

# The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

In general

# The work of sanctification

- The work of sanctification is the masterpiece of the Holy Spirit when considered as the completion of his work accomplished in Jesus Christ.

# Two ways of sanctification

- The Holy Spirit brings about our sanctification in two ways. The first is by helping us, moving us, **directing us, but in such a way that we are actually doing our own work**. It is our glory to fulfill our own destiny. God has given us the wonderful and terrible gift of freedom, by which we ourselves are the artisans of our own happiness or our own ruin.
- But the Holy Spirit has another way of directing. It is **his personal direction of our deeds**, when he no longer merely illuminates us with his light or warms us with his fire to show us the road that we must follow. In this second way, he himself deigns to move our faculties and to urge us so that we may perform his work.

# Virtues vs gifts

- The **virtues** that come with grace our instruments of the soul, and with them, little by little, we destroy the old man with all his concupiscence and trace the image of Jesus in our hearts, thus forming the new man, created according to the will of God in justice and the holiness of truth.
- But a time comes when the virtues are no longer sufficient for the accomplishment of the divine work and our own direction is not enough. Then the Holy Spirit intervenes, and he carries on the work, using the instruments that theologians call the **gifts of the Holy Spirit**.

# Divine radios

- We can compare the gifts of the Holy Spirit to divine receivers for picking up his inspirations. Just as one who does not possess a radio cannot hear sounds from the other side of the earth, so one who is without the gifts of the Holy Spirit will not be able to pick up divine inspirations. The gifts are supernatural realities that God has willed to put in our souls so that we may be able to “make contact” with the Paraclete.

# A divine character

- If the Holy Spirit moves us and our acts are performed under his influence, those acts have a truly **divine character**. Someone has said very correctly: “The style is the man.” Everyone has his own style, a seal, and a reflection of his own personality. Thus, when the Holy Spirit works on us, he gives us his divine, unmistakable seal.
- **The acts that proceed from the gifts of the Holy Spirit have a divine stamp**, an entirely celestial form, that is the sign of the Spirit. We might even say that the norms of these celestial gifts differ. That is, the norms of the gifts are different from the norms of the virtues.

# Our response

- The gifts do not develop to the same degree and with the same perfection in all souls, any more than do the virtues. Like the virtues, the gifts are vital seeds that need to be cultivated. Our work, our effort as Christians, consists in **nurturing with exquisite care these precious seeds** that God has placed in our soul.

# Available to everyone

- Let us not believe that only the saints possess the gifts of the Holy Spirit. All of us possess them. St. Thomas Aquinas teaches that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are indispensable for the salvation of the soul. Without them we are not able to accomplish our sanctification.



# Developing the gifts

- Increasing charity in our hearts.
- Developing the virtues that we receive along with the grace of God.
- Being responsive to his inspirations.