



# UP TO THE SOURCE

## MONTHLY WORDS

### *May: Holy Spirit—The Lord and Giver of Life*

#### ***A Clumsy Altar Server***

Karol Wojtyła lost his mother at the tender age of nine years old. At that time, he became an altar server at his home parish in Wadowice. However, his service was far from perfect: he was not devoted enough and was distracted during the liturgy, as he himself recalled years later. Then, something happened that changed his spiritual life forever. His father, noticing his lack of devotion, told him: “you are not a good altar server; you need to pray to the Holy Spirit.” He taught him a prayer to the Holy Spirit that he prayed his entire life and changed his relationship with God radically. As he shared years later as Pope: “I never forgot this prayer. It was an important spiritual lesson, more durable and stronger than others which I could pull from readings or teachings which I received. With such conviction he

spoke to me! Until this day, I can hear his voice. My Encyclical letter about the Holy Spirit is the result of this lesson from my childhood.”



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## ***The Spirit of the Father and of the Son, Given to the Church***

This Encyclical, *Dominus et vivificans* ("Lord and Giver of Life"), was published by St. John Paul II in 1986, the fifth of his Encyclicals and the final one dedicated to the mystery of the Trinity. The intent was to reaffirm the unity between the action of Christ and that of the Holy Spirit, and the continuity between the work of creation and redemption. Particular attention is given to the promise of the Advocate by Christ during his Last Supper, where "the highest point of the revelation of the Trinity is reached" (DV 9).

"The supreme and most complete revelation of God to humanity is Jesus Christ himself, and the witness of the Spirit inspires, guarantees and convalidates the faithful transmission of this revelation in the preaching and writing of the Apostles, while the witness of the Apostles ensures its human expression in the Church and in the history of humanity" (DV 5). And the communication of the Holy Spirit is a new creation, a new beginning, in which the believer is made sharer of the own life of the Trinity.

### ***The Spirit Who Convinces the World Concerning Sin***

"When the Holy Spirit comes, he will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment" (Jn. 16:8): Jesus in the Upper Room

announced that the coming of the Holy Spirit would show men the evil of sin (the rejection of Christ's mission and all the sins in the history of mankind) and the necessity of repentance. The conversion brought about by the Spirit will lead men to the "justice" rendered by the Father to Christ in the glory of the Resurrection and will avoid the "judgment" reserved for unbelievers.

Today as yesterday, the sin against the Holy Spirit, the refusal of salvation and the presumed "right" of man

to persevere in evil, is "hardness of heart." It is the loss of the sense of sin as Pius XII expressed it, the "loss of the sense of God." Jesus Christ, in order to make us understand the extreme gravity of such an attitude, uses shocking

words: "Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit," "unforgiveness," "eternal guilt" (Mt. 12:31; Mk. 3:28; Lk. 12:10). In this light, we can well understand Saint Paul's exhortations: "Do not quench the Spirit" (1 Thes. 5:19), "do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph. 4:30).

### ***The Spirit Who Gives Life***

It is by the power of the Holy Spirit that Christ became incarnate in the womb of the Virgin Mary and was made man: the mystery of the Incarnation makes us understand the fullness of the self-communication of the Triune God in the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of





God and joint heirs with Christ" (Rm. 8:16–17). Man, then, understands the dignity of being called to live the new life: divine and supernatural to which the sanctifying grace bestowed by the Spirit leads.

### ***Practical Ideas to Have the Holy Spirit Present in Your Life***

- Consider frequently the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and how they are at work particularly in your life. Where do you need more help?
- Our relationship with God must include the personal relationship with the three persons of the Holy Trinity. Consider in your prayer life if you pray to each one of them personally.
- Invoke the Holy Spirit before important moments, especially when you need to say something important (Mt. 10:20).
- Ask the Holy Spirit to increase your missionary zeal in your family and in the world (Acts 1:8).

### ***Some Bible Readings***

- The Spirit over the waters in creation: Gn. 1:1–2.
- The Spirit and the Messiah (seven gifts): Is. 11:1–9.
- The new heart: Ez. 36:24–29.
- The promise of the Spirit: Jn. 14:15–26.
- Life in the Spirit: Gal. 5:13–26.
- The Spirit of Adoption: Rom. 8:1–17

### ***To Know More***

St. John Paul II encyclical on the Holy Spirit: *Dominum et vivificantem* (1986): "On the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church"

Catechism of the Catholic Church:

- I believe in the Holy Spirit: 683–747
- The Sacrament of Confirmation: 1285–1321.

## Prayer of St. John Paul II to the Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit, I ask of You the gift of wisdom for a better understanding of You and of Your divine perfection; the gift of intellect for a better understanding of the essence of the mysteries of the holy faith; the gift of knowledge so that I may know how to orient my life in accordance with the principles of faith; the gift of counsel so that in all things I can seek counsel from You and can always find it in You; the gift of strength so that no fear or earthly motivations can take me away from You; the gift of piety, so that I can always serve Your Majesty with filial love; the gift of the fear of God so that no fear or earthly motivations can take me away from you. Amen.



### Consecration of the Parish to Mary

May 29–30, after all Masses at St. Mary Park

Join us as we conclude our celebration of the Jubilee Year of St. John Paul II by renewing the consecration of our parish to Our Lady. Refreshments will be available.

*Bring flowers to present to Mary as a token of your own consecration!*



Disciples  
of the Hearts  
of Jesus and Mary

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