

The Most Holy Spirit (Metropolitan Ioïl (Frangkakos) of Edessa, Pella, and Almopia.)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



‘And He said this about the Spirit’

On the last day of the Feast of the Tabernacles, Christ revealed that He Himself is the source of life. Because people were about to leave to go back home, Christ’s words were ‘provisions’ for their salvation. The Lord said that those who are thirsty should come to Him and rivers of living water will flow from their bellies (Jn. 7, 38). The word ‘belly’ here means ‘heart’. Clearly the water is the Grace of the Holy Spirit. The Lord is the ever-flowing source of the grace of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit comes to settle in our heart, His gifts and abilities constantly well up. As He said to the Samaritan woman: ‘The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life’. (Jn. 4, 14).



Christ is the Reason behind our Reception of the Holy Spirit

Christ is the first-fruits of our new existence, that is, our renewed human nature. After His death and Resurrection, He cleansed the human race of sin and made human nature worthy of receiving the Grace of the Holy Spirit on a permanent basis. Formerly, our first ancestor Adam lost the grace of the Holy Spirit through his disobedience to the will and commandment of God and thus blackened the image of God in which he was made. As a result, the whole of the human race lost the God-given benefit of the Grace of the Comforter. This is why the Lord became human: to root within each of us the Grace of the Holy Spirit. Saint Cyril of Alexandria writes that, in the prophets, we simply have an effulgence and incandescence of the Holy Spirit which gave them the ability to understand the future and the knowledge of the hidden mysteries of God. Those who believe in Christ and become members of His Church don't merely receive the Holy Spirit occasionally, but permanently. In fact they become His temple: we're the temple 'of the Holy Spirit within us' (I Cor. 6, 19).

Signs of the Holy Spirit

According to the Apostolic Constitutions, those who acquire the Holy Spirit retain Him for as long as they're worthy and pure. On the other hand, when He withdraws from people, they become devoid of His grace and are prey to evil spirits.

The Holy Spirit is everywhere present and fills all things, but it's only in those who are worthy that He shows His power. Where does the Comforter blow? He doesn't blow upon unbelievers, nor upon the ambitious, nor upon the orators or philosophers, those who have great reputations or the unlawful, but on the humble, and those who are pure in heart. He dwells in those who are simple in their speech and even simpler in their life, whose views are pure and simple and who avoid vainglory. The Holy Spirit is the gift of our freedom, granted to us by Christ after His Resurrection.

The Holy Spirit is in the Church

We can retain the grace of the Holy Spirit permanently in the Church through prayer, asceticism and the most wonderful mystery of the Divine Eucharist. The faithful aren't given a 'dose' of Grace, but all its fulness and we retain it in proportion to our inner cleanliness. Some people might retain thirty per cent, others sixty and yet others one hundred. Some have it permanently, others fleetingly and yet others hardly at all. The signs of the residence of the Holy Spirit within us are the experience of adoption, that is the realization that we're God's children, inner peace, the forgiveness we're prepared to show to our enemies, our desire for our salvation, control of our passions, serenity of thought, increase of gifts, absence of avarice, purity of the body and so on.

Our efforts to retain the Grace of the Comforter are a life-long struggle. Let's make sure we're consistent in our lives and that we have trust in God, so that we may experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts.