

I Will Not Leave You Orphaned

Jesus has been preparing his disciples for when He will ascend to heaven and no longer be with them. And He knows that they will feel abandoned and afraid. So, in His infinite compassion, Jesus tells them that the Father will give them 'another Advocate to be with them forever' (Jn 14: 16). To further reassure His disciples, Jesus tells them: 'I will not leave you orphaned' (Jn 14: 18).

He goes on to tell His disciples that the Advocate is the 'Spirit of truth' that abides with them and who will be in them (Jn 14: 17). Imagine that. Not only will the Spirit be with them, He will be in them.

The Holy Spirit is an expression of the mutual love of the Father for the Son and the Son for the Father. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son by way of love to abide in the hearts of all those who follow the Word.

In Latin, the spirit refers to air, respiration, and vital breath. The Holy Spirit is the breath of love of the Father and the Son; the breath of divine love. How profound it is to think that this breath of divine love abides in our hearts.

When we make our profession of faith at Sunday Mass, we say that we believe in the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and Son is adored and glorified. The Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct person of God; part of the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit is God abiding in us.

The Holy Spirit comes to us for a different purpose than the Father and the Son. He confers many graces and gifts on us and, most of all, He is a Sanctifier, leading us gently towards holiness according to the teachings of Jesus. When contemplating the Holy Spirit, we would do well to meditate on the words of the ancient hymn, Come, Holy Ghost (Veni, Creator Spiritus):

Come, Holy Ghost

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest,
And in our hearts take up your rest;
Come with your grace and heavenly aid,
To fill the hearts which you have made,
To fill the hearts which you have made.

O Comforter, to you we cry,
The heavenly gift of God most high;
The fount of life and fire of love,
And sweet anointing from above,
And sweet anointing from above.

To every sense your light impart,
And shed your love in every heart;
To our weak flesh, your strength supply;
Unfailing courage from on high,
Unfailing courage from on high.

O grant that we through you may come,
To know the Father and the Son,
And hold with firm, unchanging faith
That you are Spirit of them both,
That you are Spirit of them both.

The Holy Spirit is the Comforter, fount of life, fire of love, and sweet anointing from heaven. He dispenses gifts to us: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

Jesus did not abandon us. He did not leave us orphaned. He ascended to the Father and together they gifted us with the Holy Spirit; the third Person of God, to dwell in our hearts. The question is: Will we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us to holiness?