**THE HOLY SPIRIT**

(by Pedro Caceres’ personal reflection with extracts from Executable Outlines, Mark A. Copeland, 2009; from ccel.org, from catholicculture.org; letusreason.org; gotquestions.org) May/29/2017

In every organization, there is always someone that, quietly, gets things done. Nobody praises this person, some wouldn’t even know the name. When I think of the Holy Spirit, I can’t help thinking that the quiet person in the history of Salvation is just Him.

I said Him and not it. The Holy Spirit is a person and Jesus always talks about Him. John 16:7-8: “Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, THE HELPER will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send HIM to you. And when HE has come, HE will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment”.

The Holy Spirit is the helper, the comforter, the counselor (paraclete), the advocate, the messenger, the driver, the doer. In business terms, we could say that If God the Father is the Chairman, and Jesus is the CEO, the Holy Spirit is the Chief Operating Officer, the COO, in charge of executing God’s vision of salvation for all souls, through the Church, the celestial organization of Angels, and the faith and works of all us Christian workers. A quiet efficient COO, doing His job and avoiding the spotlight, and deserving our love and recognition.

The New testament mentions the Holy Spirit 264 times. There are 75 references in the gospels. Acts has 57 references (which is why some call it "The Acts of the Holy Spirit"). The epistles refer to the Holy Spirit 132 times, and only 3 epistles make no mention of the Spirit (Philemon, 2 & 3 John).

It is impossible to understand the Holy Scriptures without understanding the Holy Spirit as it is impossible to understand the Holy Mass without the Holy Spirit, who the priest must call during the Epiclesis part of the Eucharistic Prayer to transform the bread and wine in the precious body and blood of Christ. Pre-consecration (EP II): “Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall, so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.” And Post-consecration (EP II): “Humbly we pray, that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.”

Without the Holy Spirit, there are no sacraments, there is no Eucharist, no baptism, no confirmation, no reconciliation, no matrimony, no holy orders, no anointing of the sick. Without the Holy Spirit there is simply no Church. How important is He? How do we honor Him? And how often do we talk and pray to Him and with Him?

1. **PRAYING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The month of April is dedicated to the Holy Spirit in the Catholic Church. There is also a Novena to the Holy Spirit from Ascension Thursday to Pentecost.

1. Preparing to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit
2. For the fear of the Lord
3. For the Gift of Piety
4. For the Gift of Fortitude
5. For the gift of Knowledge
6. For the gift of Understanding
7. For the gift of Counsel
8. For the gift of Wisdom
9. For the fruits of the Holy Spirit

The main prayers created for the Holy Spirit, so far, are:

* Rosary of the Holy Spirit (composed in 1892 by a Franciscan Capuchin missionary in England and approved by Pole Leo XIII in 1902). The Rosary contains five mysteries: Holy Spirit at the Immaculate conception, Holy Spirit at the Baptism of Jesus, Holy Spirit leading Jesus to the desert, Holy Spirit present in the Church, Holy Spirit in the souls of the just.
* Chaplet of the Seven Gifts, written by St. Alphonsus Liguori, praying on His seven gifts: fear, piety, knowledge, fortitude, counsel, understanding and wisdom.
* Chaplet of the Holy Spirit, containing the gifts, the Theological virtues (Faith, Hope, and Charity), the Cardinal virtues (Prudence, Fortitude, Justice, Temperance), additional virtues (Silence, Humility, Purity, Mercy), fruits (True faith, true love, divine mercy, fasting, reconciliation, peace, kindness, goodness, mildness, continence, modesty, chastity, poverty, obedience, fidelity, longanimity, patience, and joy)
* Act of Consecration to the holy Spirit
* Come Holy Spirit
* Litany of the Holy Spirit

1. **PENTECOST**

Now, Pentecost is approaching. What happened on the 50th day after resurrection is described in Acts2:1-4 “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” There was a Pentecost holiday in Jewish tradition 50 days after Passover.

