

# WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY CENACLE

February 12 & 26, 2025

## Notes

Last month we discussed the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus as well as discussing a little bit about the most Holy Spirit.

This month in light of questions people from last month's morning session were asking about the Holy Spirit and my own current readings on the Holy Spirit, we will discuss further the Holy Spirit and His special relationship with Mary.

One time my favorite Sister who taught me in high school said that she thought the "Holy Spirit was the most forgotten member of the BL Trinity." For some reason that statement has always stayed with me.

I am currently reading a book entitled *Your Life in the Holy Spirit* by Alan Schreck. (Frederick, MD: The Word Among Us, 1995). What I am enjoying about it is that it is not simply a catechetical study of the HS which discusses Him as the 3<sup>rd</sup> member of the BL Trinity (circumcession His role in the coming of the Messiah (Annunciation, Baptism of Jesus, Pentecost), ), His role in salvation history, His gifts (wisdom, counsel, fortitude, piety, knowledge and fear of the Lord) and His fruits (charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness) but the author discusses these concepts in a more spiritual way.

In the course of reading the book, I came upon Chapter 10, "The Spouse of the Holy Spirit" (pgs. 183-203) which is about the Holy Spirit's relationship with Mary and vice a versa. I thought I would share with

you some of the insights the author has presented which I found very interesting.

The question which spawned our discussion about the HS last month was when someone ask me who is the HS was and how does one pray to Him?

I explained that God is one God comprised of 3 persons and that where one is so are the other 2 persons. They all participate together in everything through circumincession so when one prays to the Father, that also includes the Son and Holy Spirit and so forth for all 3 persons, Who are a community of love. Each Person, however, has been attributed with different activities, which in fact all 3 participate in (Creation, Redemption, Sanctification).

### **The Person of the Holy Spirit**

In Chapter 10 of Schrek's book (pg. 189), he teaches that we should address the Holy Spirit as a person, not impersonally as wind, fire, water, dove etc. The Holy Spirit is a person who guides, directs, and speaks to us as individuals and to the Church. Because He is Spirit, many people turn away from Him through disinterest, lack of faith in his existence or that He is no longer functioning in our times as He did in the Old Testament. Schrek believes people really don't believe the Holy Spirit will come to them as in Old Testament times. But as Schrek points out, one must pray, and be open to the movement of the Spirit in their lives. In fact, the HS is guiding the Church through the vicissitudes of history and he guides us individually and uniquely in our lives if we allow him. I do believe, however, that like all relationships one must learn how to relate to one another and the developing of a relationship with the HS is no different.

## **Listening to the Voice of the Holy Spirit**

So how can we “hear” the voice of the HS in our lives? How do we come to understand how he moves and affects our lives?

1. Sacred Scripture: OT prophets, NT=Jesus, the writings of St. Paul and Mary. Through reading scripture, we learn how the HS functioned in each of these people’s lives. (pgs. 189-190)

If we are going to learn about and love the HS, we need to look to Jesus and Mary since the Holy Spirit is manifest in them most perfectly.

Jesus’ relationship to the HS is most unique because He and the HS are both members of the one true God. Jesus manifests perfectly both the Father and the Holy Spirit. (EX: When you see me, you see my Father. But one could also say: when you see me, you see the HS). When we come to know Jesus, we know the Holy Spirit. The HS brought forth the Messiah and the messianic gifts, Thus, when we encounter Jesus, we encounter the Spirit of Truth, the all-consuming love of God and the peace of God. (p.201)

Mary is the Spouse and Temple of the Holy Spirit. Mary reveals the HS more completely than any other human person on earth because she was/is filled with the HS and listened and responded to Him in the most pure and complete way. She was always led by the Spirit and carried out the work of the Spirit most perfectly because she was immaculately conceived and therefore committed no sin which would obscure the working of the Spirit in and through her. (201)

### **What Mary Teaches about the Holy Spirit:**

1. Mary was conceived immaculately. Therefore, the Holy Spirit was fully present to sanctify Mary at her conception. She was

conceived without Original Sin and received the fulness of God's life of grace through the power of the HS at the beginning of her existence. Remember, Angel Gabriel greeted her as "full of grace" at the Annunciation before she had agreed to anything. She already was filled with the fulness of God's grace from her conception. Schrek describes her as having been "baptized" with the HS at the moment of her conception. (p. 185 )

2. Mary is the Spouse of the HS. Through her fiat, saying "yes" to the Holy Spirit, she cooperates with Him to fulfill God plan to bring forth God's Son, Jesus, into the world for the redemption of mankind. As the cloud covered the Ark in the Old Testament, so too did the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, overshadow Mary and bring about the conception of Jesus in her womb. Therefore, she is described as the "New Ark of the Covenant", the mother of the Son of God in the New Testament." (p. 184).

