



## **The Forgotten Person** **by Joe Sixpack**

Everything in Catholicism, as in all Christianity, focuses on Jesus Christ. We focus on Him for a great variety of reasons: His sacrificial death on the cross, our redemption through Him, He's the founder of the faith we profess... The list could go on and on.

The Mass, of course, is the highest form of worship of God. In fact, the Mass is the worship of God the Father with a re-presentation of the sacrifice of the Lamb (the Son) in atonement for the sins of man. So the Mass is, to most Catholics' way of thinking, all about the Father and the Son. But when it comes to the Holy Spirit, most of us sort of neglect Him—He's a dove in most of our minds, a sort of "holy flitterer". Sure, we give Him lip service, because we think we're supposed to. After all, the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Holy Trinity. But most of us don't really know much about Him or how we're supposed to practice devotion to Him.

The Holy Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son. He is indeed God, completely equal to the Father and the Son. Like the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit is almighty, eternal, and infinite.

Although the Holy Spirit is alluded to all the way back in Genesis (1:2, 26), we learned about Him via divine revelation from Jesus. When Jesus told us about Him, Christ placed Him on an equal level with the Father and the Son.

The Holy Spirit first manifested Himself in a visible way as tongues of fire over Mary and the apostles on the first Christian Pentecost Sunday. So great was this event and revered throughout history that Christian religions have been founded by mere men that are focused entirely on the second chapter of Acts, where the first Pentecost Sunday is recorded for Christian posterity. Through this manifestation of the Holy Spirit the apostles received the light to understand all that Jesus had taught them. This new light, which is the power of the Holy Spirit, gave the apostles the zeal to preach what Jesus taught without fear.

The Catholic Church is a living, breathing organism, not merely an organization or denomination. Jesus Christ is her head, and we all are her members—Jesus and we make up the Mystical Body of Christ. In order for a body to live, it must have a soul. The Soul of the Church, then, is the Holy Spirit, making her holy by the grace of Jesus Christ. He enables the Church to teach all that Jesus taught without the possibility of error. He also transforms the members of the Church into witnesses of Christ, and He was sent by the Father and the Son to live in the Church until the end of time.

But what of our relationship to the Holy Spirit? How are we supposed to relate to Him? Whether we think of it or not, we have a relationship to the Father by the mere fact that we participate in the holy sacrifice of the Mass. Since we are Christian, we develop a relationship that can even be called a friendship with Jesus. But what about the Holy Spirit?

We all actually already have a lot more going on with the Holy Spirit than most of us think. That relationship started at our baptism. Provided we are in a state of grace, the Holy Spirit dwells in

our souls to make us holy with sanctifying grace. This Delightful Guest enlightens our minds to know God, strengthens our wills to carry out God the Father's will, and He sets our hearts on fire to love God and neighbor.

Those are the "mechanics" of the Holy Spirit, but what else is there? We are taught throughout our Catholic religious education to develop a personal relationship with the Father and the Son. But is it possible to develop a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit too?

If you want to have a deep, abiding, and loving relationship with the Father and the Son, it is imperative that you first develop a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit. As Christ described the Holy Spirit, He is pure love. It is only through the Holy Spirit that we can love the Father and the Son... much less anybody else, for that matter. He transforms the heart of man into the heart of God. The human heart longs for a holy, loving soul. That is our new nature after baptism. The human soul that is holy and loves can only do so through a direct movement of the Holy Spirit, if we will let Him move. It's up to us, as we have free will, and God in all three Persons will never force Himself on us. So we have to actively seek the Holy Spirit out to let Him know we want to grow in Him. That's where it all starts.

I decided to write about the Holy Spirit today because of my own personal journey. About thirty years ago, over the course of two succeeding years, I made three consecrations: to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and to the Holy Spirit. I suppose every serious Catholic makes an act of consecration to the Sacred and Immaculate Hearts at some point. At least I hope so. But relative to the number of people who make those acts of consecration, not too many people make an act of consecration to the Holy Spirit. I probably wouldn't have either, except for one thing.

In the early '90s, a book almost quite literally fell into my hands. It was a long out of print book written in the 1950s by Archbishop Luis Martinez (RIP) called *The Sanctifier*. That book about the Holy Spirit was so captivating and exciting, I read all 350+ pages in one sitting. When I finished, I read it all over again, but this time slowly and meditatively. When I finished, I'd made up my mind to do two things.

One thing I decided to do was find a way to bring this highly polished and nearly flawless spiritual diamond back into print. After all, with as much good as I got out of it, Catholics everywhere deserved to learn the benefits the book has to offer. But before I could claim the copyright and republish it, the Daughters of St. Paul at Pauline Books and Media brought it back into print (thanks be to God). And I highly recommend that you purchase and read this book. I've read over one-thousand Catholic books, and it's rare that I go out of my way to recommend any of them, but when I discover a book so life-changing and exciting as this one, I can't help but shout it from the rooftops.

The other thing I decided to do was consecrate myself to the Holy Spirit. Technically, you are already consecrated to the Holy Spirit by virtue of your Confirmation. The sort of consecration I'm referring to is an act of the will—spiritual and physical; the active affirmation that one devotes oneself to living for the one being consecrated to.

Recent events in my life made me realize that all three of my previously made acts of consecration mentioned above had lost some of their fire and zeal. So I decided to renew all three of those acts of consecration, beginning with the Holy Spirit. As a matter of preparation for the act of consecration renewal, I've recently re-read *The Sanctifier*. I've got to tell you, this book is as awesome today as it was for me thirty years ago. Buy it!

The Holy Spirit is our link of divine love to the Father and the Son. Without Him divine love is not possible. That's What We Believe... Why We Believe It.

Got questions about this or anything else Catholic? Do as thousands of others have—Catholic and non-Catholic—and visit [JoeSixpackAnswers.com](http://JoeSixpackAnswers.com) to get your answers or ask questions.