

Carmelites of the Holy Face

St. Joseph's Carmelite Hermitage, O.Carm
Inchincurka, Dunmanway, Co. Cork, Rep. of Ireland



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Issue 19 — May 2022

“For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” (Romans 8:14)

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

A true story is told of a certain good priest who was invited to attend a memorial celebration for the anniversary of Vatican II. He very politely declined the offer, and his witty response is well worth quoting: *“Like the Holy Ghost at the Council, I might forget to turn up.”* Certainly the fruits of that momentous event in the history of the Church speak for themselves. As the moral corruption and chaos steadily progresses from bad to worse – in civil as well as ecclesiastical society – we are fully justified in asking what spirit it is that is so widely acclaimed and promoted as “the spirit of Vatican II”? Could it possibly be the spirit of the world? At any rate, it is certainly obvious that it is far from being the Spirit of God.

As the great feast of the Holy Ghost, Pentecost Sunday, is approaching, it seems an opportune time to reflect on the important role He has (or ought to have) in our own spiritual lives. We do not have to look far to see the disastrous consequences both in Church and State when other spirits are permitted to usurp the place of the Spirit of God. Although we may not see it so clearly, our own souls suffer just as much when the Holy Ghost is refused His rightful place.



“Know you not, that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, which you are.” — 1 Corinthians 3:16-17

From the moment of Baptism, the Holy Ghost dwells within our souls, making us living tabernacles of God. This privilege can only be lost by mortal sin which deliberately drives Him from our souls and enthrones Satan there instead. If we are so unfortunate as to sin mortally, the Holy Ghost will return to our souls as soon as we have made a good Confession, received absolution and been restored to the state of grace. If, however, we die unrepentant in mortal sin, He will disown us. Unfortunately, today most people have become accustomed to living in mortal sin, which is one of the most devastating

consequences of being led by the spirit of the world. The Holy Ghost has been banished from their hearts, and this in turn has a detrimental effect on society as a whole, as well as on themselves.

Even for souls in the state of grace – and we hope and pray, dear friends, that all of you are among them – there is a tendency to ignore the Holy Ghost and to overlook His importance in our spiritual lives. It is relatively easy to think of God as our Father in Heaven, or to picture to ourselves Our Lord Jesus Christ as He appeared in His humanity, but it is hard to think of the Holy Ghost in a form we can visualise and relate to.

Often in Holy Scripture, the Holy Ghost manifested Himself as a breath or a rushing wind, and there are even some approved prayers and hymns which call Him the Breath of Life. Our Lord Jesus Christ breathed on the Apostles when He said “Receive ye the Holy Ghost,” and He is indeed the life of our souls, without Whom we are dead. But normally we cannot see a breath, and it would be difficult to portray Him in that form. Instead, the Holy Ghost is most often depicted as a dove or a flame of fire, for these are visual forms which He assumed on various occasions. For example, He descended upon Our Lord in the form of a dove when He was baptised, while



on Pentecost He appeared in the form of tongues of fire - accompanied by the sound of a mighty wind. A dove is commonly understood to be a symbol of peace and purity, while fire represents charity; yet these symbols do not accurately show us all that the Holy Ghost is, and are merely intended to help us raise our mind more easily to consider the unseen truths about Him. We cannot form an accurate idea of the Holy Ghost except by Faith. And St. Paul tells us:

"Now faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not." — Hebrews 11:1

Although He is God, equal to the Father and the Son, and inseparable from the Blessed Trinity, nevertheless, it is specifically the Holy Ghost who dwells continually in a particular manner in every baptised soul in the state of grace. He is called the Sanctifier, for His especial role is to make us holy and unite us to God; but to accomplish this He requires our cooperation. He respects our free will, even when we misuse it in order to resist Him, and hence it is never

He but always ourselves who are to blame if we do not become holy more quickly.

The Holy Ghost acts within our souls in many ways. It is He Who sends us good inspirations, strengthens our wills to do good, directing, and at times reproving us by the voice of conscience. He is our Greatest Friend, for in loving us, it is our own happiness that He seeks, and not merely His own. He is always mindful of a truth which we so often forget, namely that no true happiness can be found without Him. We all desire peace and joy, but we are too much influenced by outward appearances and the desires of our senses so we tend to seek it from other sources. Time and time again we are disappointed, disturbed and unhappy when things turn out differently than we had hoped and expected. This is God's gentle way of reminding us, even as He reminded the Israelites many times throughout the Old Testament, that without Him we can never accomplish anything good, nor find true happiness and contentment.

