

Life in the Spirit Seminar Week 4

The topics covered thus far have been about God's love, salvation, and new life. This has been a time of Preparation, and, through prayer, praise and worship of the Father through the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit you can begin to experience a new closeness to God. He truly lives within you!!! We are called to live our Catholic Faith and put it into action. Our faith affects everything that we do. St. James says show me your faith and I'll show you my works! Our works of love should be an overflow of our intimacy with God. We cannot straddle the fence; there is no room for being lukewarm (see Revelation 3:16).

John the Baptist, the prophet who prepared the way of the Lord, preached one basic message, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand" (Matthew 3:2). Throughout the New Testament, the need for Repentance and Forgiveness is preached. Repentance was the path, which prepared the way for the coming of the Lord, and Jesus is calling us to repentance as we prepare our lives for His coming to us in a deeper way. Repentance brings revival. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you deeper contrition!

Repentance involves sorrow for our sins, turning toward God, and reorienting our lives. It involves a fundamental change of attitude, a conversion of heart towards God and away from sin. In addition, we are told, "Declare your sins to one another, that you may find healing" (James 5:16). For Catholics, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is the way we live out this command. We are invited by God to receive His gift of forgiveness for any sins through the Sacrament, but confession of serious sins to a priest is necessary before

Catholics can partake of other Sacraments, particularly the Holy Eucharist. It is also recommended as a first step when making a deeper commitment to our Lord. Repentance requires honesty with ourselves. Many times “pet” sins have become a part of our lives, and we have learned to rationalize away their sinfulness. Perhaps you have a habit of gossip, or drinking too much, or some form of impurity or attachment to porn on the Internet. Maybe it is being judgmental or selfish. Maybe there are long-term rows and quarrels with family, neighbours, workmates etc. that need to be resolved. Whatever your personal weaknesses may be, it is impossible to repent until we call them sin and no longer make excuses like, “That’s just the way I am.”

Because of coronavirus our churches are closed and confession has not been possible. However I will have a short penitential service before we pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit next week. (Week 5). You can prepare this week and confess to the Lord and then when we are back to normal you will be welcome to come and make a sacramental confession.

Daily Reading Assignments

Psalm 51

Isaiah 1:16-18

1 John 2:1-6 Psalm 32

1 John 3:4-10 John 20:20-23 Hebrews 10:11-18

(Catechism of the Catholic Church) CCC 1850

CCC 1430, 1431

CCC 1422, 1424 CCC 1502

CCC 385

CCC 1447

CCC 1442 14

RECEIVING GOD'S GIFT

'If any man is thirsty, let him come to me! Let the man come and drink who believes in me! As scriptures says: From his heart shall flow fountains of living water.'

(Jn 7:37-38)

Preparing to be baptised in the Spirit

Brother or sister,

This week the Lord himself wants to prepare you. Do not be afraid or worried. Do not ask yourself how you can possibly get ready. Just ask the Lord to prepare you. He loves you, and he will do it.

Let the words of life speak to you. God's word will prepare you.

Do not let Satan confuse you. If you feel confusion or doubt or anxiety come on you, tell Satan to go away. Tell him you belong to Jesus and Jesus is your Lord. Put your faith in God.

God loves you. He wants to give you the fulness of life in the Spirit. He has promised that he will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask. Simply ask in confidence.

Satan will tell you that you do not deserve to be baptised in the Spirit, that you are not worthy of it. And he is right. No one is worthy of it. But God is not going to baptise you in the Spirit because you are worthy of it, he will do it because he loves you. He will do it because Jesus died for you.

Jesus will change your life when you make the commitment to him and are prayed with. You will begin a new life in the Spirit. You can count on it. Simply rely on God's promise.

Do not look for a particular kind of experience. Some people experience a great deal at the moment when they are prayed with, while others experience very little. What you want is the Holy Spirit, not an experience. Once you are in a new relationship with the Holy Spirit, you will experience a new sense of his presence. You will see him work in your life in a new way.

Ask the Lord for the gift of tongues. Tongues is a gift of God, and even if you do not understand fully what it will do for you, trust God that his gifts really are gifts and worth having. If you are unwilling to receive the gift of tongues, you are putting a block on the Lord's work and the Holy Spirit will not be free to work fully in you. Open yourself to all of God's gifts, with no reservations.

Relax. God loves you. Remember that his fatherly love surrounds you. Remember that he sent his Son to save you. Each day entrust your life to his hands.