3. At the Annunciation, Mary becomes both the Spouse of the Holy Spirit and the Mother of Jesus, the Son of God simultaneously. (p.185)

### **Mary's Relationship with the Holy Spirit**

Mary's life in the Holy Spirit did not end with the Annunciation. From that point forward, Mary lead her daily life in full cooperation with the movements of the Spirit, as we can do also although probably not as perfectly.

Mary lived a life of contemplation while fulfilling her earthly duties. Mary contemplated and thought about all the activities in her life. Two occasions mentioned in Sacred Scripture describe Mary as "pondering" the events which had just occurred in her life. At the birth of Jesus when the shepherds arrived on the night of Jesus' birth she was

described as “pondering” the events of the birth of Jesus and again after finding Him in the Temple when he became ‘Lost.” Mary pondered = contemplated what had happened and what Jesus said to her in the Temple. (pgs. 186-187) Contemplation is prayer, and for Mary her prayer is an activity of the Holy Spirit working in her. Her prayer manifests itself through vocal prayer, prophesy (Magnificat) praise and contemplation. Mary’s pondering are expressions of two gifts of the Holy Spirit, those of wisdom and understanding. (p.187)

We see numerous incidences of Mary responding to the Holy Spirit in her life: the visitation, proclamation of the Magnificat, the birth of Jesus, searching for Jesus in Jerusalem, as a disciple of Jesus during his ministry, the wedding feast of Cana, and at His Passion.

At the foot of the cross, Jesus gave His mother to St. John to be cared for until the end of her life and in effect calling her to become the mother of His followers, the Church.

Mary continued to respond to the movement of the Holy Spirit after the Ascension of Jesus as she became the spiritual guide and mother for the Apostles. ( p. 107) At the Feast of Pentecost, Mary is described as being present when she, the Apostles, and the other 120 disciples were anointed with the Holy Spirit. They were “confirmed” with the graces to strengthen and enlighten them as they were about to embark on their roles as missionaries to spread Jesus’ message to the ends of the earth. (p. 193)

But what about Mary, did she need to be anointed with the Holy Spirit again since she was already “full of grace”?

At the Feast of Pentecost, Mary also received the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The Apostles and disciples receive the anointing to become enlightened and strengthened to carry out their missionary activities.

Mary was anointed with the Holy Spirit as she was also embarking on a new mission as “Mother of the Church. (p, 189)

As Schrek mentions, we are anointed many times by the Holy Spirit in our lives. There is not just one coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus called down the Holy Spirit a number of times upon the Apostles with the most dramatic being at Pentecost. So, Mary also received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost as she embarked upon a new mission as Mother of the Church.

### **What about us??**

For us, each time we receive a sacrament, we are receiving sanctifying grace distributed to us by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Mary is described as the Temple of the Holy Spirit. We too, become temples of the Holy Spirit by virtue of our baptism and confirmation in the Church. At Baptism, Original Sin is wiped away, we receive sanctifying grace and become members of the Church through the power of the Holy Spirit. So long as we are not in mortal sin, the Holy Spirit resides within our souls. The difference between Mary and us is that the Holy Spirit resides in her most perfectly. The purity and clarity of her soul makes her the perfect sanctuary of the Holy Spirit who resides and works through her unencumbered. Maximillian Kolbe once said “ It is the Holy Spirit that we love in her; and through her we love the Son.” (p.201)

Schreck stated “Wherever Mary went, her mere presence brought forth a movement or action of the Holy Spirit in others, like her cousin Elizabeth. The climax of the work of the Holy Spirit through Mary was her presence with the apostles on the eve of Pentecost. It was through Mary’s yes that the Old Testament prophecies of the people were at last *fulfilled!*” (p. 203)

Schrek concluded that, "One conclusion I would draw from the biblical evidence about Mary is simply that *where Mary is, there is the Holy Spirit!* Whether it be through her intercession or simply through her presence, Mary in whom the Holy Spirit dwells in a special way, evokes the Holy Spirit in others." (pgs.189-190)

And we who are followers of Christ, anointed by the Holy Spirit at baptism and confirmed in our relationship with the Father and Jesus His Son through the power of the Holy Spirit at Confirmation, are also temples of the Holy Spirit called to bring the love and knowledge of God to each person we encounter.