

You Belong - July 23-July 30

Q . #65 It is through faith alone that we share in Christ and all his benefits: where then does that faith come from?

A. The Holy Spirit produces it in our hearts by the preaching of the Holy Gospel, and confirms it by the use of the Holy Sacraments.

Memory verse: These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God.

Devotion 1 -- Lest you ever begin to wonder if God actually does stuff in the world or if instead he decided to take a step back after creating it all, let me remind you: we serve a God of revelation. A God who at a very basic (and yet intricate) level reveals himself to us in his very created world, a God who reveals himself in the humanity of Christ and in the words of Scripture, and a God who continues to reveals himself to us daily through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, God who dwells in the “temples” of our very bodies. And, who “searches everything, even the depths of God.” Somehow, we come away with the mother load on this one. The same Spirit who knows God in the deepest way knows and lives in us as well?! So when we are told that the Spirit reveals God to us we can take it seriously. It’s the real deal.

And if God is continually revealing himself and his gifts to us through the Spirit, I think that has something to say about the way we experience the world. We are invited to experience life not with despair and pessimism but with wonder and curiosity. We get to look around wide-eyed at what the Spirit might have to show us even this day. Plus, God’s revelation in his Spirit gives us the faith to receive everything he has to offer us—the fullness of life in him.

Prayer: Spirit, we praise you that you know the depths of God and you choose to reveal yourself to us each day. Grant us the gift of faith to receive this gift. In Jesus’ name,

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Devotion 2 -- What gifts are given us through faith?

“We have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit that is from God.” The spirit of this world...what do you think that means? The world isn't all that bad, is it? Maybe this will be helpful: while we live in a world that's being redeemed, we also cannot escape the reality that it is also fallen. Which means that anything the “world” has to offer us will also be fallen, temporary, it can't help but being twisted and affected by sinful nature.

This, then, is in contrast to the Spirit of God—untainted, pure, and everlasting. We have not been given a spirit that will pass away, but the Spirit who is immortal. One who will not leave us wanting but who fills us—with many good things, the least of which is the gift of faith, as we are reminded through scripture and in the catechism.

We may go through living life and feel a spirit of happiness, or sadness, or contentment, or pain. But any of these feelings are fleeting when compared to the Spirit's gifts of deep faith, joy, and peace that are available to us through him. In this way it's the Spirit who helps us experience God more fully and deeply.

So the next time you feel happy, you get to ground it in the Spirit who offers joy. The next time you experience pain, find your foundation in the Spirit who grieves with you. Experience the peace in faith that is given that surpasses any spirit the world has to present you.

Prayer: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, thank you for the height and depth of your Spirit given to us and in us, and let us experience your fullness. Amen.