

The Holy Spirit

Q. 114. Who is God the Holy Spirit?

God the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Blessed Trinity, is God just as the Father and the Son are God.

He is called the Paraclete (or Comforter) and the Advocate, because He pleads mankind's cause with God. He is also called the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Love. The Holy Spirit comes to us when we are baptized, and He continues to dwell within us and sanctify us as long as we do not shut Him out by mortal sin.

Sacred Scripture

God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what person knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. *1 Corinthians 2:10-12*

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. *1 Corinthians 6:19-20*

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684 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.”⁷¹ But the Spirit is the last of the persons of the Holy Trinity to be revealed. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, the Theologian, explains this progression in terms of the pedagogy of divine “condescension”: “The Old Testament proclaimed the Father clearly, but the Son more obscurely. The New Testament revealed the Son and gave us a glimpse of the divinity of the Spirit. Now the Spirit dwells among us and grants us a clearer vision of himself. It was not prudent, when the divinity of the Father had not yet been confessed, to proclaim the Son openly and, when the divinity of the Son was not yet admitted, to add the Holy Spirit as an extra burden, to speak somewhat daringly.... By advancing and progressing ‘from glory to glory,’ the light of the Trinity will shine in ever more brilliant rays.”⁷²

743 From the beginning to the end of time, whenever God sends his Son, he always sends his Spirit: their mission is conjoined and inseparable.

Summary Prayer

God, the Holy Spirit, divine Spirit of love and light proceeding from the Father and the Son, we adore You as the third Person of the adorable Trinity, our very God. In the same way as we adore God the Father and God the Son, we adore You in union with the angels and saints who surround Your throne on high. May You be praised and glorified now and forever. Amen.

For commentaries on each question with Cardinal Arinze, Sr. John Vianney and Fr. Straub (in Spanish), see Appendix E.

Q. 115. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. What is meant by this?

God the Father and God the Son behold the infinite loveliness of each other. There flows between these two divine Persons a Love which is divine and personal. It is a Love so perfect that it is a living Love. This Love is God, the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

The Father and the Son eternally give this personal Love (God the Holy Spirit) to one another. God's love for us has led Him to make us sharers in His own divine life. We can say that the Spirit of Love, God the Holy Spirit, is the One Who makes this possible. Since the work of making souls holy is especially a work of divine Love, we say that the Holy Spirit is the Sanctifier, the One Who makes us holy; yet what one Person in the Trinity does, all three do.

#T3-35

**Sacred Scripture**

Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. *John 16:7*

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you. *John 16:13-15*

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248 At the outset the Eastern tradition expresses the Father's character as first origin of the Spirit. By confessing the Spirit as he "who proceeds from the Father," it affirms that he *comes from the Father through the Son*.¹ The Western tradition expresses first the consubstantial communion between Father and Son, by saying that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son (*filioque*). It says this, "legitimately and with good reason,"² for the eternal order of the divine persons in their consubstantial communion implies that the Father, as "the principle

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Sacred Scripture

Q. 115. Rom 8:9; Eph 1:13-14.

without principle,³³ is the first origin of the Spirit, but also that as Father of the only Son, he is, with the Son, the single principle from which the Holy Spirit proceeds.⁴ This legitimate complementarity, provided it does not become rigid, does not affect the identity of faith in the reality of the same mystery confessed.

#F1-54



Splendor of Truth

This is what takes place through the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, of freedom and of love: in him we are enabled to interiorize the law, to receive it and to live it as the motivating force of true personal freedom: “the perfect law, the law of liberty.” (section 83)

Vatican Council II

Now, what was once preached by the Lord, or fulfilled in him for the salvation of mankind, must be proclaimed and spread to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), starting from Jerusalem (cf. Luke 24:27), so that what was accomplished for the salvation of all men may, in the course of time, achieve its universal effect.

To do this, Christ sent the Holy Spirit from the Father to exercise inwardly his saving influence, and to promote the spread of the Church. Without doubt, the Holy Spirit was at work in the world before Christ was glorified. On the day of Pentecost, however, he came down on the disciples that he might remain with them forever (cf. Jn. 14:16); on that day the Church was openly displayed to the crowds and the spread of the Gospel among the nations, through preaching, was begun. *Missionary Activity*, 3, 4

Summary Prayer

God the Holy Spirit, we believe that in the divinity itself, You are the completion of the inner life of God. By contemplating Himself, the Father begets the idea of the living, perfect and perpetual “mirror image” of Himself. This is God the Son, Who is the expression of the Father’s infinite self-knowledge. The Father and the Son see each other in their divine beauty and embrace each other in infinite love. You are this Love Who proceeds from the Father and the Son. You are Their blissful surrender to one another, and Their reposing in one another. You are the bond and unity, the embrace and kiss, the streaming joy, the jubilant happiness, and the silent blessed repose of the Trinity.

Your very name, “Spirit,” signifies that You are the “Breathing Forth” of God the Father and God the Son. You are the “Holy” Spirit, because by virtue of Your origin You are the holiness of God, and God’s holiness is one with His infinite love of Himself. Though You are the mutual love of the Father and the Son, still, like Them, You are God, equal to Them in all things. As God, You never had a beginning; You always were. As God, You are worthy of adoration, love, and devotion.

Divine Love, the One Who unites the Father and the Son, Spirit of power, faithful Consoler of the afflicted, let the splendor of Your light penetrate our hearts to their very depths. Send the heavenly rays of Your love into the sanctuary of our souls that, penetrating them, they may enkindle divine love and there consume all our weaknesses and our negligences.

