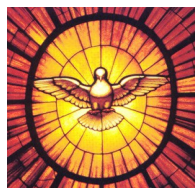




The Armor of Faith
Topic Summary: The Profession of Faith
I Believe in the Holy Spirit: Part I



Holy Spirit as Dove
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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:

Last time, we discussed the **judgment** we all shall face. As we reviewed scripture, especially the parables through which Jesus taught, we observed that there are a number of things over which we might be **judged**. It is true, it is by the grace of God and our **faith** in the only begotten Son of the Father by which we have the opportunity to receive salvation, but it is not as simple as saying, “We **believe**.” If we do **believe**, then, there is a small matter of how we choose to live that **belief**.

Fortunately, there is an **Advocate**, an **Advocate** who will remind us of all Jesus taught. An **Advocate** who will guide us in truth. It is this **Advocate** of which we shall discuss today.

One of the first places in the Bible where we see someone led by the **Holy Spirit** is Genesis 41: 33-38 where Joseph, son of Jacob, was brought before Pharaoh to interpret a dream. As a result, Joseph saw that Egypt was to experience seven years of abundance to be followed by seven years of famine, so Joseph issued this advice to Pharaoh:

*33 “Therefore, let Pharaoh seek out a discerning and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt. 34 Let Pharaoh act and appoint overseers for the land to organize it during the seven years of abundance. 35 They should collect all the food of these coming good years, gathering the grain under Pharaoh’s authority, for food in the cities, and they should guard it. 36 This food will serve as a reserve for the country against the seven years of famine that will occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish in the famine.” 37 This advice pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. 38 “Could we find another like him,” Pharaoh asked his servants, “a man so endowed with the **spirit of God?**” (Genesis 41:33-38)*

(Question: So here we see Joseph referred to as a man endowed with the **spirit of God**. **What is the nature of the Spirit in this moment?**)

In Psalm 51:11-19, in a portion of the song of David, we read:

*11 Turn away your face from my sins;
blot out all my iniquities.
12 A clean heart create for me, God;
renew within me a steadfast spirit.
13 Do not drive me from before your face,
nor take from me your **holy spirit**.
14 Restore to me the gladness of your salvation;
uphold me with a willing spirit.
15 I will teach the wicked your ways,
that sinners may return to you.
16 Rescue me from violent bloodshed, God, my saving God,
and my tongue will sing joyfully of your justice.
17 Lord, you will open my lips;
and my mouth will proclaim your praise.
18 For you do not desire sacrifice or I would give it;
a burnt offering you would not accept.
19 My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit;
a contrite, humbled heart, O God, you will not scorn.
(Psalm 51:11-19)*

(Question: Here we observe King David in prayer to God. **For what is King David asking and for what purpose do we believe King David is making this request?**)

As the book of Wisdom opens, we read the following instruction:

*I Love righteousness, you who judge the earth;
think of the LORD in goodness,*

- and seek him in integrity of heart;*
- 2 *Because he is found by those who do not test him,
and manifests himself to those who do not **disbelieve** him.*
- 3 *For perverse counsels separate people from God,
and his power, put to the proof, rebukes the foolhardy;*
- 4 *Because into a soul that plots evil wisdom does not enter,
nor does she dwell in a body under debt of sin.*
- 5 *For the **holy spirit** of discipline flees deceit
and withdraws from senseless counsels
and is rebuked when unrighteousness occurs.*
- 6 *For wisdom is a kindly **spirit**,
yet she does not acquit blasphemous lips;*
*Because God is the witness of the inmost self
and the sure observer of the heart
and the listener to the tongue.*
- 7 *For the **spirit of the LORD** fills the world,
is all-embracing, and knows whatever is said.*
- 8 *Therefore those who utter wicked things will not go unnoticed,
nor will chastising condemnation pass them by.*
- 9 *For the devices of the wicked shall be scrutinized,
and the sound of their words shall reach the LORD,
for the chastisement of their transgressions;*
- 10 *Because a jealous ear hearkens to everything,
and discordant grumbings are not secret.*
- 11 *Therefore guard against profitless grumbling,
and from calumny withhold your tongues;
For a stealthy utterance will not go unpunished,
and a lying mouth destroys the soul.*
- 12 *Do not court death by your erring way of life,
nor draw to yourselves destruction by the works of your hands.*
- 13 *Because God did not make death,
nor does he rejoice in the destruction of the living.*
- 14 *For he fashioned all things that they might have being,
and the creatures of the world are wholesome;
There is not a destructive drug among them
nor any domain of Hades on earth,*
- 15 *For righteousness is undying.*
- (Wisdom 1:1-15)

(Question: In this instruction, we see several qualities of wisdom, which is also attributed to the **Holy Spirit**. What are these qualities and what might their benefit be to us?)

In the New Testament, one of the first references to the **Holy Spirit** is Matthew 1:18-25, where it is written:

18 *Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the*

holy Spirit. 19 Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. 20 Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the **holy Spirit** that this child has been conceived in her. 21 She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:

23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means “God is with us.” 24 When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. 25 He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.
(Matthew 1:18-25)

(Question: In this short passage, we see the involvement of the **Holy Spirit**. What was accomplished through the **Holy Spirit** and how did this influence Joseph, who is described as a righteous man?)

The next place we read of the **Holy Spirit** is Matthew 3:7-12, which reads:

7 When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance. 9 And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones. 10 Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. 11 I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the **holy Spirit** and fire. 12 His winnowing fan is in his hand. He will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.” (Matthew 3:7-12)

(Question: Here, John the Baptist reveals the coming of One greater than he, One who will baptize with the **Holy Spirit**. What do we think baptism with the **Holy Spirit** might yield?)

