

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHURCH

We saw in our first session that the Trinity is the central mystery of our faith

1. Everything God does, He does as a Trinity. So that All God's work takes on certain Trinitarian characteristics
2. In fact, History itself is Trinitarian
3. Notice how in the Creed, we begin by talking about the Father and His work, then the Son and His work, then the Holy Spirit and His work.

Of course, the Trinity works together on everything, but there's a way that each Person is emphasized through different phases of God's saving plan

So which person is emphasized at which stage of God's work for us?

1. Well, the work of the **Father**, "The Creator of Heaven and Earth," is emphasized In the Old Testament
2. Then the work of the **Son**, which we go over in the second part of the Creed, is emphasized in the Gospel period.
3. Finally, beginning with Pentecost, we see an emphasis on the work of the **Holy Spirit**

But, when we talk about the Holy Spirit's work in this third phase of salvation, we have to talk about two things:

1. The Holy Spirit's invisible work in the human soul
2. The Holy Spirit's visible work in the institution of the Catholic Church

So, let's get to know the Holy Spirit and His Church

I. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

A. The Holy Spirit in History

1. The Holy Spirit is revealed throughout the Old and New Testaments
 - a) Of course, from eternity, the Holy Spirit is with the Father and the Son in the Blessed Trinity

2. But we recognize Him at work in the Old Testament...
 - a) For example: moving over the waters at creation; entering the souls of the first man and woman; and speaking through the prophets
 3. and in the New Testament
 - a) For example: overshadowing Our Lady when she conceived Christ; being breathed on the apostles after the Resurrection; coming upon the Church at Pentecost
- B. The Holy Spirit in our souls
1. The Holy Spirit is the one who internally prompts us:
 - a) First, to recognize Jesus as Lord
 - b) Secondly, to follow Jesus in all things
 2. It is the Holy Spirit who dwells within us when we are in the state of sanctifying grace
 - a) Only by His presence and power are we able to live as we ought.
 3. Many people may feel as though they don't know the Spirit – but that's because He's too close to see. He's the one we owe all our merits and virtues too, and it is He who makes our **being** holy (by Baptism) and our **action** holy (by Confirmation).
- C. The Holy Spirit in the Church
1. But it wouldn't be enough if the Holy Spirit were simply an invisible force. God knows we need to use our bodies to enter into a relationship with anyone, including Him.
 - a) So by the power of the Holy Spirit, He has given us a visible Church ii. This Church includes tangible things like Official Church teaching, the Holy Bible, the Blessed Sacraments –
 - b) So we can hear God's directions through our human ears, read God's word with our human eyes, and touch God Himself in the sacraments
 - c) And it is the Holy Spirit, who is the **soul of the Church**, who preserves and sanctifies these heavenly gifts

II. What the Church is

- A. The Church is the **community of the faithful**, which includes both the laity and the hierarchy
1. Never in salvation history did God deal merely with an isolated individual (think how misguided was Cain's question, "Am I my brother's keeper?")

2. We pursue our eternal destiny together, as a family, and that family is the Church.

B. Now, very importantly, the **Church is a Mystical Body**

1. Paul, over and over, calls the Church “the Body of Christ”
 - a) As we just saw, the invisible **soul** of the Church is the **Holy Spirit**
 - b) And the **head** of the Church is **Christ**
2. But if the Church is Christ’s body, then that has some major implications
 - a) First of all, a body is visible (by definition, a body is something material, something tangible). So the Church can’t just be an “invisible community of all believers.” It has to be a concrete institution.
 - b) Secondly, a body is organized (a body, after all, has organs, and all the parts of the body are precisely coordinated to work together). So it doesn’t make sense for a Christian to say, “I don’t believe in organized religion.”
 - c) Thirdly, a body is how you relate to a person. A man can’t say to his wife, “I want to have a relationship with you, but I don’t want your body to get in the way. I don’t want to see, or touch, or hear your body.” So too, if the Church is Christ’s body, it doesn’t make sense to say, “I want a relationship with Christ, but I don’t want the Church to get in the way.” The Church is precisely how you have a relationship with Christ.

