



The Armor of Faith
Topic Summary: The Profession of Faith
I Believe in the Holy Spirit: Part II



Descent of the Holy Spirit
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Introduction

[Greeting:] → Welcome to “The Armor of Faith,” a show where we hope to bring our listeners closer to the Word of God and the blessings we receive through living in the fullness of the Catholic faith. My name is Doug and I will be your host as we discuss the blessings of the Church Christ built upon Peter.

I am joined today by my panel: [names]

Our panelists provide support and catechesis for religious formation at St. Philip Benizi Catholic Mission in Cedaredge CO. Our panelists are also in the process of study as lay Dominicans who are also known as the Order of Preachers. So, welcome to our panelists as well as our listeners.

Let us open with a prayer:

Heavenly Father, we lift up our hearts in thanks and praise for this opportunity to open and share your Holy Word this day. We pray that You are with us and all our listeners as we share with one another the blessings of faith. We pray You will grant us wisdom and understanding as we seek to learn Your Holy Truth.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit we pray.

Discussion:

We concluded our last discussion with article 684 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church where we are informed, “the **Spirit** is the last of the persons of the Holy Trinity to be revealed.” Given we see the **Holy Spirit** working in the lives of the children of God's creation since the book of Genesis, I asked, is this a contradiction? The answer is really, “no.” The reason is that just because we are aware of someone does not mean they are fully revealed to us. As we

discussed last time, in the Old Testament, we see qualities of the **Holy Spirit**, but He is not fully revealed to us in terms of the fullness of His role in our lives and in the maturation of our **faith**.

We mentioned that for many people, the **Holy Spirit** is perhaps the most difficult element of the Holy Trinity to comprehend. We observe in the Old Testament, God speaking through His angels and His prophets. We should also consider that it is the **Holy Spirit** which guides the wisdom and truth of what the prophets speak.

Some of the qualities of the **Holy Spirit** we discussed last time included, wisdom, truth, righteousness, justice, power, strength, and life. Today, we are going to walk deeper into the meaning of the power of the **Holy Spirit** within our lives as well as to the growth and comprehension of our **faith**.

In the Old Testament, we see the presence of the **Holy Spirit**, but references to the **Holy Spirit** are rather obscure. We see that change in the New Testament, because right off the bat, we see the work of the **Holy Spirit** through Mary and John the Baptist, but even then, we observe the **Holy Spirit** working in the background towards the fulfillment of God's plan. We are told the **Holy Spirit** is within John and indeed, it is through the **Holy Spirit** by which John is able to recognize the presence of Jesus even as both were forming in their mothers' wombs as recounted to us in Luke 1:39-45.

We are told in Matthew 1:18 and Luke 1:35 that it is by the power of the **Holy Spirit** that the Word made flesh was conceived within the womb of Mary. We are also told in John 1:29-34 that it was through the **Holy Spirit** by which John would once more recognize the Lamb of God, although John said he did not know Him. Of course, we should not be surprised that John did not remember his first encounter with Jesus as it was at a time when John was too young to remember that particular moment given they were both within their mother's womb. As we observe this interaction of John with Jesus, perhaps this gives visibility to another quality of the **Holy Spirit** which is not easy to sum up in one word, which is, "One who confirms or testifies to God's truth."

As we came to the end of our last show, we were discussing article 684 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It begins, "Through his grace, the **Holy Spirit** is the first to awaken **faith** in us and to communicate to us the new life, which is to 'know the Father and the one whom he has sent, Jesus Christ.'" In the footnotes to this statement, we see a reference to John 17:3, where Jesus states, "*Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ.*"

Let's take a moment to look at the context of this statement. As we read John 17, we observe Jesus in prayer with His Heavenly Father.

1 When Jesus had said this, he raised his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your son, so that your son may glorify you, 2 just as you gave him authority over all people, so that he may give eternal life to all you gave him. 3 Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ. 4 I glorified you on earth by accomplishing the work that you gave me to

do. 5 Now glorify me, Father, with you, **with the glory that I had with you before the world began.**

6 “I revealed your name to those whom you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 **Now they know that everything you gave me is from you,** 8 **because the words you gave to me I have given to them, and they accepted them and truly understood that I came from you, and they have believed that you sent me.** 9 I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for the ones you have given me, because they are yours, 10 and everything of mine is yours and everything of yours is mine, and I have been glorified in them. 11 **And now I will no longer be in the world, but they are in the world, while I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are.** 12 **When I was with them I protected them in your name that you gave me, and I guarded them, and none of them was lost except the son of destruction, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled.** 13 **But now I am coming to you. I speak this in the world so that they may share my joy completely.** 14 **I gave them your word, and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world.** 15 **I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the evil one.** 16 **They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world.** 17 **Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth.** 18 **As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world.** 19 **And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth.** (John 17:1-19)