(CCC: 683) “No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the **Holy Spirit**.” “God has sent the **Spirit** of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’” This knowledge of faith is possible only in the **Holy Spirit**: to be in touch with Christ, we must first have been touched by the **Holy Spirit**. He comes to meet us and kindles faith in us. By virtue of our Baptism, the first sacrament of the faith, the **Holy Spirit** in the Church communicates to us, intimately and personally, the life that originates in the Father and is offered to us in the Son.

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. 30 He is the one of whom I said, ‘A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.’ 31 I did not know

him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel.” 32 John testified further, saying, “I saw the **Spirit** come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him. 33 I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘On whomever you see the **Spirit** come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the **holy Spirit**.’ 34 Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God.” (John 1:29-34)

(Question: Here, we read of an interaction in relation to what John is told and what John reveals. What is the nature of this revelation and what is the role of the **Holy Spirit**?)

10 Then, when the whole assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense offering, 11 the angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right of the altar of incense. 12 Zechariah was troubled by what he saw, and fear came upon him. 13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John. 14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, 15 for he will be great in the sight of [the] Lord. He will drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will be filled with the **holy Spirit** even from his mother’s womb, 16 and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a people fit for the Lord.” (Luke 1:10-17)

(Question: As we read about John, we learn about the mission of John. What is that mission and who do we believe is leading John in that mission?)

(CCC: 683 Cont'd) Baptism gives us the grace of new birth in God the Father, through his Son, in the **Holy Spirit**. For those who bear **God’s Spirit** are led to the Word, that is, to the Son, and the Son presents them to the Father, and the Father confers incorruptibility on them. And it is impossible to see God’s Son without the **Spirit**, and no one can approach the Father without the Son, for the knowledge of the Father is the Son, and the knowledge of God’s Son is obtained through the **Holy Spirit**.

(Question: Here, we read that “[I]t is impossible to see God’s Son without the **Spirit**, and no one can approach the Father without the Son, for the knowledge of the Father is the Son, and the knowledge of God’s Son is obtained through the **Holy Spirit**. What is the relationship revealed in this statement and what is its importance to the maturity of our faith?)

(CCC: 684) 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.”⁴ But the **Spirit** is the last of the persons of the Holy Trinity to be revealed. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, the Theologian, explains this progression in terms of the pedagogy of divine “condescension”: 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. It was not prudent, when the divinity of the Father had not yet been confessed, to proclaim the Son openly and, when the divinity of the Son was not yet admitted, to add the **Holy Spirit** as an extra burden, to speak somewhat daringly. . . .

By advancing and progressing “from glory to glory,” the light of the Trinity will shine in ever more brilliant rays.

(Question: You may have noticed in this article the statement. “But the **Spirit** is the last of the persons of the Holy Trinity to be revealed.” You may have also noticed that the scripture with which I began our show with is from the Old Testament, as a matter of fact, kinda early on, like from the book of Genesis. You might be saying to yourselves that this appears to be a contradiction. **Is this a contradiction, that the **Holy Spirit** is the last to be revealed? Why or why not?)**

[A hint for the discussion: Revelation is defined by our friends Merriam-Webster as, “an act of revealing or communicating divine truth; something that is revealed by God to humans; an act of revealing to view or making known....]

Quotes:

According to the degree to which the intellect is stripped of the passions, the **Holy Spirit** initiates the intellect into the mysteries of the age to be. – St. Thalassios the Libyan

O **Holy Spirit**, descend plentifully into my heart. Enlighten the dark corners of this neglected dwelling and scatter there Thy cheerful beams. – Saint Augustine

Virtues are formed by prayer. Prayer preserves temperance. Prayer suppresses anger. Prayer prevents emotions of pride and envy. Prayer draws into the soul the **Holy Spirit**, and raises man to Heaven. – St. Ephraem

Enrich your soul in the great goodness of God: The Father is your table, the Son is your food, and the **Holy Spirit** waits on you and then makes His dwelling in you. – St. Catherine of Siena

Come, **Holy Spirit. Spirit of truth**, you are the reward of the saints, the comforter of souls, light in the darkness, riches to the poor, treasure to lovers, food for the hungry, comfort to those who are wandering; to sum up, you are the one in whom all treasures are contained. Come! As you descended upon Mary that the Word might become flesh, work in us through grace as you worked in her through nature and grace. Come! Food of every chaste thought, fountain of all mercy, sum of all purity. Come! Consume in us whatever prevents us from being consumed in you. - St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi

Final Thoughts:

As we opened our discussion today, we examined scripture which helped us to gain appreciation of the **Holy Spirit** and some of the qualities the **Holy Spirit** brings to those who receive Him, such as wisdom, righteousness, justice, truth, power, strength, and life. As we encounter the Holy Spirit within the Old Testament, we see references to His nature and stories of those the Holy Spirit has guided and the fruits produced by their following.

We are told in article 684 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church that through the grace of God, “the **Holy Spirit** is the first to awaken **faith** in us.” If we have ever wondered what draws

us to learn more about God, it is the **Holy Spirit**. Especially for our listeners who may be in RCIA or in preparation for confirmation, you should trust that the **Holy Spirit** is seeking a place to reside within your heart. For the rest of us, the same is also true and if we examine our lives, we may very well see the times where He has endeavored to bring us closer to the Son so we may be brought closer to the Father. As we experience that innate desire to know God, we should consider that it is the Holy Spirit tugging us away from evil so we may turn to the blessings of God's truth.

In our discussion today, we barely opened the door of what we might seek to understand in terms of the meaning of the Holy Spirit to our lives. We have so much more to discover, so next week, we will continue our discussion and examination of both scripture and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We will discuss further the role of the **Holy Spirit** in revelation of the Son as well as the role of the Holy Spirit in the early church and as it continues to this day.

Wrap Up: Well, our time has come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we pick up our discussion with

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.