C. Finally, it is the Church (the Mystical Body of Christ) who gives us the most intimate access to God through the Eucharist (which is the Sacramental Body of Christ).

1. These two ways of Christ being present complement each other and depend on each other
 - a) So it’s a great mistake to emphasize the Eucharist without the Church, or the Church without the Eucharist
 - b) Christ’s Body is Christ’s Body – and it’s how we come to Him

III. What does the Church do?

- A. The Church is the community of believers, but every community needs leadership
 1. That’s why Jesus gave us Peter and the Apostles, and they in turn appointed successors (the popes and the bishops), to direct the Church until Christ should come again
- B. Under this leadership of the Pope and Bishops, the Church fulfills three tasks

1. The Church **teaches**

- a) The Church keeps safe the truths of revelation
- b) The teaching authority of the Church makes sure that our faith is never corrupted, never contradicts itself, and never invents a new teaching that isn't based on the original witness of Scripture and the Apostles
- c) Have you ever wondered how it is that official Church teaching hasn't contradicted itself in the course of two thousand years? Or why the "telephone effect" hasn't made us believe totally different things from the first Christians?
- d) It's because the Holy Spirit has safeguarded the Church's power to teach

2. The Church **sanctifies**

- a) It is by the power of the apostles and their successors that we have the Seven Sacraments, which God uses to make His people Holy
- b) It's the unbroken chain of ordination from the first apostles down to today's popes, bishops, priests, and deacons, that makes us confident that the miraculous power of the sacraments endures

3. The Church **governs**

- a) Christ appointed the apostles as shepherds, to lead the sheep – and gave them His power of binding and loosing (especially Peter in Matthew 16:19).
- b) Christ is, as we saw, Head of the Church, and He continues to lead His people through the authority of His apostles today.

WHAT A BLESSING TO HAVE CHRIST HIMSELF TEACHING US, MAKING US HOLY, AND GIVING US DIRECTION, THROUGH HIS SACRED BODY, THE CHURCH!

01

WHAT IS A NOVENA?

A NOVENA IS TAKEN FROM THE LATIN WORD NOVEM, WHICH MEANS NINE.

A NOVENA IS A NINE DAY PRAYER ASKING FOR A SPECIFIC INTENTION THROUGH A SAINT'S INTERCESSION

04

AM I PRAYING TO A SAINT?

A COMMON MISCONCEPTION, EVEN AMONG CATHOLICS, IS THAT WE PRAY TO SAINTS. WE ARE NOT PRAYING TO THIS SAINT BUT RATHER ASKING FOR THEM TO PRAY FOR US BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT THEY ARE SO CLOSE TO GOD IN HEAVEN!

02

WHAT IF WE MISS A DAY?

JUST KEEP GOING! GOD'S MERCY IS EVERLASTING AND HE JUST WANTS TO LOVE YOU!

05

DO I HAVE TO BEGIN AND END ON A CERTAIN DAY?

A COMMON PRACTICE IS TO DO A NOVENA THE NINE DAYS PRIOR TO A SAINT DAY, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO! YOU CAN PRAY A NOVENA AT ANY GIVEN POINT OF TIME. IF YOUR CHILD IS NAMED AFTER A SAINT, CONSIDER DOING A NINE DAY NOVENA LEADING UP TO THEIR BIRTHDAY!

03

WHY ARE THERE SO MANY DIFFERENT VERSIONS?

NOVENAS ARE NOT A MAGIC FORMULA TO GETTING WHAT YOU WANT OR A SPECIFIC PRAYER OF THE CHURCH LIKE THE OUR FATHER THAT HAS ONE WAY TO SAY IT. ANY VERSION OF THE PRAYER IS GOOD IF IT IS LEADING YOU TO GOD! DIFFERENT VERSIONS ARE HELPFUL FOR DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES!

