

Reflection 1

The Catechism reminds us that we can actually come to know the Father's love like Jesus did while on earth. 'This is the most beautiful moment of any creature's life: to know that one is loved, personally, by God, to feel oneself lifted to the bosom of the Trinity and to find oneself in the flood of love that flows between Father and Son, enfolded in their love, sharing their passionate love for the world.'

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, Come, Creator Spirit

Reflection 2

The Bible is full of promises of God's amazing love.

'How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!' 1 John 3:1

'He will rejoice over you with great gladness, with love He will calm all your fears.' Zephaniah 3:17

'May you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long and how deep His love really is.' Ephesians 3:18

Reflection 3

We never get to the end of His boundless love.

'We know how dearly God loves us, because He has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with His love.' Romans 5:5

'Through each day the Lord pours His unfailing love upon me.' Psalm 42:8

'May the Lord bring you into an ever deeper understanding of the love of God.' 1 Thessalonians 3:5

Reflection 4

Getting to know the Father's love is not a DIY job!

'What is it that we ask of the Spirit when we pray? This, above all, is what we ask for:

'Make us know the Father's love!' This is the Holy Spirit's most special and important task: to pour the love of God into our hearts; to give us not just an abstract knowledge of that love but to make us feel it and really live it.'

'It is the Holy Spirit who makes us know simply what the Son has revealed about the Father! He takes the 'out-ward' revelation that comes through the Word and makes it 'inward' in us.' Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, Come, Creator Spirit

Reflection 5

We need to pray constantly for a 'head-to-heart' revelation of His love.

'The whole Bible, St. Augustine observes, does nothing but tell of God's love. If the written word of the Bible could be changed into a spoken word and become one single voice, this voice, more powerful than the roaring of the sea would cry out: "The Father loves you!" Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, Life in Christ

'I pray for you constantly asking God the glorious Father to give you spiritual wisdom and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light.' Ephesians 1:17

Reflection 1

We need to constantly remember God's unconditional love for us each day.

'I led them with reins of kindness, with leading strings of love. I was like someone who lifts an infant close against his cheek; stooping down to him I gave him his food.' Hosea 11:4

There is nothing you can do to make God love you more. There is nothing you can do to make God love you less. Philip Yancey 'What's so amazing about grace?'

Reflection 2

Today spend some time thanking God for the wonder of your being.

'God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them. God blessed them... God saw all that he had made and it was very good.' Gen 1: 27-8, 31

'For it was you who created my inmost self, and put me together in my mother's womb; for all these mysteries I thank you: for the wonder of myself, for the wonder of your works.' Psalm 139:13-14

Reflection 3

Unfortunately sin has consequences.

'Your sins have created a gulf between you and your God' Isaiah 59:2

'By his sin Adam, as the first man, lost he original holiness and justice he had received from God, not only for himself but for all human beings'

Catechism of the Catholic Church 416

With St Paul we ponder our struggles; 'I am full of myself..What I don't understand about myself is that I decide one way, but then I act in another, doing things I absolutely despise' Rom 7:14

Pope Francis asks each of us to reflect on, how have I let myself be deceived or how I have shunned God's love? Joy of the Gospel 3

Reflection 4

Out of love for us God sent his son Jesus our saviour and redeemer who showed us how to live in right relationship with our heavenly Father.

'God loved the world so much that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life. For God sent his son into the world not to condemn the world but so that through him the world might be saved.' John 3:16

'For the wage paid by sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus.' Rom 6:23

Reflection 5

We are invited to make our own personal response to all that God has done for us.

'I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least to an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord.'

Pope Francis – Joy of the Gospel 3

'You have made us for yourself oh Lord and our hearts are restless until they rest in you'. St Augustine

Reflection 1

We may know about the Holy Spirit, but do we know Him in a personal way, do we believe He is present with us?

'I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified' The Creed

The Holy Spirit is essential if we want to live full and effective Christian lives. Jesus to His disciples: 'It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you' John 16:7.

Reflection 2

We may have been baptised and Confirmed but still not be aware of the need to personally and deliberately invite the Holy Spirit to be at work in our lives. We have to ask Him to come. In the words of Cardinal Suenens: 'Has the Spirit got YOU?'

'If you know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!' Luke 11:9-13.

The Holy Spirit is the water of life, a gift freely offered to all who will accept Him:

'Come! Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes let him take the free gift of the water of life' Revelation 22:17

Reflection 3

When we open up our lives and ask for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, He offers us His supernatural gifts/charisms, given to help us reach out to others for their transformation, thus building up the Body of Christ, the Church. On the eve of Pentecost 1997, Pope Saint John Paul II prayed: 'Open yourselves with docility to the gifts of the Spirit! Accept gratefully and obediently the charisms which the Spirit never ceases to bestow on us!'

We need these charisms to equip the Church to present the truth of the Gospel to our modern world more powerfully.

'Try to excel in gifts that build up the church' 1 Cor. 14:12

Reflection 4

At the Second Vatican Council in 1963, the Cardinals and Bishops taught us in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, section 12:-

'The Holy Spirit also distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake various tasks for the renewal and building up of the Church. These charisms are to be received with thanksgiving since they are fitting and useful for the needs of the Church'. This is repeated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church sections 800 and 2003, and is an echo of the teaching in 1 Corinthians 12.

Reflection 5

The most discussed list of charisms is found in 1 Cor.12:7-10:-

'To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge, to another faith, to another gifts of healing, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.'

