

Warning: getimagesize(images/stories/ospitalita/giovani/lettereEnzo/IMG_3945_Colomba.jpg): failed to open stream: No such file or directory in /home/monast59/public_html/plugins/content/multithumb/multithumb.php on line 1563

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Is it possible to know the Holy Spirit?

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spirit, and pour down from the Heaven the beauty of your splendour!

Bose, 25 October 2007

The Holy Spirit “blows wherever it pleases” and “you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going” (John 3:8).

The Spirit dwells in Christians’ confession of faith like a stranger and He’s shrouded in great mystery. However, the Fourth Gospel shows us that even though the world doesn’t know the Holy Spirit and it can’t accept Him, the believers do and they know Him “for he lives in them and will be in them” (John 14:17).

But how can we get to know the Holy Spirit?

To speak about Him means to take a pretty serious challenge. The Holy Spirit is God’s secret. It’s His strength, His aesthetic power by which He has got out of the world and at the same time He has fulfilled the whole creation with His own presence. The Spirit is not to be worshipped; He never claims prayers or adoration for himself. All His wishes aim to glorify the Son.

We should accept it: the Holy Spirit is a mystery.

Christians can’t talk about the Spirit in itself but they can indeed talk about His action: they all experience his presence “because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us” (Rom 5:5). Therefore we know the Spirit by knowing his work throughout the story of salvation. We might not be aware of Him but we live and dwell in the Holy Spirit every moment of our lives. Otherwise we wouldn’t be true Christians, which implies being God’s sons. The Spirit is not to be described by human words, He’s unspeakable and He’s a far cry from every picture we might paint of Him. He works inside, in our innermost selves, not setting up extraordinary circumstances but ushering the extraordinary into our daily Christian life. The Holy Spirit is made manifest in the human spirit; the former goes beyond the letter: He transcends, He renews, He cleanses, and He consecrates human hearts...

The Spirit is neither an ethereal life force nor a simple attribute, which belongs immanently to human beings. The Spirit is pure life. He’s true, actual and given life. Where life is real life and not simply outward appearance, there the Holy Spirit dwells. Where freedom is complete – and humans as God’s sons are not slave of anything anymore –, they’re the Holy Spirit dwells. Where a contact between the human – the earthly – and God takes place, there is the Holy Spirit too.

While saying the Creed’s words: “We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and the Giver of life,” we state that no creation whatsoever is possible without Him and that nobody can be saved if not through the Spirit.

That said, it's not a matter of talking about the Holy Spirit but of praying and letting Him to work effectively inside of each of us. "Come, Holy Spirit, and pour down from the Heaven the beauty of your splendour!"

Enzo Bianchi,
prior of Bose

Article written for the Belgian young people in the occasion of their leaving for the World Youth Day in Sidney, 2008