

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the RCIA The Holy Spirit

[N]o one can say, “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit . . . To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” (1 Corinthians 12:3b,7)

Insight

When you are down, what pulls you up?

Team captain Bobbie smiled and high-fived a teammate on the way out of the gym. The team pulled it off. At first, it didn’t look like the game was going their way. They were playing poorly and losing until after the half-time break when the coach talked to them.

The coach didn’t raise his voice. He quietly and firmly pointed out how they had to pick up on defense, take care of their end of the floor, and be more confident with their shot selections. “Guys, you need to hustle!” he encouraged them. “Play together and communicate! Be a team!”

Bobbie knew the half-time talk did the trick. It was not so much the coach’s words as it was his intensity and enthusiasm that got them more motivated and focused.

For Reflection . . .

Jesus did not leave his Church alone after his Ascension. He left them an Advocate and Teacher—a “coach”—the Holy Spirit.

What aspects of Church life reveal to you the hidden presence of the Holy Spirit?

Who and what brought you to Christ and how did they do that?

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 683–747

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: pages 102–110

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church: 136–146

Church Teaching

Moved to Act

Called together by the Risen Lord, the disciples witnessed his return to the Father, the Ascension. Yet Jesus had promised that the Father would send the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, “to be with [them] always” (John 14:16).

During the annual Jewish feast of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon them. Fired up, they went into the marketplace where Peter boldly proclaimed Jesus. Soon after, the others would travel the world under the power of the Holy Spirit proclaiming the Good News. Without the presence and grace of the Holy Spirit, we would not be motivated to act as witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

A Joint Mission

All the Persons of the Trinity, while truly distinct from each other, share a joint mission. The work of God is one. God the Son, the Eternal Word, becomes incarnate in Jesus. In him is made visible the invisible God, but it is the Holy Spirit who lifts the veils and shadows from our eyes so that we might both see Christ for who he is and take part in the work and mission he gave to the Church.

At Baptism, we begin our participation in the joint mission of Jesus and the Holy Spirit as adopted children of God. Raised in the faith, we are ever more strongly grafted onto the vine of Christ as we bear the good fruit of the Holy Spirit in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control (see Galatians 5:22–23). The Spirit is always with us, giving us all the help, motivation, and courage we will ever need.