"Destruction is thy own, O Israel: thy help is only in me." — Osee 13:9



Confirmation is especially regarded as the Sacrament of the Holy Ghost, but its significance and effects in the life of the soul are seldom truly understood. The supernatural Gifts and Fruits which He imparts to us in this Sacrament should mean more to us than empty words. If we faithfully correspond with them, they will produce their intended effect in our souls, and will continually increase and deepen our union with God. However, as Holy Scripture warns us, God resists the proud and gives His grace to the humble. Pride is therefore (after mortal sin) the greatest obstacle to the action of the Holy Ghost within us, while humility draws Him to dwell with us in a more intimate manner and to unite us ever more closely to Himself. Never has

this truth been more clearly demonstrated than by Our Lady. It was her humility, which she practised to an eminent degree, that made her so pleasing in the sight of God that He exalted her by making her the Mother of His own Divine Son. This great mystery of the Incarnation — of God made Man — was accomplished through Mary at the precise moment when the Holy Ghost came upon her. Mary is therefore an excellent model for all who desire to please the Holy Ghost.

"After the Son of God, no creature in the world was so exalted as Mary, because no creature in the world ever humbled itself so much as she did." — St. Bonaventure

This prompts us to ask the question, what is humility? St. Teresa of Avila defines it simply as being Truth. Humility is a correct opinion of oneself; a realisation of one's own nothingness. Mary knew that she had been blessed beyond all other creatures, yet she gave all the credit for it to God. Humility does not necessarily make us blind to the favours we have received or the talents and gifts we may possess, but it does lead us to acknowledge that it is God who has given them to us and that of ourselves we have and are nothing.

"...what hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" — 1 Corinthians 4:7



All God demands of us before sending His own Spirit into our hearts is that we acknowledge our spiritual poverty and cast out from our hearts that spirit of self-love and self-sufficiency which is directly opposed to true humility. In proportion to our emptiness of self, He will make us rich, filling us with Himself, and renewing within our souls the mystery of the Incarnation. The more like Mary we become, the more fully and perfectly will the Holy Ghost come upon us, forming us in the likeness of Jesus Christ and perfecting the likeness of Jesus Christ in us. He will unite His own Divinity to our Humanity until we are truly one with Our Lord Jesus Christ.

To realise in practice this wonderful ideal, which is the destiny of every Christian who cooperates with the Holy Ghost, let us pray for the Spirit of Truth to enlighten us, and make a firm resolution to be faithful to His inspirations.

"Lastly, we ought to pray to and invoke the Holy Ghost, for each one of us greatly needs His protection and His help. The more a man is deficient in wisdom, weak in strength, borne down with trouble, prone to sin, so ought he the more to fly to Him who is the never-ceasing fount of light, strength, consolation, and holiness. And chiefly that first requisite of man, the forgiveness of sins, must be sought for from Him."

— *Divinum Illud Munus*, Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII

Let us also implore His most pure, humble and faithful Spouse, the Blessed Virgin Mary, to help us empty ourselves of all that could oppose His Divine action in our souls. Then the Holy Ghost will delight to remain with us, strengthening us for the daily conflict with evil, and we shall experience that true peace and joy of heart which He alone can give.

Prayer to the Holy Ghost

*O Holy Ghost, our Greatest Friend,
Our Hope and Consolation,
Come, we implore Thee; condescend
To heed our invitation.*

*Come, fill with grace the souls Thou made,
For we are Thine by right.
Support us with Thy heavenly aid,
And lead us by Thy Light.*

*Thou Who art called the Paraclete
And Gift of God Most High,
Come, sanctify us, we entreat,
Consoler ever nigh.*

*O Fount of Life and Fire of Love,
Transform our hearts of stone;
With Thy sweet unction from above,
Confirm them as Thy own.*

*Cast out from us all trace of pride,
Dear Father of the Poor,
And let Thy Truth in us abide
More fully than before.*

*Help us to follow and obey
Each holy inspiration;
To find in Thy own will and way
Our greatest consolation.*

*O Gentle Breeze, Life-Giving Breath,
Unseen by human eye,
Keep us from everlasting death
And lead our souls on high.*

