

Reflections

Father Nicolas Schwizer

131 May 15, 2012

Mary, Symbol of the Holy Spirit

The Acts of the Apostles tells us that St. Paul found an altar in Athens which had the following inscription: to the unknown God. This title seems to be equal to – in some special way – the Holy Spirit who is for many of us Christians, the unknown God.

Who is the Holy Spirit?... the third Person of the Blessed Trinity..... the living bond of love that unites the Father with the Son: He is love so infinitely profound and perfect that He constitutes a new Person equal to them. The Holy Spirit is what is most intimate of God, the personification of his love, of his life, of his power.....He is like the common soul of the Father and the Son..... like the heart of the Triune God.

Why, then, is the Holy Spirit so unknown? First of all, because to discover his presence and action, intimate and personal closeness with God is needed because He becomes present and acts in a discreet and hidden way – difficult to perceive by eyes that are not accustomed to Him.

Also, an influential factor is not being able to represent him through an adequate figure. The figures representing him in the Bible – the dove, the wind and fire – conceal from us the richness of his person. God the Father is also invisible, but the word “father” is very near to our human experience. On the other hand, to imagine a “spirit” is much more difficult.

Nevertheless, God has given us someone in whom we can almost touch – visibly and sensitively – the presence and action of the Holy Spirit: it is the Blessed Virgin Mary. She is that most significant symbol of the Holy Spirit.....the most personal... the most appropriate and most beautiful. Why?

Because the Holy Spirit is the love made person, the personified surrender, and Mary is the love, the surrender in person.

The Blessed Virgin is, in fact, the woman thrice filled by the Spirit of God:

1. At the moment of her Immaculate Conception, in which He chose her as a favorite temple and filled her with his grace, avoiding that the least stain of sin would touch her.

2. At the moment of the Annunciation, in which “*she was overshadowed,*” to make her fertile and convert her into the Mother of Christ.

3. And at the moment of Pentecost, in which He hears her prayer and descends upon her and the apostles, making her Mother of the Church which at that moment is born from her vivifying power.

But the Virgin leads us to the Holy Spirit, not only through her being, but also through her mission because her mission and that of the Holy Spirit go in the same line.

+ **Mary is our Mother – Educatrix.** And the Holy Spirit is the great educator and sanctifier of each Christian. With his graces and divine gifts, He matures us and transforms us into new men, reflections of Christ, throughout our entire life.

+ **Mary, as an authentic Mother, encourages and inspires her own at each moment.** And the Holy Spirit is the great vivifier who renews and permanently inspires men and communities.

+ **Like a good Mother, the Virgin also has the mission to unite and gather her Family around her.** And the Divine Spirit is the great uniter, and attachment of unity for the Church and Christian communities.

Mary, work of the Holy Spirit. She, throughout her entire earthly life, is totally under the influence and guidance of the Divine Spirit. Therefore, we can admire in Mary all virtues and Christian values that our great Educator wants to transmit and inculcate in us. She is the intuitive teaching that God gives us to surrender us with confidence into the creative hands of the Holy Spirit.

Questions for reflection

1. What does the Virgin Mary represent to me?
2. Am I a person who unites others?
3. Do I educate in my family, in my place of work...?

If you wish to subscribe, comment on the text or give your testimony, write to: pn.reflexiones@gmail.com

Translation: Carlos Cantú, Schoenstatt Family Federation, La Feria, Texas USA 04172012