And we learn everything we need to know about the Holy Spirit from Pentecost:

* The image of the rushing wind is an image that reminds us that the Holy Spirit brings us back to life and sustains us. If Christmas is the feast of God with us, and Good Friday is the Feast of God for us, then Pentecost is the Feast of God in us. The Holy Spirit, like a rushing wind, breathes life back into us. This text brings us to the very root meaning of the word “Spirit.” For “spirit” refers to “breath,” and we have this preserved in our word “respiration,” which means breathing. So, the Spirit of God is the breath of God, the Ruah Adonai (the Spirit, the breath of God).
* The image of the Holy Fire when God comes to dwell in us through his Holy Spirit. And as a Holy Fire, He refines us by burning away our sins and purifying us. As Job once said, “But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold” (Job 23:10). Fire changes everything it encounters. Nothing goes away from fire unchanged. Either is it consumed, converted or purified, warmed or mollified or steeled.  But nothing goes way from fire unchanged. And thus, God the Holy Spirit, like a Holy Fire, is within, changing and transforming us. Burning away sin, refining us, enlightening us, stirring the flame of God’s love and bringing us up to the temperature of God’s glory. He is kindling a fire that gives light and warmth in our darkest and coldest moments. Little by little we become a burning furnace of God’s love and we give warmth to others around us. And, as fire, He is also preparing us for judgement, for if God is a Holy Fire, then who may endure the day of his coming or of our going to Him? What can endure the presence of Fire Himself? Only that which is already fire. Thus, we must be set afire by God’s love. So, in the coming of the Holy Spirit God sets us on fire to make us a kind of fire. In so doing, he purifies and prepares us to meet him one, He who is a Holy Fire.
* The image of Tongues, to learn that one of the chief fruits of Spirit is to help us witness to others. What is a witness? A witness is one who speaks of what they have seen, heard, and experienced. The spirit comes as tongues to strengthen us for mission, for witness. Evil has triumphed since the good have remained silent. Pulpits and parents have been silent. The tongues of fire remind us that God wants fiery and bold saints who are courageous witnesses in a doubting, deceitful, and scoffing world. Many martyrs have died courageously and too many of fear that someone might merely raise an eyebrow at us. Pray for the courage of tongues, the courage to speak.

1. **WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?**

We must connect with the Holy Spirit as we do with God the Father and Jesus Christ. But we must do it the proper way. There are many mistaken views of the Holy Spirit, some think He is an impersonal force expressive of God's power, while others think He is really Jesus in another form. Many attribute "impressions or "intuitive feelings" to being "led by the Spirit" ignorant of how the Holy Spirit leads us, and attributing to the "Holy Spirit" what is really the "human spirit and human conscience".

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity, and as such is one with God the Father and Jesus Christ. He is omniscient, omnipresent, and eternal:

* The Holy Spirit knows everything. He is omniscient: 1 Corinthians 2:10–11 “But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.”
* The Holy Spirit is everywhere at the same time. He is omnipresent: Psalm 139:7–10 “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me”
* The Holy Spirit is eternal: Hebrews 9:14 “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”
* The Holy Spirit was begotten by the Father and the Son before all things were made: Genesis 1:2 “The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”, and was used to create the heavens, Job 26:13 “By His Spirit He adorned the heavens; His hand pierced the fleeing serpent.”, and to create men Job 33:4 “The Spirit of God has made me, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life”. Everything was created by the Father in conjunction with the Son and the Holy Spirit.
* We recognize the Holy Spirit as God in the Creed: 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 worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

Can anything happen in Christianity without the Holy Spirit? Jesus gives us the answer in John 16:12–13 “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come…”, and John 16:14: “He [the Holy Spirit] will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.”

The Holy Spirit interacts with us in many different ways. The Holy Spirit manifests personality:

* The Holy Spirit speaks: Acts 10:19–20 “While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, Behold, three men are seeking you. Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them.”
* The Holy Spirit teaches: John 14:26 “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”
* The Holy Spirit bears witness: John 15:26-27 “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.
* The Holy Spirit forbids: Acts 16:6–7 “Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them.”
* The Holy Spirit intercedes: Romans 8:26 “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

The Holy Spirit possesses personal characteristics:

* The Holy Spirit has a mind: Romans 8:27 “Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”
* The Holy Spirit has knowledge: 1 Corinthians 2:11 “For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.”
* The Holy Spirit has affection: Romans 15:30 “Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me,”
* The Holy Spirit has a will: 1 Corinthians 12:11 “But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.”

