

the action of the Holy Spirit we can learn to look at ourselves and world through God's eyes and distinguish between good and evil.

715 As we develop in our spiritual life, we see ever more clearly through the fabric of our daily lives the action of the Holy Spirit. Maximus Confessor wrote of the particular contemplation that a Christian gradually achieves—the contemplation of Divine Providence.⁴⁶¹ Through the action of the Holy Spirit, Christians "see" God's will for themselves and accept it joyfully. Hence, a Christian's entire life becomes a sign of the action of the Holy Spirit and acquires meaning and fulfillment.

1. Holiness as a Sign of the Action of the Holy Spirit

716 Only the one Lord is holy in the true sense of this word. We read about this in the book of the prophet Isaiah, who saw God on the heavenly throne. The seraphim sang of his ineffable holiness, proclaiming: "Holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory (Is 6:3). The Holy Scriptures also call believers "saints" (literally holy ones)—those who are sanctified through God's salvific action (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:2). The Holy Spirit cleanses a person of all defilement and leads him or her into divine life and holiness. The apostle teaches:

Do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers—none of these will inherit the kingdom of God. And this is what some of you used to be. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God (1 Cor 6:9-11).

717 Christian holiness is not a perfection grounded in our nature, but achieved rather through the active participation of a person in the holiness of God. Saint John Cassian teaches:

All holy people have certainly had God within them. For we know well that God was in the patriarchs, and that he spoke in the prophets. We believe that not only apostles and martyrs but all the saints and servants of God have within them the Spirit of God, according to this: "For we are the temple of the living God" (2 Cor 6:16) And again: "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" (1 Cor 3:16). And thus, we are all receivers of God.⁴⁶²

⁴⁶¹ See MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR, *Mystagogy*, 24: PG 91, 701ff.

⁴⁶² JOHN CASSIAN, *On the Incarnation of the Lord*, V, 3: PL 50, 102.

718 All Christians receive holiness in embryonic form through the Holy Mysteries of Baptism and Chrismation, and they are called not to squander it, but to nurture it to fullness. Again, John Cassian reminds us:

As far as human weakness permits, [people] should humble themselves before God, be subject to God, make themselves dwellings for God, and by their faith and piety win this, to have God as their guest and indweller. For in proportion as anyone is fit for God's gift, so does the Divine grace reward that person: in proportion as a person seems worthy of him; in proportion as a human being seems worthy of God, so does that person he enjoy God's presence, according to the Lord's promise, "those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them" (Jn 14:23).⁴⁶³

2. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

719 The gifts of the Holy Spirit are the capacity granted to a person to accept God and to be open to communion with him. There are seven such gifts: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. The prophet Isaiah prophesied about these gifts as attributes of the awaited Saviour: "The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD" (Is 11:2).

720 In their instructions about these gifts, the Holy Fathers developed a teaching on the spiritual senses which a Christian discovers within himself or herself. Just as sight, hearing, and natural intellect allow a person to see, hear, and understand the visible and created world, similarly, the Holy Spirit grants a person the means to perceive and understand the invisible and divine world. Symeon the New Theologian speaks of a spiritual sight that is illumined and becomes active in the light of the Most Holy Trinity, and of other spiritual senses that help us perceive and correctly understand the Word of God, as well as see God in the created world.⁴⁶⁴

3. The Fruits of the Spirit

721 The fruits of the Holy Spirit are the marks of a Christian's mature spiritual life and action that flow from the person's cooperation with divine grace. In order to live as a true Christian and bear witness to Christ, both the assistance of the Holy Spirit as well as the openness and effort

⁴⁶³ JOHN CASSIAN, *On the Incarnation of the Lord*, V, 4: PL 50, 104.

⁴⁶⁴ See SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN, *Ethical Discourses*, III.