(Question: Of course there is a lot to unpack in this prayer of Jesus, but we should note that as He is praying, Jesus is preparing to leave the world and come to the Father. Jesus is advocating for those who **believe** in Him, that they may also learn more of the Father. Jesus was the Word made flesh, and during His time on earth, He shared that Word, but now He was returning to the Father. **Who might we expect to be the One to continue the mission of teaching the Word and testifying to the truth and how might that be done?)**

15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16 **And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always,** 17 **the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains with you, and will be in you.** 18 **I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.** 19 **In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me, because I live and you will live.** 20 **On that day you will realize that I am in my Father and you are in me and I in you.** 21 **Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him.”** 22 **Judas, not the Iscariot, said to him, “Master, [then] what happened that you will reveal yourself to us and not to the world?”** 23 **Jesus answered and said to him, “Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him.** 24 **Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; yet the word you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me.** 25 “I have told you this while I am with you. 26 **The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name—he will teach you everything and remind you of all that [I] told you.** (John 14:15-26)

(**Question:** Let us try to imagine if we were in the presence of the Word made flesh. Can we imagine being taught by Him? Do you think we would remember all which He said? Do you think we would comprehend all which He taught? What do you think that experience might be like?)

(**Question:** We shouldn't feel bad if we have memories which fade and begin to fail us. The only way we can counter that is through continuous study and learning. Still, if we examine the life of the Apostles, we see that even those who walked with Jesus for three years struggled in their comprehension of all which Jesus spoke and taught. In John 14:16, we might observe that Jesus is, in a fashion, putting His affairs in order. He recognizes the students will no longer have their teacher. As He prepares to go to the Father, He tells His disciples, “*And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always..*” What does Jesus mean when He says, “another Advocate?”)

6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” (John 14:6-7)

(**Question:** As was mentioned in John 14:18, Jesus tells His disciples that He will not leave them orphans; that He will ask the Father to give them another Advocate, the Holy Spirit. What does Jesus say the Holy Spirit will do for them and what is the importance of that role?)

(CCC: 685) To believe in the Holy Spirit is to profess that the Holy Spirit is one of the persons of the Holy Trinity, consubstantial with the Father and the Son: “with the Father and the Son he is adored and glorified.”⁶ For this reason, the divine mystery of the Holy Spirit was already treated in the context of Trinitarian “theology.” Here, however, we have to do with the Holy Spirit only in the divine “economy.”

(CCC: 258) The whole divine economy is the common work of the three divine persons. For as the Trinity has only one and the same nature, so too does it have only one and the same operation: “The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are not three principles of creation but one principle.” However each divine person performs the common work according to his unique personal property. Thus the Church confesses, following the New Testament, “one God and Father from whom all things are, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all things are, and one Holy Spirit in whom all things are.” It is above all the divine missions of the Son’s Incarnation and the gift of the Holy Spirit that show forth the properties of the divine persons.

(**Question:** So, here, we are diving here into attempting to understand the nature of the Trinity; One God in three persons, but we will leave that for another time. My question here is, what does “consubstantial with the Father and the Son,” mean?)

19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” 20 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21 [Jesus] said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” 22 And when he had

said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the **holy Spirit**. 23 Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.” (John 20:19-23)

(Question: In this moment, Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit upon His disciples. For what purpose do we think Jesus did this?)

1 In the first book, Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught 2 until the day he was taken up, after giving instructions through the **holy Spirit** to the apostles whom he had chosen. 3 He presented himself alive to them by many proofs after he had suffered, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. 4 While meeting with them, he enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for “the promise of the Father about which you have heard me speak; 5 for John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the **holy Spirit**.” (Acts 1:1-5)

1 When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. 2 And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. 3 Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. 4 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)

(Question: We recognize the events recounted in Acts 2 as those of Pentecost. As the Holy Spirit descends upon the disciples of Jesus, what has begun and what do we believe to be the role of the Holy Spirit?)

8 Now Stephen, filled with grace and power, was working great wonders and signs among the people. 9 Certain members of the so-called Synagogue of Freedmen, Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and people from Cilicia and Asia, came forward and debated with Stephen, 10 but they could not withstand the wisdom and the **spirit** with which he spoke. 11 Then they instigated some men to say, “We have heard him speaking blasphemous words against Moses and God.” 12 They stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes, accosted him, seized him, and brought him before the Sanhedrin. 13 They presented false witnesses who testified, “This man never stops saying things against [this] holy place and the law. 14 For we have heard him claim that this Jesus the Nazorean will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us.” 15 All those who sat in the Sanhedrin looked intently at him and saw that his face was like the face of an angel. (Acts 6:8-15)

Stephen, then, recounted the history of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, and Solomon. He continued:

51 “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always oppose the **holy Spirit**; you are just like your ancestors. 52 Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They put to death those who foretold the coming of the righteous one, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become. 53 You received the law as transmitted by angels, but you did not observe it.” (Acts 7:51-53)

(**Question:** Shortly after this speech, the people, with Saul [Paul] watching, drug Stephen out to the gates of the city and stoned him. You might say the people kinda made Stephen's point for him. What did Stephen mean as he accused the Sanhedrin of opposing the **Holy Spirit**? Were they not the keepers of the law of God?)