The Holy Spirit suffers personal slights and injuries:

* The Holy Spirit can be grieved: Ephesians 4:30 “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”
* The Holy Spirit can be blasphemed: Matthew 12:31–32 “Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men.”
* The Holy Spirit can be insulted: Hebrews 10:29 “Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?”
* The Holy Spirit can be lied to: Acts 5:3 “But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?”
* The Holy Spirit can be resisted: Acts 7:51 “You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.

1. **THE WORKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Everything done by the Holy Spirit is connected to God the Father and Jesus Christ:

* The Holy Spirit obeys the command of the Father: Luke 11:13 “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” and “Acts 2:33 (NKJV) “Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.”
* The Holy Spirit was promised to those who believe in Christ: Acts 2:38–39 “Then Peter said to them, Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off”
* The “one baptism” can only be the one commanded by Christ and involves the Holy Spirit: Matthew 28:19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”
* Jesus poured the Holy Spirit to all flesh: Acts 2:17 “And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams.”
* The Holy Spirit does not speak on His own authority: John 16:13 “However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.”

1. **THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN**

And we, Christians, must create a space for the Holy Spirit in our mind, heart, and soul. He brings to us the Truth, and when we accept it, The Spirit’s presence within us enables us to understand and interpret God’s Word. He indwells in us and plants His gifts given to believers in order that we may function as the body of Christ on earth. All these gifts, both great and small, are given by the Spirit so that we may be His ambassadors to the world, showing forth His grace and glorifying Him. The Spirit also functions as fruit-producer in our lives. When He indwells us, He begins the work of harvesting His fruit in our lives—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control ([Galatians 5:22-23](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gal%205.22-23)). These are not works of our flesh, which is incapable of producing such fruit, but they are products of the Spirit’s presence in our lives:

* 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 ”Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
* We can receive the Holy Spirit in our baptism, Acts 2:38–39 “Then Peter said to them, Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. “, our confirmation, and in the “laying on of the Apostles’ hands”: Acts 8:14–17 “Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.”
* And the Holy Spirit inside us will give us power: Acts 1:8 “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
* And we will receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit: Hebrews 2:4 “God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?” and Mark 16:17–20 “And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover”
* Because we must be born of the water and the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God: John 3:5 “Jesus answered, most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”
* And when the Holy Spirit enters us, we are marked and sealed: Ephesians 1:13 “In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise”
* Marked by the Father: Galatians 4:6 “And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, Abba, Father!”
* And we become stronger by the Spirit: Ephesians 3:16 “That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man”
* And we control our desires with the Spirit: Romans 8:13 “For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”
* And overcome our weaknesses with the Spirit: Romans 8:26 “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered”
* And we are led by the Spirit to God: Romans 8:14 “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”
* And our fruits are: Galatians 5:22–23 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”
* And the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to one for the profit of all: 1 Corinthians 12:7 “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all”
* But we need to know that everything is not permanent and will be finished when God’s work is complete: 1 Corinthians 13:8–10 “Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.”

1. **CONCLUSION**

Let’s bring the Holy Spirit into our lives. He was instructed by Jesus to stay with us until the end of time. He is a free resource in our way to salvation. We can’t get there ignoring Him. It is impossible as we don’t have the strength, resilience, focus, and determination to do this on our own. Let’s pray that the holy Spirit does the journey with us:

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful; fill them with enduring love; bring to perfection in me the image and likeness of Christ; remind me of all that Jesus said and did; Instruct me in everything; bring me unto all truth. Your words, lord, are Spirit and life. You are the Word of Eternal Life, made me holy in the truth.

Come, O spirit of Love; O fire of love; Purify my heart, mind, and soul; Sanctify all I think, say, and do; And bestow on me in plenitude thy holy gifts. May I always and only give thanks, and glory to you, my Lord and my God.

Amen.

And yes, I made this document be seven pages long. Seven is the number of the Holy Spirit.

Thanks and God bless you

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