

260 The grace of the Holy Spirit is indispensable for humankind's salvation. Although gifted with an intellect and will, without grace, a human being is only a soul and body, because it does not understand the Spirit of God.²¹⁵ Being conscious of the absolute necessity of divine grace, the Church begins every divine service with the prayer "Heavenly King" thus invoking the Holy Spirit. the *liturgical invocation* of the Holy Spirit (in Greek, *epiklesis*) "upon us and these gifts here present" completes the consecration of the Holy Gifts and our own selves.

See, Fire and Spirit are in the womb of her who bore you; see, Fire and Spirit are in the river, in which you were baptized. Fire and Spirit are in our baptismal font; in the Bread and the Cup are Fire and Holy Spirit ... In your Bread there is hidden the Spirit, who is not consumed; in your Wine there dwells the Fire, that is not drunk; the Spirit is in your Bread, the Fire in your Wine—a manifest wonder that our lips have received.²¹⁶

Б. The Sending Down of the Holy Spirit

261 The Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles after Christ was glorified in his Resurrection and ascended into heaven, and enthroned at the right hand of the Father. Made worthy to receive the Holy Spirit, the apostles become "new tablets of grace, truly inscribed by God, living scrolls initiated into his mysteries, holding the word of salvation written with the finger of the Father."²¹⁷ Fulfilled are the words of John the Baptist about the expected Saviour: he will baptize "with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Lk 3:16).

262 The Holy Spirit grants understanding among peoples, overcoming alienation and divisions planted by sin. These are described in the Old Testament in the image of the tower of Babylon (see Gn 11:1-9). The Spirit prepares all nations of the world to encounter Christ:

And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power (Acts 2:8-11).

²¹⁵ See METROPOLITAN ANDREY SHEPTYTSKY, Дар П'ятдесятниці [The Gift of Pentecost] (May - June 1937).

²¹⁶ EPHREM THE SYRIAN, Hymn on Faith, 10.

²¹⁷ Octoechos, Tone 2, Thursday, Vespers, Stichera at Psalm 140.

- 263 The Holy Spirit *teaches* the apostles what to say (see Acts 4:8-12). That same Spirit directs them to listen more to God than to people (*see Acts 4:19*). The apostles are inspired by the Holy Spirit to preach Christ boldly: "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness" (*Acts 4:31*). The Spirit leads them to preach even among the Gentiles, overcoming human reservations (*see Acts 10:9-20*).
- 264 The Holy Spirit, who descended upon the apostles, builds the Church of Christ: "Pour out now the power which has its origin in you, the sovereign Spirit, whom you have given to your beloved Son Christ, and that he has handed on to the apostles who built the Church."²¹⁸ The apostles profess the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church at the Council in Jerusalem: "It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and us..." (*Acts 15:28*).
- 265 The Holy Spirit fashions the Church and gives life to her as the Body of Christ, making her *the place of salvation*: "For where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church."²¹⁹ All people are called to the Church, "from every nation from all tribes and peoples and languages" (*Rev 7:9; see Rev 14:6*), regardless of culture and background. It is this same Spirit within the Church who reveals to Christians the very mystery of salvation: "For progress in the knowledge of truth we give thanks to that divine and magnificent Spirit, the Author and Leader of the Church."²²⁰

c. The Life-Creating Spirit is the Giver of Grace

- 266 The Source of all grace is God the Father. From the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Spirit, the grace of God descends upon creation and sustains its existence. By the power of grace, being wisely ordered, the laws of nature have been established, and the beauty of the universe and of humankind has been designed. Of all that was created, only humankind, called to life in God, has been granted the ability to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, the *Treasury of Blessings* who grants God's grace in a variety of gifts (*see 1 Cor 12:4-13*). In this cooperation (in Greek, *synergies*), the natural powers (in Greek, *synergiat*) of humankind are united with the divine and uncreated gift of the grace of the Holy Spirit.
- 267 The bearer of God's grace in the world is Christ's Church. Through the ministrations of the Holy Mysteries, by means of sanctification and

²¹⁸ HIPPOLYTUS OF ROME, *Apostolic Tradition*, 3:3.

²¹⁹ IRENAEUS OF LYONS, *Against Heresies*, 111, 24, 1: PG 7, 966.

²²⁰ DIDYMUS THE BLIND, *Commentary on 2 Peter*, 3, 5: PG 39, 1774.