THE HOLY SPIRIT AND GRACE

OBJECTIVE: THE THIRD PERSON OF THE TRINITY WHO GIVES HIS PRESENCE TO THE CHURCH AT ALL TIMES

I. The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Blessed Trinity, sustains us.
   A. By virtue of our Baptism, the first sacrament of faith, the Holy Spirit in the Church communicates to us, intimately and personally, the life that originate in the Father and is offered to us in the Son (CCC 683).
      1. Through his grace, the Holy Spirit is the first to awaken faith in us and to communicate to us the new life, which is to “know the Father and the one whom he has sent, Jesus Christ” (CCC 684).
      2. “The Spirit who ‘has spoken through the prophets’ makes us hear the Father’s Word, but we do not hear the Spirit himself. We know him only in the movement by which he reveals the Word to us and disposes us to welcome him in faith” (CCC 683).
      3. “From the beginning until ‘the fullness of time’ (Gal 4:4), the joint mission of the Father’s Word and Spirit remains hidden, but it is at work” (CCC 702).
      4. “Whenever God sends his Son, he always sends his Spirit: their mission is conjoined and inseparable” (CCC 743).
   B. We come to know the Holy Spirit most fully in the Church for He comes to us in many, diverse ways (CCC 688).
      1. The Scriptures we read are inspired by the power of the Holy Spirit.
      2. The Holy Spirit guides us and inspires the Church’s Magisterium in their effort to faithfully adhere to Tradition.
      3. The Holy Spirit sustains us in the sacramental life of the Church.
      4. The Holy Spirit is present in the charisms of the Church. Charisms are special gifts of service given for building up the Body of Christ (CCC 799).
      5. The Church is the temple of the Holy Spirit. “What the soul is to the human body, the Holy Spirit is to the Body of Christ, which is the Church” (St Augustine, CCC 797).

II. The Holy Spirit animates and inspires the faithful.
   A. The Holy Spirit, whom Christ the head pours out on his members, builds, animates, and sanctifies the Church. She is the sacrament of the Holy Trinity’s communion with men (CCC 747).
      1. Examples
   B. On the day of Pentecost, when the seven weeks of Easter ended, Christ’s Passover was fulfilled in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. On that day the Holy Spirit was fully revealed (CCC 731-32).
      1. Confirmation is the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost” (CCC 1302).
      2. Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace... it increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us.” (CCC 1303).
   C. “The moral life of Christians is sustained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These are the permanent dispositions which make man docile in following the promptings of the Holy Spirit” (CCC 1830).
      1. The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. They belong in their fullness to Christ, Son of David. They complete and perfect the virtues of those who receive them.” (CCC 1831).
      2. The Holy Spirit brings unity in diversity.

III. The Holy Spirit is symbolized and understood in varied ways.
   A. The Holy Spirit has many titles (CCC 692-93).
      1. The Paraclete which means “he who is called to one’s side” (CCC 692).
      2. Spirit of truth (Jn 16:13)

5. Spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9).
7. Spirit of God (Rom 8:9, 14:15:19; 1 Cor 6:11, 7:40).
8. Spirit of glory (1 Pt 4:14).

B. The Holy Spirit is symbolized in many ways (CCC 6940701)
1. Water
2. Anointing
3. Immersion
4. Fire
5. Cloud and Light
6. The seal
7. The hand
8. The Finger
9. The dove

OBJECTIVE: THE CATHOLIC TEACHING ON GRACE WITH ATTENTION TO ITS INTRINSIC NATURE AND CAPACITY TO TRANSFORM THE PERSON TO THE LIKENESS OF GOD.

IV. Grace and Justification

A. The grace of the Holy Spirit justifies God’s sons and daughters.
   1. Justification is the cleansing from sin and communication of “the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ and through Baptism.” (CCC 1987).
   2. Through Baptism, we become members of the Body of Christ, the Church. “Through the power of the Holy Spirit we take part in Christ’s Passion by dying to sin, and in his Resurrection by being born to a new life” (CCC 1988).

B. “The first work of the grace of the Holy Spirit is conversion” (CCC 1989)
   1. Graced by the Holy Spirit, justification takes place according to Jesus’ proclamation of Matthew’s Gospel: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Mt 4:17)” (CCC 1989).
   2. It is only through grace that a person is able to turn towards God and away from sin. In so doing, forgiveness and righteousness from on high are accepted (CCC 1989).
   3. As the Council of Trent stated in 1547: “Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the interior man” (CCC 1989).

C. Justification detaches a person from sin.
   1. Sin contradicts the love of God.
   2. Justification purifies the heart of sin (CCC 1990).
   3. Justification is the gesture of God’s merciful love offering forgiveness (CCC 1990).
   5. Justification “frees from the enslavement to sin, and it heals” (CCC 1990).

D. Justification accepts “God’s righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ” (CCC 1991).
   1. Justification in this context means the “rectitude of divine love” (CCC 1991).
   2. “With justification, faith, hope and charity are pored into our hearts, and obedience to the divine will is granted us” (CCC 1991).

