

TAKE-HOME • SESSION 1

The Breath of God

What We Found

The Hebrew word *ruah* means breath, wind, and spirit at once. Before anything lived, the Spirit of God was moving over the waters (Genesis 1:2); St. Basil pictured that hovering as a bird brooding over her nest. The first man became a living being only when God breathed into him (Genesis 2:7). And when Israel was as good as dead in exile, God showed Ezekiel a valley of dry bones and summoned breath from the four winds until a whole people stood on its feet (Ezekiel 37). Life, in the Bible, is borrowed breath. Then, on Easter evening, the risen Jesus breathed on His apostles: "Receive the Holy Spirit." The story that began at creation is starting again, and this study is about where it lands: on you.

Voices of the Church

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Irenaeus of Lyons (*Against Heresies, Book IV, chapter 20*)

The Father was never without His Word and His Wisdom, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They are like the Father's two hands, and with them He freely fashioned all things, including man. From the first page of Scripture, the Spirit is one of the hands that made you.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Basil the Great (*Hexaemeron, Homily 2*)

The Spirit "moving" over the waters is the image of a bird brooding over her eggs, warming and cherishing them into life. The Spirit does not hover at a cold distance. He broods over what He is about to bring alive.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (*Catechetical Lectures, Lecture 16*)

The Holy Spirit is like rain: one and the same water comes down, yet it becomes one thing in the palm tree and another in the vine, adapting itself to each living thing. So the Spirit, one and the same, gives Himself to each person as each one needs.

Live It This Week

Parent and candidate together. Each morning this week, before leaving the house, pray one sentence together out loud: "Come, Holy Spirit, breathe life into this day." That is the whole practice. Seven mornings, one breath of a prayer. If a morning is missed, no penance and no quitting; just pray it the next morning.

Memory Verse

"The spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life." (Job 33:4)

Table Talk

One question for the drive home or the dinner table: If someone at school or at work asked you tomorrow, "What even is the Holy Spirit?", what would you say after tonight?

Sealed Until Session 14

Fill these in this week, then fold this page over and do not look again until the final session. On your honor.

CANDIDATE: MY GUESS. At the moment you are confirmed, what do you think the bishop will actually say and do? Write your best guess.

PARENT: MY MEMORY. What do you remember about your own Confirmation? The day, the name you took, the bishop, anything at all. If the honest answer is "almost nothing," write that; it will matter later too.

Before Next Session

Read Numbers 11:16-30. Moses, seventy elders, and a wish Moses makes out loud.

Catechism references for this session: CCC 691, 703, 704.