

Ask Fr James

How is the Holy Spirit Lord and Giver of Life?

The Holy Spirit is creator Spirit and giver of life. The Bible says; "Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7). Jesus did the same thing God did to Adam after his resurrection; he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). The Holy Spirit is Lord and gives life, opening our eyes, making us aware and awakening all that is truly human in us. This is why in the Nicene Creed, we professes the Spirit as *dominum et vivificantem*; that is; that the Holy Spirit is "Lord and Giver of Life."

The day of Pentecost is the day when the whole universal church celebrates the revelation of the Holy Spirit in the world. It is the day when we celebrate how we Baptized people became a "new creation." St. Paul describes it in this way: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (2 Cor. 5:17). The Holy Spirit renders blessings of the renewal effected by Christ.

When the Holy Spirit is infused in us to give us life, the Holy Spirit aims at our sanctification. In the Church, the presence of the Spirit is manifested by a diversity of gifts (1 Cor 12:4-11). The Spirit pours out these gifts to aid us to live life successfully. The gifts that the Holy Spirit gives is life. We need those gifts to live.

It was the same Holy Spirit who overshadowed Mary and Mary conceived Jesus (Luke 1:35). The same Spirit, the giver of life in whose power Jesus is raised from the dead to new life is the same Spirit who was poured out upon the disciples at Pentecost and empowers all the disciples with a variety of gifts and different callings to witness to the saving power of Christ and to be a sign of the reign of God in the midst of the brokenness of this world.

In the "holy mysteries and the sacraments, the Spirit has a central place. In them, we pray to the Father to send the grace of the Holy Spirit through the Son. In the Eucharist for instance, at the consecration of the Bread and Wine at Mass, the priest prays thus: "Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall, so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ." Also, during Baptism, through the prayers of the priest and through his hand, the Holy Spirit is called down to remove completely the stain of original sin, by taking off the old garment of sin and putting on the royal robe" and the one being baptized is given new life. And at the Sacrament of Confirmation, the presence of and the grace of the Holy Spirit is infused in the candidate when the priest says: "Be sealed with the Holy Spirit, Amen. Thus the Spirit is the bringer of life, the new meaningful life of the present as well as of the future. It is in such a life that we throw ourselves utterly into the arms of God.

You may email/send your faith questions to Fr. James and he will answer them in our Sunday Bulletins

