

# *The Holy Spirit and The Mystery of the Church*



Catholicism 101 (RCIA) 2011-12

# The Holy Spirit and The Church

## The Third Part of the Creed

“I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy  
Catholic Church...”

# The Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity
- He is the last to be revealed
  - “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...” (St. Gregory of Nazianzus)
- God gradually reveals the mystery of himself



# The Holy Spirit

- We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.  
(Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed)
  - **Lord** – the Holy Spirit is consubstantial with the Father and the Son
  - **Giver of life** – he is Creator and brings us God's divine life by dwelling in us
  - **Proceeds** – eternally comes forth from the Father and Son
  - **Worshiped** – The Holy Spirit is God and thus worshiped
  - **Spoken through the Prophets** – acknowledging the Spirit's work in salvation history



# Names of the Holy Spirit

- **Paraclete** - Greek word which literally means “he who is called to one’s side”
  - **Advocate** – comes from the Latin words “ad” which means *near by* and “vocare” which means *to call*.
    - An advocate pleads one’s case
    - The Holy Spirit pleads our case for us
  - **Consoler** – comes from the Latin words “cum” which means *with* and “solor” which means *comfort*.
    - The Holy Spirit gives us the comfort of God’s presence
- **Spirit of Truth** – “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (Jn 16:13)
  - The Spirit guides us into Christ who is truth itself
  - The Spirit enables us to understand all revealed truth



# The Spirit and Christ

- The mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit are inseparable
- Whenever the Father sends the Son he likewise sends the Holy Spirit
  - Christ came in the power of the Spirit
    - Annunciation, baptism, desert, preaching, sacrifice
  - The Spirit brings us Christ
    - Witness to Christ by the power of the Spirit, Epiclesis in the sacraments, prayer of Jesus is Lord
- Just as one uses breath to speak a word so the Father sends the Spirit and the Word together



# Symbols of the Holy Spirit



- Fire
  - Tongues of fire at Pentecost
  - *Symbolizes* the transforming energy/power of the Holy Spirit
- Wind, Breath (Hebrew-*Ruah*)
  - “The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit.” (Jn 3:8) “Jesus... breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’” (Jn 20:22)
  - *Symbolizes* power and vitality
- Dove
  - A dove returned to Noah with an olive-branch at the end of the flood and a dove appeared at Jesus’ baptism
  - *Symbolizes* the abiding presence of the Spirit and the beginning of a new creation

# Symbols of the Holy Spirit



- Living Water

- “He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.’ Now this he said about the Spirit...” (Jn 7:38-39)
- Water satisfies and causes freshness and fruitfulness
- *Symbolizes* the work and life of the Holy Spirit especially in Baptism

- Anointing

- The humanity of Christ was anointed with the Holy Spirit
- A Christian is anointed in Confirmation
- *Symbolizes* comfort, healing, and strength

# Pentecost

- Pentecost was a Jewish feast celebrating the summer grain harvest and the giving of the law of Moses
  - Many pilgrims from around the world would come to Jerusalem on this day
  - While this celebration was going on the Apostles, Mary, and other disciples were gathered in prayer awaiting the Holy Spirit
- Descent of the Holy Spirit
  - Rushing wind, tongues of fire, different languages
  - Peter preaches with wisdom and courage to the many pilgrims and each understand him their own language
  - 3000 are baptized
- Pentecost is the birth of the Church and marks the enduring presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church



# The Spirit and the Church

- These two articles in the creed are closely connected
- The mission of the Church is not in addition to Christ and the Holy Spirit but is its *continuation* and *sacrament*
  - **Continuation** – what Christ and the Spirit did the Church continues to do
  - **Sacrament** – sign and instrument of salvation and the unity of the human race with God



# The Spirit's Presence in the Church

- The Holy Spirit is present in the Church in many ways:
  - Scriptures he inspired
  - Living Tradition which he guards and guides
  - Church's Magisterium which he assists and leads
  - Liturgy which he animates
  - Prayer wherein he intercedes for us
  - Charisms and gifts which he gives
  - Signs and miracles which he enables
  - Charity and Holiness of the saints which he creates

# What is the Church

- **Church** - is a translation of the Hebrew word “qahal” and the Greek word “ekklesia” both of which mean *gathering, assembly and convocation*
  - It comes from a Greek word “kalein” which means *to call or to invite*
- In the Hebrew and Greek world an assemble received its character and purpose from the will of the one who called it
  - Example: assemblies were called for political, military, professional, liturgical, and religious purposes
- The Church is the assembly of people throughout the world and throughout history, whether on earth, in purgatory, or in heaven who have responded to God’s invitation of Salvation in Christ

