

TAKE-HOME • SESSION 6

The Promise of the Paraclete

What We Found

On the night before he died, Jesus promised his frightened friends another *Parakletos*: one called alongside, the friend who stands next to you in court, Advocate, Comforter, Counselor. If this one is "another," the first was Jesus himself. The Paraclete's job description: with you for ever; dwelling WITH you and soon IN you, Ezekiel's promise arriving on Jesus' own lips; teaching all things; bringing to remembrance everything Jesus said; guiding into all truth; not speaking on his own authority, always glorifying Jesus. And one impossible sentence: "it is to your advantage that I go away," because while Jesus walked among us his visible presence was beside his disciples in one place at a time, and through the Spirit he would dwell within believers wherever they are. Then, on Easter evening, behind shut doors, the risen Jesus breathed on his apostles, the way God breathed on the dust in the garden, and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit." And still, forty days later, he told those same men to wait, because something more was coming.

Voices of the Church

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Augustine of Hippo (*Tractates on the Gospel of John*)

The Spirit is not known the way objects are known, by looking. He is known by being possessed, the way you know love: from within, by having it. The soul that receives him knows him better than sight could tell.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Cyril of Alexandria (*Commentary on the Gospel of John*)

Why was Jesus' departure to our advantage? While Christ dwelt among his disciples in the flesh, he was present beside them; when he ascended and sent the Spirit, Christ came to dwell within them. Beside became within, and within is the deeper intimacy.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Gregory the Great (*Homilies on the Gospels, Homily 30*)

The proof of love is shown in deeds. Do not ask first how the Spirit feels in you; ask what he is doing through you. A warmed heart is a gift; a changed life is the evidence.

Live It This Week

Parent and candidate together. Once a day, before homework, before work, before the hard conversation, whichever moment needs it most, pray one sentence: "Come, Holy Spirit, Spirit of truth: teach me, and remind me." Compare notes once during the week: did anything come back to mind right when you needed it?

Memory Verse

"But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you." (John 14:26)

Table Talk

One question for the drive home or the dinner table: Jesus said it was to our advantage that he go away, so the Spirit could come. Why might the Spirit dwelling within be a deeper communion than standing beside Jesus? Argue about it kindly.

Before Next Session

Read Acts 1:1-14.

Catechism references for this session: CCC 692, 728, 729.