06

WHY SHOULD I PRAY A NOVENA?

A NOVENA IS A GREAT WAY TO LEARN ABOUT A SAINT OR GOD WHILE PRAYING **CONSISTENTLY** FOR A SPECIFIC INTENTION

9-day Novena***Prayer to the Holy Spirit***

O Holy Spirit, Beloved of my soul, I adore You.

Enlighten me, guide me, strengthen and console me.

Tell me what I ought to do and command me to do it.

I promise to submit to everything that You ask of me and to accept all that You allow to happen to me. Just show me what is Your will, O Holy Spirit.

(by Cardinal Mercier)

Day 1: Pray this Novena to the Holy Spirit for (name your intention).

Praying this *Prayer to the Holy Spirit* during the Novena before Pentecost will allow you to develop a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit. Prayer is the foundation for knowing and following the guidance of the Holy Spirit, especially by allowing times of silence in prayer. Silence leads to awareness and recognition of the inner promptings of the Holy Spirit who will guide your actions toward what is true and good for you. The reading for each day is meant to foster this process. Please consider praying the *Prayer to the Holy Spirit* each day after the Novena.

God's love for you

You will want to become more aware of how much God loves you. St. Paul tells us that "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us." (Romans 5:5) The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Blessed Trinity. The Holy Spirit was sent by Jesus to live in your heart and bring you closer to Him. It is His power in you that enables you to recognize the voice of Jesus and follow His guidance.



The Holy Spirit coming with great power upon Mary, the Apostles, and the women on Pentecost. (Acts 2:1-4) The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person. The tongues of fire are a Biblical symbol.

Why pray to the Holy Spirit each day?

- To encounter the Person of the Holy Spirit.
- To develop/deepen your relationship with Jesus as He is revealed to you by the Person of the Holy Spirit.
- To grow in an awareness and learn to listen to the inner promptings of the Holy Spirit and practice following His guidance.
- To seek to follow the direction of the Holy Spirit and allow His Gifts to be operative in your life.

Day 2: Ask the Holy Spirit for an increase of the Gift of Wisdom.Meaning of the Words of the Prayer to the Holy Spirit

- **Holy Spirit, Beloved of my soul, I adore You.**
The Holy Spirit is God. The Holy Spirit is “Beloved of our souls” because He is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity and therefore you are called to adore Him.
- **Enlighten me, guide me, strengthen and console me. Tell me what I ought to do and command me to do it.**
In this prayer you are asking for His enlightenment for greater understanding of the Truth, guidance in doing what is right and good and the strength to do it, and the consolation of joy and peace that you are on the right path. You can trust the Holy Spirit, Who only wants what is best for you.
- **I promise to submit to everything that You ask of me and to accept all that You allow to happen to me.**
With the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit, you will be strengthened to accept and be faithful in doing His holy will.
- **Just show me what is Your will, O Holy Spirit.**
You pray that the Holy Spirit will show you His good and perfect will.



Pentecost

Day 3: Ask the Holy Spirit for an increase of the Gift of Fortitude.Learning the Principles