# The Mystery of the Church

- The Church is a mystery because it is both visible and invisible, human and divine
- Visible and human
  - Church structures and institutions, e.g. churches, traditions in the liturgy, the hierarchy, religious orders
  - Difficulties which arise in the Church
  - The actions of sinners and saints in the Church
- Invisible and Divine
  - Christ's abiding presence in the Church "behold, I am with you always, to the close of the age." (Mt 28:20)
  - Holy Spirit perpetually guides and animates the Church working in and through the people of God, the hierarchy, and other visible elements
  - Includes charisms, miracles, supernatural charity



# People of God

- God desired to save us not in isolation but as a people “brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” (St. Cyprian)
- The people of God participate in Christ’s three-fold office
  - **Priest** – consecrated at baptism to offer spiritual sacrifices
  - **Prophet** – enabled to know the faith and witness to it
  - **King** – by means of service to all especially the poor and suffering
- The term “People of God” also emphasizes the great diversity of members of the one Church



# Pilgrim People

- **Pilgrim** – emphasizes that in this present life we are on a journey toward our heavenly homeland
  - Our destination is not in this world
  - The Church is therefore always traveling until Christ returns
- **People** – have three things in common:
  - *Ancestry*: we are all born by faith and baptism
  - *Experiences*: we all experience in varying degrees the grace that come through celebration of the liturgy and the sacraments
  - *Goals*: we are all invited to live out our faith in this world and reach eternal life



# Body of Christ

- Mystical Body of Christ
  - Christ unites himself to his faithful people in an intimate way through the Holy Spirit
  - Christ continues to live and work through the diversity of his members
- Head of the Church
  - Christ “is the head of the body, the Church” (Col 1:18)
  - **Christus Totus** - The whole body: head and members
- Human and Divine
  - Just as Jesus is both God and man so the Church is divine and human
- The term “Body” highlights the unity of the head and members of the Church



# Bride of Christ

- Christ is the bridegroom of his bride the Church
- “Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, the he might sanctify her” (Eph 5:25-26)
  - The Lord has joined himself to the Church and established an everlasting covenant with her
  - As the bride of Christ the Church is also the fruitful mother of all the children of God
- The term “Bride” emphasizes the distinction of the two in their personal relationship



“He”



“She”

- **Father**
  - Activating principle of all creation
- **Son**
  - Draws us to himself and gives his life for our Salvation
- **Holy Spirit**
  - Dwells within and guides the Church and the open soul
- “He” initiates and protects
- *Mary*
  - Received Christ in her maternal womb and gave him to the world
- *The Church*
  - Receives the salvation and faithful love of Christ and spiritually nourishes her children
- *The Soul*
  - The soul receives the indwelling Trinity and gives the fruit of Charity
- “She” receives and brings forth

# Temple of the Holy Spirit

- The Church is the temple of the Holy Spirit because he dwells in the body which is the Church
  - *Collectively*: “Do you not know that you (plural) are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?” (1 Cor 3:16)
  - *Individually*: “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God?” (1 Cor 6:19)
- The Spirit also builds up the Church in charity by the Word of God, the sacraments, the virtues, and the gifts and charisms
- “What the soul is to the body, the Holy Spirit is the Church” (St. Augustine)
  - The Holy Spirit is the life giving principle of the Church just as the soul is the life giving principle of the body



# The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

- Isaiah 11:2-3
- 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit
  - **Wisdom:** perception of the ultimate cause and its reflection in life and creation; seeing from God's perspective
  - **Understanding:** penetration into divine things
  - **Knowledge:** perception of the value and earthly and heavenly things
  - **Counsel:** supernatural prudence to see the most God-pleasing course
  - **Fortitude:** ability to overcome all obstacles to our salvation
  - **Piety:** honor of God as the source of all good things
  - **Fear of the Lord:** filial fear which is afraid to sin and lose the Father's love
- With the Gifts of the Holy Spirit a person operates not in a human mode but in a divine mode, i.e. God operates through him/her



# Fruits of the Holy Spirit



- The Fruits of the Spirit are a result of God putting order in our lives (St. Thomas)
  - In our soul
  - In our relation to others
  - In our relation to things
- The fruits are the effects of the Spirit's work in which we delight
- The fruit of the Spirit Gal 5:19-25
  - love
  - joy
  - peace
  - patience
  - kindness
  - goodness
  - faithfulness
  - gentleness
  - self-control

# Charism of the Holy Spirit

- Charisms are given for the common good and building up of the Church
  - utterance of wisdom
  - utterance of knowledge
  - teaching
  - faith
  - administration
  - gifts of healing
  - working of miracles
  - prophecy
  - ability to distinguish between spirits
  - various kinds of tongues
  - interpretation of tongues
- It is given to the hierarchy to discern their authenticity