E. Justification has been merited by Christ’s passion and death (CCC 1992).
   1. Christ “offered Himself on the cross as a living victim, holy and pleasing to God, and whose blood has become the instrument of atonement for the sins of all men’ (CCC 1992).
   2. Justification is received in Baptism, the sacrament of faith (CCC 1992).
   3. Justification “conforms us to the righteousness of God, who makes us inwardly just by the power of His mercy” (CCC 1992).
5. The covenant response on the part of the person is living the life of faith. This saying “yes” to God through His Word is the assent of faith (CCC 1993).

6. A person is invited to conversion through the promptings of the Holy Spirit who love “precedes and preserves” the assent of faith (CCC 1993).

7. The Council of Trent explains that when the heart is touched by the Holy Spirit, the person could reject this prompting of grace. However, without God’s grace, the person cannot move toward justice. Again, precedes and sustains the activity of God (CCC 1993).

F. "Justification is the most excellent work of God's love." (CCC 1994).
   1. St. Augustine says that justification, made manifest in Christ and granted by the Holy Spirit, is greater than the creation of heaven and earth (CCC 1994). Justification manifests God’s mercy.
   2. The Holy Spirit nurtures the interior life of the believer. "Justification entails the sanctification of his whole being" (CCC 1995).

V. Grace is the “free and undeserved help” that God gives to a person so that they may participate in His own divine life and receive eternal life (CCC 1996).
   A. Grace introduces us into the intimacy of the Trinitarian life (CCC 1997).
      1. The call to eternal life is supernatural. “It depends entirely on God’s gratuitous initiative.” For only God can reveal and give Himself (CCC 1998).
      2. Sanctifying grace is the free gift of God’s love which comes to us through Christ, infused by the Holy Spirit. By this grace the soul is headed of sin and sanctified (CCC 2023).
   B. In addition to sanctifying/habitual grace, there is also actual grace.
      1. Sanctifying grace is a habitual gift which enables the soul to live continuously in God’s love as well as to act by His love (CCC 2000).
      2. Actual graces are God’s interventions which occur at the beginning of conversion or at other times in the work of sanctification (CCC 2000).
   C. The preparation of a person “for the reception of grace is already a work of grace” (CCC 2001).
      1. Grace “is needed to arouse and sustain our collaboration in justification through faith” (CCC 2001).
      2. It is grace that brings us to sanctification through charity (CCC 2001).
   D. God’s free initiative of love demands a free response from the one who is being invited and gifted by God (CCC 2002).
      1. A person is created in God’s own image.
      2. Being created in God’s own image confers on the person freedom to chose, the power to know God, and to love Him (CCC 2002).
      3. “The soul only enters freely into the communion of love” (CCC 2002). The human response is a free choice.
   E. Grace is the gift of the Holy Spirit who justifies and sanctifies (CCC 2003).
      1. Various graces are distinguishable.
         1. The gifts of the Holy Spirit which assist us in our collaboration with God to build up His kingdom (CCC 2003).
         2. Sacramental graces are received through the sacraments (CCC 2003).
         3. Charisms are graces received for the purpose of giving service in the life of the Church. Teaching, preaching, and hospitality are a few examples of charisms (CCC 2003).
         4. The grace of state is given to those with varying responsibilities for Church ministry (CCC 2004).
      2. We cannot see or feel grace. It can only be known through faith (CCC 2005).

VI. Merit
   A. By its definition, merit refers to recompense owed (CCC 2006).
      1. With regard to God, there is no possible way of even conceiving God’s greatness and our insignificance before Him (CCC 2007).
      2. On His initiative, God invites the person to choose in freedom through His collaboration (CCC 2008).
B. True merit which may be granted by grace makes us “co-heirs” with Christ (CCC 2009).
   1. We become partners by grace in God’s divine nature (CCC 2009).
   2. The merits of our good works are gifts of the divine
   3. “No one can merit the initial grace of forgiveness and justification, at the beginning of a conversion” (CCC 2010).
   4. Moved by grace and charity, “we can then merit for ourselves and for others the graces needed for our sanctification, for the increase of grace and charity, and for the attainment of eternal life” (CCC 2010).

VII. The call of all believers is to union with God through the attainment of holiness (CCC 2013).
A. “All Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity” (CCC 2013).
   1. The romance of faith, being in love with God, realizes that there are no limits as one is progressively drawn into the intimate life of Trinitarian love (CCC 2028).
   2. This union with Christ is called “mystical” because it is lived in the realm of mystery (CCC 2014).
   3. In the mystery of His love God chooses to work differently with different people. The most important reality of our own personal growth in union, is to do God’s will as it is manifested by our own lives (CCC 2014).
   4. The ultimate manifestation of the activity of God in our lives is our inner transformation which bears fruit in greater virtue and charity (CCC 2013). “This I command you: love one another” (Jn 15:17).

B. The journey to God in this life can never avoid the Cross in union with Christ (CCC 2014).
   1. Because of our wounded nature, there must be denial and spiritual battle (CCC 2015).
   2. Various forms of mortification and asceticism assist the self to die in the spiritual sense so that the peace and joy of beatitude living becomes predominant (CCC 2015).
   3. A person who strives to do God’s will and accepts whatever suffering comes into their lives can live in the hope of final perseverance, that is, receiving eternal life with God after death (CCC 2016).