



From A Bishop's Journal (685)

Moved by the Spirit (1)

“You Will Receive Power”

For the fifth consecutive year, with you I want to go through Level Five of the family- and parish-based catechetics programme. During this Lent we shall reflect on the topic, “Moved by the Spirit.” I congratulate the members of our diocesan catechetics coordinating committee for having so carefully revised the programme. May what follows help us to better know the Holy Spirit, both in Himself and in His work.

Make Us Live in Your Spirit

I begin with a prayer of praise and intercession, which the Church gives us in the French edition of the Liturgy of the Hours (Morning prayer, Tuesday of Week II):

“In the Son and the Spirit, let us pray to our loving Father: Make us live in your Spirit.

- At the dawn of creation, your Spirit on the waters brought forth life. Awaken us to praise, in your service.
- At the dawn of salvation, your Spirit formed the Messiah in Mary's womb. Form us to obedience, for the sake of your Kingdom.
- On the day of Pentecost, your Spirit spoke through the mouths of the Apostles. Put on our lips your saving words.
- At the dawn of this day, the Spirit works in us: may he be in our prayers and our work.
- Lord, you open your loved ones to the riches of the Holy Spirit, and you make your own life progress in them by making them sharers in the body of your Son. Help them behave in the world like children of God who are called to freedom. May their holiness of life attach them to the prophetic mission of the Church.”

He Is, He Was, and He Will Be

Whenever there is talk of the Holy Spirit, we might think that He has existed only since the Christian Pentecost, that He had never made himself known before. Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Holy Spirit has always existed. He was there way before creation. He is ever the Living God who

spreads His love in our hearts. He will still be there tomorrow and always. However, just as God's revelation was made over time, it took centuries for the manifestation of the Holy Spirit to humankind to be recognised. Even in the days of St. Paul, many among the baptised ignored that there was a Holy Spirit. However, in the Old Testament we read how the Holy Spirit took hold of King David and of many prophets. Several times the prophets announced that the Lord would change our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh by giving them a new Spirit, that He would pour out His Spirit on His people.

But How do we Call Him?

Just as the principal revelation of God the Father comes from Jesus who made Him known through his life and his teaching, in the same way we owe to Jesus the revelation of the Holy Spirit in a distinct way. "It is good that I leave. I shall send you a protector, a Paraclete. You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes down on you; then you are to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, yes, even to the ends of the earth." The Holy Spirit had already made himself known in the life of Jesus, most especially at his baptism in the Jordan and at the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor. Without forgetting the flood of the baptismal waters and the holy anointing, Tradition has always shown the Holy Spirit under the forms that Jesus himself had used: a dove, flames, and the wind or breeze. Religious imagery, religious art have constantly represented these symbols. Saint Luke the Evangelist is the one who spoke the most of the Holy Spirit, his entire Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles are marked by it. Saint Paul, too, is sensitive to the presence of the Holy Spirit at the heart of every community. The Holy Spirit himself is the strength and courage of Jesus' disciples.

Jean-François' Testimony

A young boy asked, recently, to be confirmed. This is what he wrote: "After several weeks of preparation, I think that I am now ready to receive the gift of the Spirit in the sacrament of confirmation. Through your help, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit will be given to me. The wind of filial love will make me love the Lord and my brothers and sisters. I shall use the wind of strength to overcome obstacles that I shall come across. The wind of knowledge will help me understand the realities of life. The wind of wisdom will make an important place to God, in my heart. I shall use the wind of intelligence to understand the Word of God. Thanks to the wind of counsel, I shall be able to live as a true Christian. The wind of worship will make me recognise all the wonders which God has worked for me. With these gifts, I shall be able to live in peace with the Spirit of Jesus. I am ready to say yes to my baptismal promises. I thank you for this beautiful gift you offer me today. You can be assured that I shall be a good witness of Jesus."

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02-21-07