Read these words often this week. They will help you to prepare to be baptised in the Spirit:

'Our soul awaits the Lord, he is our help and shield; our hearts rejoice in him, we trust in his holy name. Lord, let your love rest on us as our hope has rested in you.'

It is important to remember that we are not being re-baptized. You can only be baptized once. The word Baptise literally means to be immersed. We are basically renewing our

baptismal promises as we do at Easter and now asking for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit in your life.

The commitment to Christ

In the next seminar, after the penance service you will make a commitment to Christ before being prayed with to be baptised in the Spirit. I will ask you three questions, and after you answer them, you will say a prayer expressing a commitment to Christ. Meditate on these questions and on the prayer during this week:

Do you renounce Satan and all wrongdoing? **I do**

Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that he died to free us from our sins, and that he rose to bring us new life?

I do

Will you follow Jesus as your Lord? **I will**

Lord Jesus Christ, I want to belong to you from now on. I want to be freed from the dominion of darkness and the rule of Satan, and I want to enter into your kingdom and be part of your people. I will turn away from all wrongdoing, and I will avoid everything that leads me to wrongdoing. I ask you to forgive all the sins that I have committed. I offer my life to you, and I promise to obey you as my Lord. I ask you to baptise me in the Holy Spirit (and give me the gift of tongues.)

At this point if you are not happy about asking for the gift of tongues just leave that line out.

Words of Life

Day 1

God has a new life for you, because he loves you. It is a gift. You cannot earn it or deserve it. God's word says:

‘When the kindness and love of God our saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our saviour.’

(Tit 3:4-6)

Veni Sancti Spiritus - Come Holy Spirit.

Day 2

The new life in the Spirit is a gift, but you have to turn to Jesus to receive it. All those who come to him receive new life abundantly. Jesus says:

‘If any man is thirsty, let him come to me! Let the man come and drink who believes in me! As scripture says: From his heart shall flow fountains of living water.’

(Jn 7: 37-38)

Veni Sancti Spiritus - Come Holy Spirit.

Day 3

To turn to Jesus, you turn away from everything incompatible with the life he is offering (repentance) and accept the promises he is making (belief and faith). When you turn to Jesus in repentance and faith, he can give new life to you.

Jesus says:

‘The time has come and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent and believe the good news (the gospel).’

(Mk 1:15)

Veni Sancti Spiritus - Come Holy Spirit.

Day 4

This new life is for everyone who will turn to the Lord. The gift of the Holy Spirit is for you. Satan will try to deceive you into thinking that you are someone who cannot be baptised in the Spirit, but the word of God says:

‘You must repent, and every one of you must be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise that was made is for you and your children, and all those who are far away, for all those whom the Lord our God will call to himself.’

(Acts 2:38-39) **Veni Sancti Spiritus - Come Holy Spirit.**

Day 5

You cannot earn or deserve the gift of the Holy Spirit, but you do have to put away everything in your life which is incompatible with the Christian life. The new life means that you will be holy as God is holy. God's word says:

‘You know perfectly well that people who do wrong will not inherit the kingdom of God; people of immoral lives, idolators, adulterers, catamites, sodomites, thieves, usurers, drunkards, slanderers and swindlers will never inherit the kingdom of God.’

(I Cor 6:9-10)

Veni Sancti Spiritus - Come Holy Spirit.

Day 6

Faith means relying on what God has promised. You know that God can do anything. You know that he does not lie. Rely on God's promises and claim them from him as Abraham did, and you will see him work in a new way in your life. God's word says:

‘Since God had promised it, Abraham refused either to deny it or even to doubt it, but drew strength from faith and gave glory to God, convinced that God had power to do what he had promised.’

(Rom 4:20-21)

Veni Sancti Spiritus - Come Holy Spirit.

Day 7

When you turn to the Lord in repentance and faith, all you have to do is ask the Lord for the fullness of life in the Holy Spirit. We know that we can have the Holy Spirit, because God loves us and wants to be as fully united to us as possible. Jesus promises that the Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.

‘So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you. What father among you would hand his son a stone when he asked for bread? Or hand him a snake instead of a fish? If you then, who are stingy, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!’

(Luke 11:9-13)

Veni Sancti Spiritus - Come Holy Spirit.

Study

This week the two chapters we will read are about the life of the Spirit and the power of God in us:

John 14, Acts 8