Holy Spirit, have mercy on us. Make our souls docile and upright. Show pity toward our weaknesses with such clemency that our nothingness may find grace before Your infinite greatness, that our helplessness may find mercy before Your almighty power, and that our offenses may find forgiveness before the multitude of Your mercies, through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

#H5-23



#J2-357



Doctrine • Moral • Worship Exercise (see Appendix B for answer key)

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
2. In what way can you worship and glorify the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in your daily life?
3. Name a prayer that mentions the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Slowly read the Summary Prayer after question 115, and make it your own prayer.

Q. 116. What did Jesus Christ say about the Holy Spirit?

Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit and that this Spirit would remain with us.

Jesus said to the Apostles the night of the Last Supper, “And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you” (John 14:16-17).

Sacred Scripture

These things I have spoken to you, while I am still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. *John 14:25-26*

But when the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me. *John 15:26*

Jesus stood up and proclaimed, “If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.’” Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. *John 7:37-39*

#H5-20

***Catechism of the Catholic Church***

729 Only when the hour has arrived for his glorification does Jesus *promise* the coming of the Holy Spirit, since his Death and Resurrection will fulfill the promise made to the fathers.¹ The Spirit of truth, the other Paraclete, will be given by the Father in answer to Jesus’ prayer; he will be sent by the Father in Jesus’ name; and Jesus will send him from the Father’s side, since he comes from the Father. The Holy Spirit will come and we shall know him; he will be with us for ever; he will remain with us. The Spirit will teach us everything, remind us of all that Christ said to us and bear witness to him. The Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth and will glorify Christ. He will prove the world wrong about sin, righteousness, and judgment.

For commentaries on each question with Cardinal Arinze, Sr. John Vianney and Fr. Straub (in Spanish), see Appendix E.

Splendor of Truth

The Lord promised his disciples the Holy Spirit, who would “bring to their remembrance” and teach them to understand his commandments (cf. Jn 14:26), and who would be the principle and constant source of a new life in the world (cf. Jn 3:5-8; Rom 8:1-13). (*section 25*)

Vatican Council II

Before freely laying down his life for the world, the Lord Jesus organized the apostolic ministry and promised to send the Holy Spirit, in such a way that both would be always and everywhere associated in the fulfillment of the work of salvation. *Missionary Activity, 4*

Summary Prayer

Most Holy Spirit of God, Jesus spoke of You as the “Paraclete” or “Advocate” as He prepared to call You from heaven. Your mission was to act as Christ’s Witness before the world, by defending His character, authority, and doctrine. To assure our eternal salvation, we entrust our minds to Your guidance and our hearts to Your inspirations. Let us be witnesses to Jesus Christ in the world, especially by our good example. We ask this through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Doctrine • Moral • Worship Exercise (see Appendix B for answer key)

1. In the Scripture verses John 14:16-17 and 25-26, what does our Lord Jesus say about the Holy Spirit?
2. “Paraclete” means “He who is called to help.” Recall occasions when you experienced the help of the Holy Spirit. Describe one of your experiences in writing.
3. Read John 14:16-17 again. Thank the Father and Jesus for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Ask the Holy Spirit to remain with you always and to inspire, strengthen, and guide you to greater intimacy with Jesus.

Chapter Summary Prayer

Holy Spirit of God, the Incarnation of Jesus, which is the most important of the whole work of salvation, and the deepest proof of God’s love for us, was wrought by Your divine power. The Incarnation was the highest union of a human nature with God and is the source of all holiness.

Spirit of Life, Your divine breath filled the sanctuary of Mary’s womb and brought into existence the union of the eternal Word of God with His human nature. You were the mysterious heartbeat of His inner life, moving it in its wonderful depths of devotion.

We believe that Jesus Christ’s divine and human natures are united in one divine Person, the eternal Word of God, the second Person of the adorable Trinity. Creator Spirit, You effected this wonderful union. Your infinite power created the human soul of the Savior and conceived His sacred Body in the womb of His Most Holy Mother. The angel spoke to Mary, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God” (Luke 1:35).

Most infinite Spirit of love and life, we praise and thank You also for Your constant work within Jesus' soul, which, with His cooperation, brought forth marvelous increases of grace, wisdom, holiness and glory. May we, as sharers in Your divine life by virtue of Baptism, also be always open to Your will and to Your grace. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Family Wisdom Library: Chapter 32

See Appendix A for more references.

Q. 114. Who is God the Holy Spirit?

*Dei Verbum (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation), Vatican II, sect. 5;
Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), Vatican II, sect. 4;
On the Dignity and Vocation of Women, John Paul II, sect. 29;
On the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World, John Paul II, see entire document;
The Relationship Between Faith and Reason, John Paul II, sect. 44.*

Q. 115. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. What is meant by this?

*On the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World, John Paul II, sect. 8;
The Relationship Between Faith and Reason, John Paul II, sect. 44.*

Q. 116. What did Jesus Christ say about the Holy Spirit?

*Dei Verbum (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation), Vatican II, sect. 5, 8;
Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), Vatican II, sect. 4;
On the Dignity and Vocation of Women, John Paul II, sect. 15;
On the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World, John Paul II, sect. 30;
The Relationship Between Faith and Reason, John Paul II, sect. 44;
Splendor of Truth, John Paul II, sect. 83.*



Thought Provokers

Please see Appendix C for the answers.

- Q. 114: Where in the Bible is the divinity of God the Holy Spirit clearly taught?
- Q. 115: What are the basic similarities and differences between the love exchanged between a Christian husband and wife in the state of grace and that exchanged between God the Father and God the Son?
- Q. 116: How do we know when God the Holy Spirit is dwelling in us helping us to become holy?