

The Church's Main Six Spiritualities

All spiritualities within the Catholic Church have many similarities—
although the form of expression and degree of emphasis will differ

- All Spiritualities seek union with the Trinity through Jesus
- All seek to live the gospel life
- All emphasize the need for personal, communal, and Eucharistic and liturgical prayer
- All call for conversion—a turning away from evil and toward the Lord
- All honor Mary, the Mother of God
- All recognize a need for community

Augustinian Spirituality

Augustine of Hippo [354-430]

Consists of a love response to Jesus as a friend who guides us affectionately to union with the Triune God. Animated by the prayer of wonder at the mystery that is the divine life and strengthened by love of the Mother of the Incarnate Word, we pursue Wisdom and promote the glory of God in the work of the Church, which unites us as God's children.

This effort is supported by the discipline of penance, so that our human sinfulness will not impede the flow of grace.

Augustine saw Jesus as the Mediator and Physician, healer of souls.

Benedictine Spirituality

Benedict of Nursia [480-543]

Seeks union with God by an ordered life of work and prayer as a continual act of adoration. As disciples of Jesus, show forth the obedience that our Master gave to His Father in all things, even unto death on the cross. By the conscientious and serene fulfillment of our responsibilities to God, the Church, and our families, we acknowledge before others that we have given God priority in our lives, though we move about in a world that draws us to its own purposes.

Benedict believed in structure and that prayer plus work gave honor and glory to God.

Dominican Spirituality

Dominic Guzman [1170-1221]

Compels a pursue knowledge of the divine mysteries by prayer and study, to understand the love of the Father who sent His Son to bring salvation to mankind, and how that work is completed by the Holy Spirit through the Church. With the discipline of a mortified life we unite with the Eternal Priest and strive by word and example to lead others to know Jesus our Savior, who has revealed to us eternal Truth. In this we depend greatly Mary the Mother of our Savior as guide in the service of her Son.

Dominick stressed preaching, teaching and writing as essential to the apostolic life. The Dominican order was formed to combat heresy.

Franciscan Spirituality

Francis of Assisi [1182-1226]

Directs us to the amazing truth that the Son of God was born among us from the 'womb of a Virgin-Mother in order to share our human condition [humanity of Christ], to live simply and humbly among the poor, and then, taking on our sins, to suffer the injustice of a cruel death. By imitating His style of life and His servant-role as revealed in the Gospel, respond to each other's needs as brothers and sisters of Jesus in joyful praise of God's goodness. Franciscans are called to remind the Church that she must always image the poor and humble Son of God.

Francis stressed preaching more by example than learned discourse. Also used the title "minister" since Jesus, our brother, came to serve and not to be served. Also, stressed respect for all priest, despite sinful behavior, because it is through priests we receive Christ. [\[See 17 Essential Elements of Franciscan Spirituality\]](#)

Ignatian Spirituality

Ignatius of Loyola [1491-1556]

Prepares one, as companions of Jesus, to undertake whatever must be done to "build up the Body of Christ." This calls for continuing preparation of mind and heart and spirit for a life of service to the ignorant, the poor, and sinners. Getting others involved in the work of the Lord becomes a priority. This we do in undying loyalty to the Spouse of Christ [the Church] guided and protected by the Virgin Mary as Mother of the Church.

Ignatius stressed fidelity and loyalty to the Church and its leadership. Also stressed profound loyalty to their companions.

Teresian Spirituality [Carmelite]

Teresa of Avila [1515-1582]

Consists in a life of surrender in total trust of Jesus in whose love one rejoices. This demands unqualified service to those whose lives are shared and nourished by an intense prayer life that seeks a union with the redemptive mission of Jesus. This is a call for the acceptance of all misfortunes of the body and spirit a privileged partnership in the sufferings of the Cross. It demands a life of simplicity through the imitation of Mary in her home at Nazareth who as handmaiden of the Lord willingly abandoned herself to the will of God for our salvation.

Teresa stressed detachment from our own will, using prayer, poverty, and fasting as a means of lifting the soul up to God (contemplation).