- The Person of the Holy Spirit does not have a body. He is pure Spirit. The pronoun “He” is used to refer to the Holy Spirit because He is a Person. You will not want to refer to the Holy Spirit as “it” or a “power”.
- The Holy Spirit reveals Jesus to you. Therefore, you know that you are developing a relationship with the Holy Spirit if you have a growing awareness of Jesus’ love for you, and your love for Him is growing and you notice that He is changing you. If you are becoming more peaceful, and/or becoming more joyful, then you will also realize that your relationship with the Holy Spirit is growing.
- The Holy Spirit is the Source of answered prayer.
- Every time you begin to pray to Jesus it is the Holy Spirit Who draws you on the way of prayer by His grace. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, hereafter CCC, paragraph 2670)
- The Holy Spirit teaches you how to pray and helps you to know what to pray for. (CCC 2671-2672. To read these two paragraphs, type in *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and click on Vatican.va)
- In every situation, you can pray silently asking for the help of the Holy Spirit because without God you are helpless – whether you know this or not. Simply pray: “Holy Spirit please help me.” Or “Holy Spirit please guide me.” The Holy Spirit is known as the Helper, the Advocate, the Paraclete, your Counselor, your Guide. He is always within you, ready to help and guide you.
- You are called to pray with your heart rather than just rattling words. “Prayer is internalized to the extent that you become aware of Him ‘to Whom you speak.’”
- Prayer is a vital necessity. Prayer and Christian life are inseparable. (CCC 2744-2745)

In other words, praying this prayer to the Holy Spirit each day will allow you to deepen your friendship with Jesus as He is revealed to you by the Person of the Holy Spirit. You will grow in an awareness and learn to listen to the inner promptings of the Holy Spirit and practice following His guidance while allowing His Gifts to be operative in your life. The Holy Spirit wants what is best for you and as you respond to Him, you will find much peace and happiness - interior joy.

- You received the Holy Spirit first in Baptism. He came again in Confirmation to strengthen you as His witness. The Holy Spirit lives in you. You have to allow the power of the Holy Spirit to become active in your life through your free will. The Holy Spirit is not “magic.” You need to cooperate with God’s grace to align yourself with the Holy Spirit so that you can first receive guidance from the Holy Spirit and then be a blessing and of service to other people.

Day 4: Ask the Holy Spirit for an increase of the Gift of Knowledge.

The three Theological Virtues of faith, hope and charity as well as the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit are given in Baptism for personal sanctification; to make you holy. Holiness means to grow in charity by serving others with authentic love. Charity is one of the theological virtues by which you love God above all things for His own sake, and your neighbor as yourself for the love of God. In the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Holy Spirit *strengthens* in you the Virtues and the Gifts so that you can be a faithful witness of Jesus Christ by living your faith “out loud”. (See CCC 1303 for further effects of the Sacrament of Confirmation)

- The seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit aid you in making decisions in conformity with God’s will, which lead to a life of interior joy and peace.
- Each person needs to develop a relationship with the Holy Spirit.



- You live in the age of the Holy Spirit. You know this to be true because Jesus ascended into Heaven and then the Father and the Son sent God the Holy Spirit to lead and guide you into all truth. Jesus said, “I tell you the sober truth: It is much better for you that I go. If I do not go, the Paraclete will never come to you, whereas if I go, I will send Him to you.” (John 16:7) “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth.” (John 16:13)

- The Holy Spirit is the Soul of the Mystical Body of Christ – the Catholic Church. The Church would have come to an end without the Holy Spirit. Supernatural power came and continues to come to you from the Holy Spirit. The Book of Acts is referred to as the Gospel of the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit was active in the early Church, as well as today.

- Cardinal Mercier said the following when teaching about the importance about and praying this *Prayer to the Holy Spirit*: I am going to reveal to you the secret of sanctity and happiness. Every day for five minutes control your imagination and close your eyes to all the noises of the world in order to enter into yourself. Then, in the sanctuary of your baptized soul (which is the temple of the Holy Spirit) speak to that Divine Spirit, saying to Him the *Prayer to the Holy Spirit*: “O Holy Spirit, Beloved of my soul...

- If you do this, your life will flow along happily, serenely, and full of consolation, even in the midst of trials. Grace will be proportioned to the trial, giving you the strength to carry it out and you will arrive at the Gate of Paradise, laden with merit. This submission to the Holy Spirit is the secret of sanctity.

Day 5: Ask the Holy Spirit for an increase of the Gift of Right Counsel.

