

Being Catholic Today

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Second Lecture: The Trinity and the Church

God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ—it is through grace that you have been saved—and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven in Christ Jesus. (Eph 2:4-6)

We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it. (Eph 2:10)

Christ has risen, destroying death by his death. He has lavished life upon us so that, as sons in the Son, we can cry out in the Spirit: Abba, Father! (*Gaudium et spes* 22)

The personal relation of the Son to the Father is something that man cannot conceive of nor the angelic powers even dimly see: and yet, the Spirit of the Son grants a participation in that very relation to us who believe that Jesus is the Christ and that we are born of God. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2780)

I have made known to you all that I have heard from my Father. (John 15:15)

By sending his only Son and the Spirit of love in the fullness of time, God has revealed his innermost secret: God himself is an eternal exchange of love, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange. (CCC 221)

Everyone moved by the Spirit of God is a son of God. The spirit you received is not the spirit of slaves bringing fear into your lives again; it is the spirit of sons, and it makes us cry out, "Abba, Father!" The Spirit himself and our spirit bear united witness that we are children of God. And if we are children we are heirs as well: heirs of God and coheirs with Christ, sharing his sufferings so as to share his glory. (Rom 8:14-17)

If you think of the Father as something 'out there,' in front of you, and of the Son as someone standing at your side, helping you to pray, trying to turn you into another son, then you have to think of the third Person as something inside you or behind you. (C. S. Lewis: *Mere Christianity*)

Unless a man is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God... Unless a man is born through water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:3, 5).

When they came to Jesus, they found he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water. (John 19:33-34)

Jesus stood there and cried out: “If any man is thirsty, let him come to me! Let the man drink who believes in me.” As Scripture says: From his breast shall flow fountains of living water. He was speaking of the Spirit which those who believed in him were to receive; for there was no Spirit as yet because Jesus had not yet been glorified. (John 7:37-39)

All drank the same spiritual drink, since they all drank from the spiritual rock that followed them as they went, and the rock was Christ. (1 Co 10:4)

It was for no reason except his own compassion that [God] saved us by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our savior. (Titus 3:5-6)

When the Spirit of truth comes he will lead you into the complete truth, since he will not be speaking as from himself but will say only what he has heard; and he will tell you of the things to come. He will glorify me since all he tells you will be taken from what is mine. Everything the Father has is mine; that is why I said: All he tells you will be taken from what is mine. (Jn 16:13-15)

Thus the Church shines forth as “a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” (Saint Cyprian; cf. *Lumen gentium* 4, and CCC 2845)

The ultimate end of the divine economy is the entry of God’s creatures into the perfect unity of the blessed Trinity. (CCC 260)

The ultimate purpose of mission is none other than to make men share in the communion between the Father and the Son in their Spirit of love. (CCC 850)

The Spirit, who is the Spirit of communion, abides indefectibly in the Church. For this reason the Church is the great sacrament of divine communion which gathers God’s scattered children together. Communion with the Holy Trinity and fraternal communion are inseparably the fruit of the Spirit in the liturgy. (CCC 1108)

It pleased God in his goodness and wisdom, to reveal himself and to make known the mystery of his will. His will was that men should have access to the Father, through Christ, the Word made flesh, in the Holy Spirit, and thus become sharers in the divine nature. (CCC 51)

The Word became flesh to make us “*partakers of the divine nature*” (2 Pet 1:4). “For this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: so that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God. (St. Irenaeus). “For the son of God became man so that we might become God” (Saint Athanasius). “The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods” (Saint Thomas Aquinas). (CCC 460)

The Spirit heals and transforms those who receive him by conforming them to the Son of God. The fruit of the sacramental life is that the Spirit of adoption makes the faithful partakers in the divine nature by uniting them in a living union with the only Son, the Savior. (CCC 1129)

The angel showed me the river of life, rising from the throne of God and of the Lamb and flowing crystal-clear down the middle of the city street. On either side of the river were the trees of life, which bear twelve crops of fruit in a year, one in each month, and the leaves of which are the cure for the pagans. The ban will be lifted. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in its place in the city; his servants will worship him, they will see him face to face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. It will never be night again and they will not need lamplight or sunlight, because the Lord God will be shining on them. They will reign for ever and ever." (Rev 22:1-5)

You, the Word, are most wonderful, working through the Holy Spirit to fill the soul with yourself, so that it is joined to God, grasps God, tastes God, and absorbs nothing but God.

This Spirit which moves in itself is the substance of the Father and of the Word, and it proceeds from the essence of the Father and the good will of the Word; it comes into the soul like a fountain, and the soul is immersed in it. Just as two rushing rivers intermingle in such a way that the smaller loses its name and is absorbed into the larger, so the divine Spirit acts upon the soul and absorbs it. It is proper that the soul, which is lesser, should lose its name and surrender to the Spirit, as it will if it turns entirely toward the Spirit and is united.

This Spirit, dispenser of the treasures which lay in the lap of the Father, and the guardian of the deliberations which pass between the Father and the Son, flows into the soul so sweetly and imperceptibly that few esteem its greatness.

You do not, O Holy Spirit, stand still in the unmoved Father or in the Word, and yet you are always in the Father and in the Word and in yourself and in all blessed spirits and creatures. You are the friend of the created because of the blood shed by the only-begotten Word, who in the greatness of his love made himself the friend of the created. You find rest in creatures who are prepared to receive you, so that in the transmission of your gifts they take on, through purity, their own particular likeness to you. You find rest in those creatures who absorb the effects of the blood of the Word and make themselves a worthy dwelling place for you.

Come, Holy Spirit. Consume in us whatever prevents us from being consumed in you.
(Saint Mary Magdalene de Pazzi)