God wants us to have the gifts of His Holy Spirit, but we must ask for them. Without them we are much more limited in our ability to meet the needs of those around us. We need to ask for them in faith and then to use them in a loving way.

'Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts' 1 Corinthians 14:1

'I pray for you constantly asking God the glorious Father to give you spiritual wisdom and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light.' Ephesians 1:17

Reflection 1

God has blessed us with so much we need to respond and turn to him with our hearts.

'There are two keys to the human heart we have one and he has the other. God in his omnipotence can do all things, with one exception: God cannot make a human heart humble and contrite alone. It is a mystery, but for this God needs our repentance. God cannot 'repent' in a person's place'.

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa Come Creator Spirit

Reflection 2

We need to recognise our need for forgiveness. Let's examine our conscience in the light of God's truth and holiness.

'The blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from every sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves, and refusing to accept the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong'. 1 John :7-9

Reflection 3

It's so easy in this day and age to think it all depends on us, we need to surrender our lives to Jesus every day and learn to rely on his strength.

'The way God plans to make us holy is for us to depend on what Jesus has achieved through his death and resurrection. In other words, God's way of undoing the fall is for us to abandon any plan to save ourselves and to depend entirely on what Jesus Christ has done for us..... It's all too easy to say Lord by your cross and resurrection you have set us free and then live as though we have become free by our will power alone'.

Fr Ian Petit 'God is not Angry'

Reflection 4

Scripture is full of the promises of God, if we will only dare to believe and open our hearts to receive them. 'He has called us to receive his own glory and goodness. And by that same mighty power, he has given us all of his rich and wonderful promises. He has promised that you will escape the decadence all around you caused by evil desires and that you will share in his divine nature'. Peter 1:2-4

Reflection 5

We need to unwrap the gift of the Holy Spirit every day of our lives and to hold on to the truth that there is always more that he wants to give us.

'God's love has been poured out into our **hearts** through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us'. Romans 5:5

'This knowledge of faith is possible only in the Holy Spirit: to be in touch with Christ we must have first been touched by the Holy Spirit'.

Catechism of the Catholic Church 683

Reflection 1

We were created to thirst so that we can be filled by our loving Father.

'Anyone who is thirsty can come to Me! Anyone who believes in Me may come and drink! As the Scriptures declare; 'Rivers of living water will flow from their heart.'

John 7:37

'I fall to my knees and pray to the Father. I pray that from His glorious unlimited resources He will empower you with inner strength through His Spirit...then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.'

Ephesians 3:16,19

Reflection 2

We need to remember our daily need for even more of the Holy Spirit.

'We need to implore the daily grace of the Holy Spirit, asking Him to open our cold heart and shake up our lukewarm and superficial existence.'

Pope Francis, Joy of the Gospel 264

'The Spirit comes with the tenderness of a true friend and protector to save, to heal, to teach, to counsel, to strengthen and to console.'

St Cyril of Jerusalem

Reflection 3

Baptism in the Spirit is at the heart of our faith.

'He will baptise you in the Holy Spirit and with fire!' Matthew 3:11

'Let us rediscover the beauty of being baptised in the Holy Spirit...Jesus was revealed as the One who came to baptise humanity in the Holy Spirit; He came to give us life in abundance.' Pope Benedict, Rome 2008

'You must share the grace of the Baptism in the Spirit with the whole Church.' Pope Francis, Rome 2014

Reflection 4

St Paul urges us to let the Holy Spirit guide our lives and when we do the fruit is evident.

'The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.' Galatians 5:22

'Fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love and self-discipline.'

2 Timothy 1:6

Reflection 5

St. Paul tells us to go on being filled with the Holy Spirit.

'Let me ask you a question; do you pray to the Holy Spirit every day? My guess is you don't – well you must!' Pope Francis Rome 2014

'Do not grieve the Holy Spirit by the way you live...be filled with the Holy Spirit..pray in the Spirit at all times.' Ephesians 4:30, 5:18, 6:18

'Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances....do not quench the Spirit.' 1 Thessalonians 5:16 touched by the Holy Spirit'

Catechism of the Catholic Church 683

Reflection 1

This journey of faith is not an easy one we need to ask that the Holy Spirit empowers us to keep moving forward.

'When the Holy Spirit controls our lives he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control'. Galatians 5:22

Reflection 2

Prayer is essential to our everyday lives.

'Without prolonged moments of adoration, of prayerful encounter with the word, of sincere conversation with the Lord, our work easily becomes meaningless, we lose energy as a result of weariness and difficulties, and our fervour dies out. The Church urgently needs the deep breath of prayer'.

Pope Francis Joy of the Gospel 262

Reflection 3

The miraculous gift of the Eucharist gives us life. Jesus knows how fickle we can be and that we have short memories for the truth. He gives us his body and blood so that we will not forget him.

'The culture breathes the forgetfulness of God' St John Paul II

'For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them'. John 6:55-56

Reflection 4

We have to ask God to be in all that we do so that we become more like him.

'Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love what is holy. Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy. Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen'.

St Augustine.

Reflection 5

The only way to keep what we have been given is to give it away!

We are called to be Spirit- filled evangelizers, fearlessly open to the working of the Holy Spirit.....The Holy Spirit also grants the courage to proclaim the newness of the Gospel with boldness in every time and place, even when it meets with opposition.Jesus wants evangelizers who proclaim the good news not only with words, but above all by a life transfigured by God's presence.

Joy of the Gospel 259