

Reflections

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Vessel and Harp of the Holy Spirit

Spiritual Vessel. In the Litany of Loreto, we find the most beautiful titles with which the Christian community honors its Mother. One of those is: “spiritual vessel.” She, much more than St. Paul and all the other great Apostles, is an instrument chosen by God. Mary is the spiritual vessel, the vessel filled with the Spirit of God. From the first moment of her existence, He has filled her soul, He has converted her into “full of grace.” And ultimately, “full of grace” means nothing other than “full of the Holy Spirit.” Furthermore, He has transfigured her body, He has preserved it from the sting of concupiscence and He has freed her from original sin.

And why and for what are these privileges? The Holy Spirit wanted to use her as his dwelling and as his favorite instrument, preparing her to be the Mother of the Lord. She was to collaborate in the work of Redemption and sanctification of the world. She is that member of humanity which the Holy Spirit used to make possible, to fulfill and to consummate Redemption.

And as we know, Mary was a perfect instrument of the Spirit. She never disappointed or defrauded Him. She always responded to Him with a total YES, unselfish and magnanimous. She was his perfect instrument as Mother of Christ from the Incarnation to the Death on the Cross. She was and continues to be a perfect instrument in Heaven: as Mother of the Church, of Christians, and as Mediatrix of all graces.

As in Mary, the Spirit wants to act in our souls. He wants to expel the poisonous worldly spirit which surrounds us, and He wants to place us in the pure and sanctifying atmosphere of the Virgin. In Her, He gives us a living remembrance of Paradise and awakens in all the children of God the desire to return, someday, to Paradise. May She, the “spiritual vessel,” help us all to be a dwelling and a fruitful instrument of the Divine Spirit.

Through all of this, and since antiquity, the Christian community has given Mary the title of **“Vessel of the Holy Spirit.”**

To be near Her is to be near Him and to understand what He wants to do with all of us: to free us, as Her, from sin, to fill us with Christ, to submerge us into the mystery of the Church.

Mary makes clear, especially, the essential mission of the Divine Spirit: to vitally lead us to the Son and to the Father. Because She, being Mother, helps us to feel we are children and to identify ourselves as such with Jesus Christ. And because, as all Mothers, She also possesses the gift of making us feel close to and attracted to the heart of the Father.

In this way, the mission of the Holy Spirit identifies with Mary’s own charism. Thus it is explained why, in the history of the Church, devotion to the Spirit and to the Virgin always flourish together.

Harp of the Holy Spirit. Some Fathers of the Church called the Blessed Virgin: “harp of the Holy Spirit.” Her entire life was under the guidance of the Spirit. Always anew, She listened interiorly, in her heart, to be able to understand the breath of the Holy Spirit. And when she understood his insinuations and suggestions, She immediately put them into practice. She was a fine and pure instrument in the hand of God, in which the Spirit was able to touch the most delicate tones. She never placed, even the smallest obstacle, in His way. And because She always corresponded with so much openness, sensitivity and obedience to his wishes, She is called the harp of the Holy Spirit.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us ask Mary that through her intercession, as at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descends over each one of us and gives us his gifts and fruitfulness and that He transforms us into instruments and bearers of his divine love.

Questions for reflection

1. Are we anxious that He takes into his hands our education and that He forms us according to his spirit?
2. Do I feel I am an instrument of the Holy Spirit?
3. How is my reaction to the suggestions and insinuations of the Holy Spirit?

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