Understanding better the Holy Spirit and the seven Gifts

- Pray the *Prayer to the Holy Spirit* every day and at every opportunity.
- Think about what these titles and symbols tell us about the Person of the Holy Spirit. The meaning and Scriptural references are in the noted Catechism paragraphs.

Title (CCC 692-693)

- Paraclete
- The Spirit of Truth
- The Spirit of the Promise
- The Spirit of Adoption
- The Spirit of Christ
- The Spirit of the Lord
- The Spirit of God
- The Spirit of glory

Symbols (CCC 694 – 701)

- Water
- Anointing
- Fire
- Cloud and light
- The seal
- The hand
- The finger
- The dove



- To understand why your relationship with the Holy Spirit is so important, look up the Theological Virtues of faith, hope and charity, which you received in Baptism (1Corinthians 13:13; CCC 1812-1829). These Virtues make it possible for you to develop a relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. You grow in these Virtues by asking the Holy Spirit to strengthen them in you and by making acts of faith, hope and charity in your daily life. Faith is believing in God and all that He has revealed to the Apostles and handed down to us through the Church. Hope is trusting God's faithfulness and love for you. Charity is loving others for the sake of God.
- The seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit are strengthened in you in the Sacrament of Confirmation so that you can "spread and defend the Faith by word and action as a true witness, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never be ashamed of the Cross." (CCC 1302-1303; 1265-1266) These seven supernatural Gifts are **Wisdom, Fortitude, Knowledge, Right Counsel, Fear of the Lord, Understanding and Piety.** (Isaiah 11:1-2)
- You need to allow the Holy Spirit to act within you and through you. Memorize the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and think about why you need each of these Gifts. Write down one Gift and ask the Holy Spirit to increase this Gift in you in order to serve others with greater charity, which is the heart of the Christian life.

Day 6: Ask the Holy Spirit for an increase of the Gift of Fear of the Lord.

- Another sign of the Holy Spirit's activity in your life is the presence of spiritual fruit. The fruit of the Spirit is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23; CCC 736, 1830-1832) This fruit is a sign that you are growing in your friendship with the Holy Spirit and becoming a disciple of Christ

and empowered by God; on your own, you would not produce this kind of fruit. It is God who produces fruit in you when you are connected to Him. This is for the Father's glory. Write down one of the fruits and ask the Holy Spirit to make this fruit more present and actually noticeable in life? Write down any experiences after you have prayed about this for a week. Notice any changes you saw or experienced when you asked the Holy Spirit for this grace and were open to Him. Relate to another person how God answered this prayer.

- Why is a relationship with the Holy Spirit necessary for each believer? The Holy Spirit reveals Jesus to you, teaches you to pray and helps you to understand and believe everything that you have come to believe. The Holy Spirit makes Jesus present within you and empowers you to allow Him (Jesus) to live out His life in and through you. (See Index in the *Catechism* under Holy Spirit on pages 805-807) Discuss this with a friend.
- Write down one way that you are open and receptive to the working of the Holy Spirit, and one way that you are resistant?
- Is there an area of your life that you have not been able to exercise self-control: such as eating, exercising, sleeping, drinking, gossiping, being jealous, etc. Sin is addictive. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you in this specific area.

Day 7: Ask the Holy Spirit for an increase of the Gift of Understanding.

Developing a Friendship with the Holy Spirit

- The spiritual life is a battle; every person must constantly struggle to overcome human weakness, temptation and sinful tendencies. Your commitment to Christ is not severed by day-to-day failures and weaknesses. The Holy Spirit is your great consoler and encourager Who helps you to be faithful in prayer, to come to know Jesus, to believe that Jesus is God and that He died and rose from the dead to forgive your sins. Through Jesus you have been set free from slavery to sin and, through the Holy Spirit, you are given the means to live a life pleasing to God. His supernatural help, which we call grace, will help you to persevere and struggle through these challenges. The Holy Spirit is the source and strength of your spiritual life. Without turning to Him in prayer, you will experience an unfulfilling, frustrating and guilt-ridden up-and-down spiritual life. You are invited to turn to Him for help in any and all circumstances. The grace you receive empowers you to live according to the Spirit. You must cooperate with this grace by listening to the Holy Spirit, following Him and rejecting sin. With the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit, you need to persevere and be faithful. You will want to invest in your relationship with the Holy Spirit to experience this real and vital friendship.
- The Holy Spirit will teach you to recognize His **inner promptings**. He teaches you to recognize these movements of guidance and direction during times of silence in prayer while "being with" the Holy Spirit. Look up and think about these two paragraphs in the *Catechism*: 1266 and 1830.