[Paul spoke to the people as he prepared to leave Miletus and travel to Jerusalem to face what awaited him there.]

[Paul said] 28 *Keep watch over yourselves and over the whole flock of which the **holy Spirit** has appointed you overseers, in which you tend the church of God that he acquired with his own blood.* 29 *I know that after my departure **savage wolves will come among you, and they will not spare the flock.*** 30 *And from your own group, men will come forward **perverting the truth to draw the disciples away after them.*** 31 *So be vigilant and remember that for three years, night and day, I unceasingly admonished each of you with tears.* 32 *And now I commend you to God and to that gracious word of his that can build you up and give you the inheritance among all who are consecrated.* 33 *I have never wanted anyone's silver or gold or clothing.* 34 *You know well that these very hands have served my needs and my companions.* 35 *In every way I have shown you that by hard work of that sort **we must help the weak, and keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus who himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'***"
(Acts 20:28-35)

(**Question:** In this passage, we read of Saint Paul's speech to the elders of the church where he encouraged them to watch over themselves and the whole flock of the church of God which was purchased with the blood of Christ. As Saint Paul concluded his warnings and encouragement, of what did he warn those present and what example did he give to give them hope?)

Quotes:

But the **Holy Spirit** does not speak His own things, but those of Christ, and that not from himself, but from the Lord; even as the Lord also announced to us the things that He received from the Father. For, says He, "the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's, who sent Me." And says He of the **Holy Spirit**, "He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever things He shall hear from Me." And He says of Himself to the Father, "I have," says He, "glorified Thee upon the earth; I have finished the work which, Thou gavest Me; I have manifested Thy name to men." And of the **Holy Ghost**, "He shall glorify Me, for He receives of Mine."
– The Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians Chapter IX

Since, also, there is but one unbegotten Being, God, even the Father; and one only-begotten Son, God, the Word and man; and one **Comforter, the Spirit of truth**; and also one preaching, and one faith, and one baptism; and one Church which the holy apostles established from one end of the earth to the other by the blood of Christ, and by their own sweat and toil;
– The Epistle of Ignatius to the Philadelphians Chapter IV.

Wherefore, when our Lord breathed on His disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," He certainly wished it to be understood that the Holy Ghost was not only the Spirit of the Father, but of the only begotten Son Himself. For the same Spirit is, indeed, the Spirit of the

Father and of the Son, making with them the trinity of Father, Son, and Spirit, not a creature, but the Creator. For neither was that material breath which proceeded from the mouth of His flesh the very substance and nature of the Holy Spirit, but rather the intimation, as I said, that the Holy Spirit was common to the Father and to the Son; for they have not each a separate Spirit, but both one and the same. – Augustine The City of God Book 13 Chapter 24

Final Thoughts:

As we progressed through today's discussion of the **Holy Spirit**, we observed how the **Holy Spirit** guided John the Baptist as John announced the coming of the One who would baptize with the **Holy Spirit**. We also observed how the **Holy Spirit** descended upon Jesus in testimony that indeed, Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. As Jesus prepared to go to the Father, He asked that the Father would send another **Advocate, the Holy Spirit**, to remind us of all which Jesus taught as the Word made flesh.

We observed as Jesus rose from the dead, before He ascended to the Father, He breathed the **Holy Spirit** upon His disciples so that they may receive Him and to be guided by Him. We saw how the **Holy Spirit** descended upon the disciples at Pentecost to enable them to proclaim the Word of God to the world. Through these events, we see the **Holy Spirit** leading those to whom Jesus entrusted His Church. We see that it is by the power of the **Holy Spirit** by which the truth of God's Word is proclaimed. It is also by the power of the **Holy Spirit** that our own **faith** is nourished with truth. As we are told in 1 John 4:13, *“This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us, that he has given us of his **Spirit**.”*

As we continue next week, we will discuss the gifts of the **Holy Spirit** and how the **Holy Spirit** works within us and through us as we navigate our journey of life.

Wrap Up: Well, our hour is once more done. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we continue our discussion of the meaning of the **Holy Spirit** to our **faith**.

Let us conclude with a prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity to open and discuss Your Holy Word. We pray that as we go our separate ways, You will continue to walk with us and help us to see how we may put on the armor of **truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation**, and the **Word** of the gospel not only for the benefit of our lives, but also the lives of all who cross our path. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

Thank you all and God bless.

Next Session: The Profession of Faith: I Believe in the Holy Spirit – Part II.