

Catching Fire - Meeting 5

The Holy Spirit as Guide
An Open Invitation

Part 1 - The Holy Spirit as Guide

- 1) Open your sponsor/candidate meeting with prayer. Take some time to share any petitions you may have with each other. Then invite the Holy Spirit into your time together.
- 2) Take some time catching up with your sponsor/candidate. Share high points and low points of the time since you last saw each other. Share with each other how you've seen God working in your lives since you last met.
- 3) Share with each other a time when you were lost. What did it feel like? Did you become anxious? How did you find your way to where you were going?

When we think of a time we were lost, chances are we are able to solve the problem by finding a map, asking for help, or following a guide. Without finding a map, a guide, or getting help, there is a good chance that we would still be lost! In your Bibles, read John 14:1-31, when Jesus promises he will send the Holy Spirit.

What does Jesus tell his disciples when he promises the Spirit?

The Holy Spirit as Guide Continued...

Hopefully you noticed that Jesus promised his disciples that he will not leave them as orphans, but he will come to them. He also leaves them with his peace so that their hearts will not be troubled. This is why the Holy Spirit is so important in our Catholic faith! The Holy Spirit is what serves as our spiritual guide or map so we don't become lost or anxious, but rather that we follow where the Spirit leads us and find peace and joy knowing that we're doing God's will for our lives.

How does the Holy Spirit lead and guide you through your life? Are there areas of your life that you need to surrender to the guidance of the Holy Spirit? When you feel the Holy Spirit is calling you to do something, do you do it right away, or do you put it off? What can you do to be better about following the Holy Spirit's guidance?

For some of us, we may feel like we are actively allowing the Holy Spirit to guide our lives, for others however, we may find that we haven't been allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us as we should, and we might feel spiritually lost. The Holy Spirit helps us to go from knowing about God (knowledge of the head) to knowing God (knowledge of the heart). We are found when we know God. We get to know God by listening to the Holy Spirit. When we listen, we are able to discern and embrace God's will for our lives. So how do we discern where the Spirit is leading us?

The Holy Spirit is the principle author of scriptures, and uses scripture writers like a writer uses a pen, to help us understand what God is saying to us and where He is leading us. Holy Scriptures through the Holy Spirit teach us truth, wisdom, and knowledge of God. The Holy Spirit has inspired the Word of God and helps us to read it. Not only that, but the Holy Spirit has inspired the Church with wisdom and knowledge.

Just like you have a body and a soul, the Church has a body and a soul too. We who are the members of the Church are the body and the Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church. The word, "soul" comes from the Latin word "anima," which means "animate." And that's exactly what the Holy Spirit does. The Holy Spirit breathes and gives life to the Church. The Holy Spirit is also the guardian and protector of the Church and when the Church teaches in

matters of faith and morals, we can be assured that what the Church teaches is true, good, and beautiful. Getting to know God through the Holy Scriptures and Church teaching is a very good starting point for discerning where the Holy Spirit is guiding us in our lives.

Part 2 - An Open Invitation

Just like you are invited to attend different events or spend time with various people, God calls every one of us. He is inviting us into a relationship of intimate, personal, life-giving communion, and it is the Holy Spirit that allows us to say "yes" to this invitation of love and life so we can love the Lord our God with all of our hearts, all our minds, all our souls, and all of our strength.

It will not always be easy. At times we will be tempted or persecuted. We will get tired, and sometimes we will feel like giving up, but it is the Holy Spirit that strengthens us to truly live our faith with courage and conviction just as it strengthened David in his fight against Goliath and just as it strengthened the apostles that faced persecution in the early Church. It is the Holy Spirit that strengthens us to truly live our faith with passion, and it is the Holy Spirit that gives us comfort and strength during difficult times. The Holy spirit is our anchor and defender of our faith and when we say "yes" in cooperation with what God wants us to do, with the power of the Holy Spirit we can truly become the person that God created and calls each one of us to be.

Share with each other a time when you were invited to something. What did it feel like to be invited? Were you excited? Nervous? Indifferent? Have you ever been invited to something you knew you should attend or you knew was good, but for some reason you were hesitant to go? Maybe you were afraid you wouldn't know anyone or that you wouldn't enjoy your time there? Or perhaps you just didn't feel like doing anything. What was holding you back from going?

God's Invitation

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Brainstorm: What are some ways you can work on saying "yes" to the Holy Spirit's invitation to be your guide?

Prayer Challenge

Make a daily effort to say "yes" to the Holy Spirit's invitation to be your guide. Our Blessed Mother gave her "yes" to the Holy Spirit when the angel Gabriel appeared to her and told her she was to bear the Son of God. Ask Mary to pray for you - that you have the courage to follow her model of the perfect "yes."