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St. Ignatius Loyola Parish

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Introducing Rituals into your Home.

- * Holy Spirit
- * Pentecost
- * Acts of the Apostles
- * Pentecost Sequence
- * Signs, Symbols, Images and Actions
- * Sacraments

Inside this issue:

- The Holy Spirit 1
- Symbols, Signs, Actions & Images 3
- Holy Spirit Songs, Prayers and Videos 4

The Holy Spirit

Tomorrow we will once again celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation, the sacrament most associated with the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. However, each sacrament has its own association with the Spirit. It is obvious that the Spirit is invoked in the blessing of the



waters of Baptism. Likewise, the Baptismal formula calls upon the Trinity—

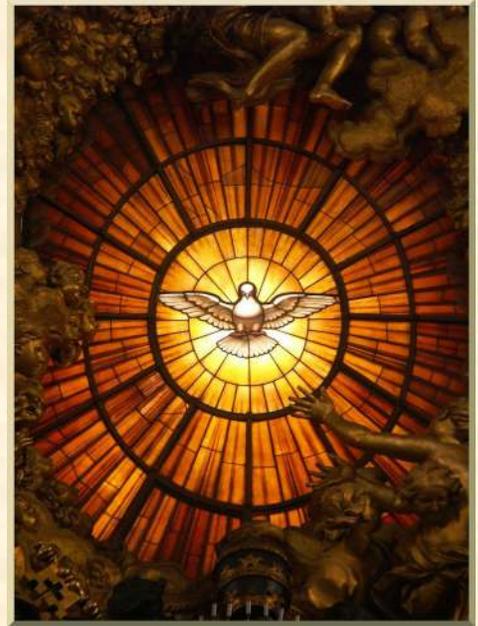
“I baptize you, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

What is less obvious to many of us is that the Eucharist is intimately tied to the Spirit with each Eucharistic Prayer



including an Epiclesis, an invocation of the Holy Spirit. (It is the prayer when the priest extends his hand over the bread and wine and says in these or similar words “...by sending down your Holy Spirit upon them....”)

The rite of ordination includes a special invocation of the Holy Spirit when the ordinands lie prostrate. Another symbol of



passing on the Spirit is the laying upon of hands by all the

priests of the assembly as well as the bishop.

The sacrament of the sick is basically an anointing, the rubbing of oil on the forehead and hands of the sick.



This oil, like the oil of Catechumens and the oil of Chrism are blessed by the bishop, usually the morning of Holy Thursday. Like the blessing of the water used at Baptism, a similar invocation of the Spirit is used to bless these

Continued on page 2

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

- Wisdom
- Understanding
- Counsel
- Fortitude
- Knowledge
- Piety
- Fear of the Lord.

Fruits of the Holy Spirit

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-control

oils. The actual prayer used during the anointing begins “Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit...”

If you are tracking through the seven sacraments you might ask next, what about the sacrament of reconciliation? Again, look to the central prayer of the sacrament, the formula of absolution. “God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son, has reconciled the world and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins...” The Spirit is an integral part of this sacrament as well.



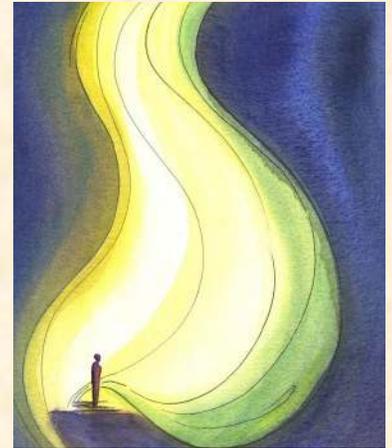
Where we may find the Spirit hard to find is in the sacrament of Marriage. First, most don't notice that the “ministers” of the sacrament are actually the couple. The priest or deacon only receives the



consent which they themselves give. As such, it should be no surprise, that even though the priest blesses the rings that the couple exchange, it is the couple themselves that invoke the Trinity to make the rings a sign of their love and fidelity “...in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” So, the Spirit does show up in all the sacraments, not just Confirmation. Maybe this brief listing will help you to look more attentively for these invocations of the Holy Spirit and to be mindful of the role of the Spirit not only in our sacraments but in all of our faith.

