads Jesus into the desert before he starts his public mission.

In the Last Supper discourse in John's Gospel, Chapter 16, Jesus speaks at length about the promised revelation and the sending of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is again revealed at Pentecost, when the seven weeks after Easter have concluded.

The Acts of the Apostles and the various epistles of the New Testament give us further evidence of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the first-century Church.

Even though the Holy Spirit is the last Person of the Trinity to be revealed, we must understand that, from the beginning, he is a part of the loving plan of our salvation from sin and of the offer of divine life.

He has the same mission as the Son in the cause of our salvation. When the Father sends the Son, he also sends the Holy Spirit.

When the Father sends his Word, he always sends his Breath. In their joint mission, the Son and the Holy Spirit are distinct but inseparable. (CCC, no. 689)

The Holy Spirit continues to give us knowledge of God, living and active in the Church.

The Catechism sets out eight ways in which the Holy Spirit provides us with an experience of God's presence (cf. CCC, no. 688):

1. When we pray and study the Scripture which the Holy Spirit inspired, we can sense his presence in the biblical words.
2. When we read the lives of the saints, their teachings and witness, we can be motivated to holiness by their example which was shaped by the Holy Spirit.
3. When we assent with obedience to the teachings of the Magisterium, we are guided by the Holy Spirit. His presence is uniquely experienced at Ecumenical Councils.
4. When we actively participate in the liturgies and Sacraments of the Church, we enter into a sacred moment when the Holy Spirit opens us to experience God, especially in the Eucharist.
5. When we give ourselves to prayer, whether that be the Rosary or the Liturgy of the Hours or meditation or other prayers, the Holy Spirit prays within us and intercedes for us.
6. When we offer ourselves to the various missionary or apostolic efforts of the Church or see signs of those efforts, we can sense the Holy Spirit at work in the world.
7. When we recognize the charisms and ministries which help build the Church, we also understand that it is the Holy Spirit providing us with the leadership we need.
8. When we dwell on the great Tradition of the Church, its marvelous history and its host of saintly witnesses, we sense the Holy Spirit's sustaining power through it all.

Faith and works are interrelated in God's plan of salvation.

Being liberated from sin and becoming a son or a daughter of God is a free gift given to us through faith, this is Justification

but we remain in God's family and mature as his spiritual children through love and good works. This is Sanctification.

Thus faith and love **together** lead us on toward eternal life (CCC 1987-1995).

The Church teaches that we are not saved simply by faith alone

The Church also teaches that we cannot earn our salvation.

Faith and works are interrelated in God's plan of salvation.