*O grant that we may love, through Thee,
The Father and the Son,
And worship Thee in unity
While endless ages run.*

Hermitage News

- ✦ February-March 2022 – Two young ladies from the USA stayed for a live-in experience. One of these may perhaps return when she is a little older (postulants must be at least 17 years of age before beginning formation), and both have surely profited from having a chance to experience religious life.
- ✦ 19th March, 2022 – On the Solemnity of St. Joseph, Patron of this Hermitage, Sr. Anne Marie of the Sacred Heart made her Solemn Profession of Perpetual Vows. Fr. Edward MacDonald, our former chaplain, performed the Ceremony during his brief visit to Ireland. This Ceremony took place in one of the rooms of



the refurbished farmhouse which will soon be serving as our main building, and was attended by about 30 of the faithful.

- ✦ 25th March, 2022 – The three new cells were blessed by Fr. MacDonald and a short procession was held in honour of Our Lady.
- ✦ 14th-17th April 2022 – A visiting priest kindly performed the Holy Week ceremonies here at the Hermitage.

Since our last newsletter there has been much progress with the repair of the house. The flooring and most of the painting of the walls is nearly finished. The skirting boards have also been installed, although many of them have yet to be painted. The stairs are in place, but they too have yet to be stained and varnished.



The electrician will soon be finishing off the electrical work, and the plumber has done a great deal already. One solid fuel stove was purchased second hand and is in good working order, while a range cooker is waiting to be installed. The outward appearance of the house has changed little in the last 6 months, but hopefully during the summer the builder will find time to plaster it. We would love to be able to cover it with flagstone to give it a more monastic appearance, but this would likely be too costly.



It is hopeful that we may be able to move into the house this summer. Still, there remains much work to be done in the development of St. Joseph's Hermitage. After the house, the erection of an enclosure wall is one of our most urgent needs.

One of the largest rooms in the house will serve as a temporary chapel, but it is our hope to erect something more permanent at some time in the future, as soon as circumstances and funds will allow. Tentative plans are even now being drawn up for that purpose. Any donations which may not be required for the

house or necessary development (such as the enclosure wall) will be carefully set aside for the future chapel – which is the most important part of a monastery.

Overall, the progress on St. Joseph's Hermitage has been good and our hearts are full of gratitude, not only to God Who is so visibly blessing us, but also to you dear friends, since it is through you that He has done so. May He Himself be your eternal reward!

Very gratefully yours in Jesus, Mary & Joseph,

Mother Irene of the Holy Face O.Carm and Community

Available from our Carmelite Shop:

Hand-made Wooden Holy Face Chaplet Beads (dark green/dark orange).....	€6.00
Miraculous Medal, Standard Size (silver).....	€1.00
Miraculous Medal on Coloured Leather Necklace (var. colours avail.).....	€5.00
Blessed Oil of the Holy Face.....	Free
1 Decade Chaplet Rosary Beads.....	€4.00
Hand-made blue plastic Rosary beads with Miraculous Medal.....	€6.00
Hand-made wooden Rosary beads with Miraculous Medal (brown/purple).....	€6.00
Hand made Greeting & Mass Cards.....	€3.00 each or €25.00 for 10
Brown wool Scapulars of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.....	€3.00
Large Ornate St. Benedict Medal (silver).....	€7.00
St. Christopher & St. Anthony Bronze Medal.....	€4.50
Heavy Copper-Coloured Crucifix Key Ring.....	€9.50
St. Benedict Copper- Coloured Crucifix.....	€2.00
St. Benedict Medal, Gold-coloured, oval, standard size.....	€1.00
Holy Face Medal (Shroud Image).....	€1.00
Holy Face Medal 3D (bronze/gold/silver).....	€2.00
Pardon Crucifix (gold/silver/bronze).....	€7.00
Blessed 100% Beeswax Candle.....	offering, €0.50
Blessed Salt.....	Free

HOW TO HELP US?

- ✓ **By your prayers**, especially that Our Lord will send us good vocations, courageous “Veronicas” to wipe and honour His Adorable Face and make reparation for poor sinners.
- ✓ **By your generosity**: bank transfer made payable to
Mother (Sr.) Irene Gibson
Carmelite Nuns of the Holy Face
St. Joseph's Carmelite Hermitage
Inchincurka, Dunmanway,
Co Cork

Bank Name: **Bank of Ireland**
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