

## Going Deeper in Prayer

### *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)

Praying this *Prayer to the Holy Spirit* every day 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 us. The resources included here are meant to foster this process. Commit to praying the *Prayer to the Holy Spirit* every day.

### 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.



### Why pray to the Holy Spirit each day?

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

### Meaning of the Words

- The Holy Spirit is "Beloved of your soul" because He is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity and therefore you are to adore Him. The Holy Spirit is God.
- In this prayer you ask 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. With the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit, you will be strengthened to accept and be faithful in doing His holy will.

- Pray that the Holy Spirit will show you His good and perfect will.



### 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. We do not 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 know 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)
- 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 in Baptism and in Confirmation. 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.
- The three Theological Virtues of faith, hope and charity and 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.” (Jn 16:7) “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth.” (Jn 16:13)

- The Church would have come to an end without the Holy Spirit. He is the Soul of the Mystical Body of Christ – the Catholic Church. 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 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...

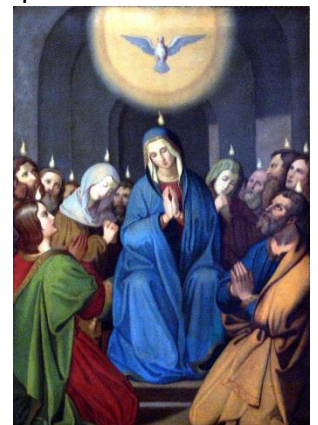
If you do this, your life will flow along happily, serenely, and full of consolation, even in the midst of trials. Grace will be proportioned to the trial, giving you the strength to carry it out and you will arrive at the Gate of Paradise, laden with merit. This submission to the Holy Spirit is the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

### Activities to Learn and Understand the *Prayer to the Holy Spirit*

- 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.

Meaning and Scriptural references are in the noted Catechism paragraphs.

<u>Title</u> (CCC 692-693)	<u>Symbols</u> (CCC 694 – 701)
• Paraclete	Water
• The Spirit of Truth	Anointing
• The Spirit of the Promise	Fire
• The Spirit of Adoption	Cloud and light
• The Spirit of Christ	The seal
• The Spirit of the Lord	The hand
• The Spirit of God	The finger
• The Spirit of glory	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: believing in God and all that He has revealed to the Apostles and handed down to us through the Church ; hope: trusting God's faithfulness and love for you; charity: 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, Piety, Fortitude, Knowledge, Fear of the Lord, Understanding, Right Counsel. (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, which is the heart of the Christian life.
- 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 your experience with God answering 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)

- Write down one way that you are open and receptive to the working of the Holy Spirit, and one way that you are resistant?
- Think of an area of your life that you have not been able to exercise self-control: such as eating, exercising, sleeping, drinking, gossiping, being jealous. Sin is addictive. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you in this specific area.

### Developing a Friendship with the Holy Spirit

- The spiritual life is a battle; you 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 with Him.
- 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*. (CCC 1266, 1830)



### Spiritual Comprehension – Do they 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 our 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; we 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 relate 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.

- 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 us to the past or the future. When you experience distractions, gently let them pass. Gently turn your heart back to God.

### 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. He who searches hearts knows what the Spirit means, for the Spirit intercedes for the saints as God Himself wills. (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).
- “When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father...” (John 15:26).
- “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth.”(John 16:13).
- “You are witnesses to these things. 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)



### Resources

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