Day 8: Ask the Holy Spirit for an increase of the Gift of Piety.

Spiritual Comprehension – Do you understand?

- The *Prayer to the Holy Spirit* is the prayer that you will want to know by heart and with good understanding before you decide to go deeper with another prayer. Plan to spend an entire year praying this important prayer every day.

Encountering God in Prayer

- Take time for silence so that you can quiet down interiorly and become aware of the Presence of the Holy Spirit within you.
- Prayer is “nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who you know loves you.” (CCC, 2709; St. Teresa of Avila) The Father, Son and Holy Spirit live in you through Baptism. As you begin prayer, close your eyes and take some time in silence to be aware of the Holy Spirit present within you and greet Him. Think about what you are doing; you are getting ready to spend this time with the God of the Universe. See on the back side of the Prayer Card how to concretely express a present concern of your heart to Him. This allows prayer to come from the



heart rather than just rattling off rote words.

- Visit a Catholic Church/Chapel, where you can pray the *Prayer to the Holy Spirit* and then have time to journal: note what word or phrase stood out for you and why. Repeat that word or phrase over and over again slowly. Think about how this word or phrase relates to God the Holy Spirit and His love and care for you. Have a heart-to-Heart conversation with the Holy Spirit about something that is weighing on your heart. This takes prayer to the next level of a deep personal encounter. Another helpful step is to write down some notes about the prayer experience to keep for future reference.
- Another way to pray the *Prayer to the Holy Spirit* is in the following manner:
 1. Read the words of the *Prayer to the Holy Spirit* slowly and thoughtfully, 2 or 3 times.
 2. Consider the meaning of the words. Do they remind you of something in your life? (Stated another way: ponder how they do or might relate to your life.)
 3. Notice what word or phrase stood out for you and why (Conversation with God). (The first three steps above are considered meditation.)
 4. Repeat silently this word or phrase several times slowly and then rest in God. (This step is considered contemplation – being still and resting in God’s presence.)
 5. Allow time to journal.
- After praying the *Prayer to the Holy Spirit*, allow time for silence so that you can learn how to listen to and recognize the inner promptings of the Holy Spirit.
- In order to pray, you want to be in the present moment. God is not in the past or in the future. He is with you now. Distractions take you to the past or the future. When you experience distractions, gently let them pass. Gently turn your heart back to God.

Day 9: Offer prayers of thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit for all the gifts received.

Scriptural Foundation

- Supernatural power came and continues to come to you from the Holy Spirit. The Book of Acts is referred to as the Gospel of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will remind you to pray and prays in you according to God’s will. “The Spirit too helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in speech. (Romans 8:26-27)
- “For the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say” (Luke 12:12).
- “If you then... know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in Heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” (Luke 11:13).
- “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you” (John 14:15-17).
- “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (John 14:26).
- “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth.”(John 16:13).
- “See I am going to send down upon you the promise of My Father. Remain here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:48-49)
- “And with that Jesus breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22).
- “No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the grace Holy Spirit” (1Cor 12:1-11)



The Day of Pentecost

Resources

- FREE Series on the Holy Spirit entitled “The Wild Goose” by Fr. Dave Pivonka, TOR. 14 segments, 20 minutes each: thewildgooseisloose.com/series-segments/