Symbols, Signs, Actions and Images

There is an abundance of ways in which the Holy Spirit is symbolized, invoked and expressed in art and in ritual. So many so, that it seems worthwhile to speak about many of them.



Wind or Breath is one of the most common. From the very first, from Genesis 1, we find the earth to be without form or shape with the wind sweeping over the waters. Even here this mighty wind is interpreted as being the Holy Spirit. We jump from Genesis to Acts to see the rush of wind to be the arrival of the Holy Spirit even though we "see" the Spirit as tongues of fire over the heads of each of the apostles. John refers to the wind as an uncontrollable force and so too is the Spirit. (Jn 3:8). [The website, Biblegateway.com, is useful

for searching for a term like "wind". While not all instances refer to the Spirit, it can help you to locate those instances where "wind" is used a sign or symbol for the Spirit.]

Breath shows up in Genesis when God breathes life into Adam. Throughout the Hebrew scriptures we see this connection between life, Spirit and breath. However, we also see instances where breath is used to bestow the Spirit. "And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the holy Spirit.'" (Jn 20:22)



In a similar manner as this breathing on another as a bestowal of the Holy Spirit, many of us know the ritual of the "laying on of hands." We've seen this in the sacrament of anointing and in the rite of ordination. We find this in scripture in places like Acts 8:17, "Then they laid hands on them and they received the holy Spirit."

Even in early scriptures, we find this "laying on of hands" as a means of commissioning (Numbers 27:23), that is both authorizing an individual as well as a bestowal of Spirit. And while it may not be a direct example of the Spirit, "laying on of hands" was also a means of purifying a sacrifice or an individual.

Likewise, water often shows up as a symbol of the Spirit. In Eucharistic Prayer

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Finding God in All Things

- **World Blessing for Pentecost 2022**

A compilation of blessing videos from 154 countries in 257 languages. <https://youtu.be/d48-qbcovVY>

- Taize **Veni, Sancte, Spiritus**

Come Holy Spirit, sung by 54 young people from 36 countries
<https://youtu.be/us-v4sisUX4>

- BibleProject **The Holy Spirit**

<https://youtu.be/oNNZ09i1Gjc>

- BibleProject **Theme Videos** (Similar to the Holy Spirit above)

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/themes/>

- **Pentecost Sequence** Sung by Khrisha J Blackwell

<https://youtu.be/ga8jTm4PPTk>

- **Rain Down** (an old favorite)

<https://youtu.be/pmOswvIS6CQ>

- Faith Formation (SuperHero Powers)

<https://loyoladenver.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Faith-Formation-Gifts-of-the-Spirit-5-20-22.pdf>

II there's the invocation of the Spirit as "let your Spirit come upon these gifts like the dewfall"—not only a reference to water but a reference back to the early morning appearance of manna to feed those in the desert. As with the laying on of hands, so too with water we find the symbolism of purification.

Fire, tongues of fire, are one more symbol of the Spirit. Again, as a symbol, fire can be a sign of purification—like the refiner's fire.

So there's more than the simple dove that we often use to make visible the Spirit. What we often don't consider is the, for lack of a better word, the size of the Spirit. From Genesis we have the Spirit (Wind) hovering over the whole world. In Acts we have a driving wind, while in Exodus and in the Eucharistic Prayer we have the gentle

almost imperceptible appearance as dewfall. In 1 Kings 19:12, when Elijah goes to the mountain to await God's appearance, he finds God's presence in the "tiny whisper of sound". Ezekiel has a marvelous story about the "Wonderful Stream" (Ez 47) where there begins a tiny trickle flowing from the temple to become a major river. So too we find many examples where the Spirit seems to start small but swell to a mighty movement.

All this signs, images, actions and symbols do describe a Spirit that cannot be captured or contained whether that's physically or metaphorically. As such, it seems to be a great understanding of the Spirit to be passed onto our children.