



# The Decalogue of Docility to the Holy Spirit



(From a talk on Radio Maria in Italy by Fr. Gasparino on “The School of Prayer,” which I have reworked a little bit. —Fr. Thomas, OCD)

- 1. The Holy Spirit Speaks Softly:** The Holy Spirit respects to the utmost your liberty; the love of the Holy Spirit is strong and discreet: all it takes is a little pride, a little superficiality for His voice not to reach you. At that point the Spirit becomes silent...silently waiting. The Holy Father in his encyclical on the Holy Spirit says, “The Spirit is the supreme guide of man, the Light of the human spirit.”
- 2. If the Holy Spirit is Hammering, it’s Because There is a Problem Which is Boiling Over:** When the Holy Spirit insists, it is because He is telling us that there is a wound. “Something is wrong! Open your eyes!” Any delay in welcoming His voice does serious damage to your spiritual life; every quick response to Him renews you and helps you to perceive even better His Light. But how often the Spirit hammers away! “Let go of that friendship!” “Leave that occasion of sin!” “Leave that vice alone!” Well, when the Spirit hammers, we need to listen and obey. (C.S. Lewis: “God whispers to us in our joys and shouts to us in our pain.”) The Holy Father says in his encyclical, “Under the influence of the Spirit, we mature and become strong interiorly. The Spirit builds up our interior self, makes us grow and strengthens us.”
- 3. The Secret of Joy is to Give Continual Joy to the Holy Spirit:** But we have to begin concretely, in little things. Every act of humility and every act of generosity nourish the joy that the Holy Spirit sows in us. When you have done a good deed—if you are not careful—you might become a little proud. From now on, when you do a kind act, do it like this: Stop yourself and say, “Thank You, Holy Spirit. Again, again! Let’s do it again!” You are saying in effect, “Continue to inspire me to do good, continue to place me in occasions to do something beautiful for you.” The Holy Spirit is constantly at work, and we have to let Him work. The Holy Father says in No. 67 of his encyclical, “The joy that no one can take away is the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
- 4. The Holy Spirit Does Not Get Tired of Speaking to You, Teaching You, Forming You:** What I mean to say is that the Holy Spirit is the Fidelity-Faithfulness of Love, and He uses the most simple means: inspirations, the advice of friends who love you, examples, testimonies (like in prayer groups), reading, encounters, things that just happen... The Holy Father says in No. 58, “The Holy Spirit is the never-ceasing Self-Giving of God.”
- 5. The Word of God is the Primary Antenna of the Holy Spirit:** This means that you should beg the Holy Spirit to help you to learn to read the Word of God, the Sacred Scriptures. Don’t ever read the Word without the Spirit’s help. Nourish yourself on the Word, invoking the Spirit. Pray the Word in the Spirit. When you take the Word in your hands, first put up the antenna of “listening to the Holy Spirit,” then pray, pray to the Holy Spirit. It is with the Word and prayer that you learn to distinguish the voice of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Father says in No. 25, “With the strength of the Gospel, the Holy Spirit constantly renews the Church.” You see, then, that the Word of God is the constant antenna that renews the Church—the Word through which the Church connects itself to the Holy Spirit.
- 6. Do Not Cease to Give Thanks to the Holy Spirit For What He Does For You:** Your life is a mysterious, on-going story or weaving of gifts that the Holy Spirit is giving you, from Baptism to death. From your birth to your death there is a gold thread, the gifts of the Holy Spirit...a gold thread that runs through your whole life. You perceive some of those gifts, but you need to push yourself to find even more of them. And whenever you do perceive them, begin to give thanks for them. The Holy Father says in No. 67, “Before the Holy Spirit, I genuflect in recognition-acknowledgement.”

**7. The evil one copies the Holy Spirit and does everything to try to oppose His Works:** Satan is the monkey of God; he copies God. He too sends his inspirations, he too sends his messages, his messengers. Sometimes when you use the mass media (open the newspaper or internet or email), there is his messenger waiting for you. But the power of the Holy Spirit with a Breath defeats Satan, routs him. All you need is to confide totally and quickly in the Holy Spirit. For then, if we are well-connected to the Holy Spirit, we overcome whatever seduction he presents to us. I always meet people who are afraid of Satan. There is no need to be afraid of Satan, because we have the Holy Spirit. When we cleave to the Holy Spirit, Satan can no longer do anything. When we invoke the Holy Spirit, Satan is blocked. When we invoke the Holy Spirit on others, Satan is ineffective. The Holy Father says in No. 38, "Satan, the perverse spirit of suspicion, challenges man to become the adversary of God." ("Satan" means "adversary" in Hebrew.)

**8. A Frequent Offense Against the Holy Spirit is to not Relate to Him as a Person:** I will always insist on this point, because we do not treat the Holy Spirit as a Person. And yet Jesus has entrusted us to the Holy Spirit and told us that "He will teach you all things and will remind you of the things I have told you," and that He will accompany us, convict us of sin, snatch us away from sin. Jesus has entrusted us to the Holy Spirit and has told us that He is our Support, our Teacher. And yet very often we do not relate to Him as a Living Person, One Who is alive and lives in our midst, within us. We think of Him as something fleeting, far-off, unreal. (That is precisely the point. We tend to use the word "thing" for a spirit, when for the Holy Spirit we should always be thinking of a "Who," never of a "what.") The Holy Father, in No. 25, has these beautiful words: "The Spirit is not only a gift to the person, but is the Person-gift." He is the Person who makes Himself the Gift, the unceasing Self-Giving of God. Try to get in the habit of always beginning the day by saying, "Good morning, Holy Spirit," to the One Who is so close to you, within you. And at the end of the day say, "Good night, Holy Spirit," to the One Who is within you and Who guides you even in your sleep.

**9. Jesus Has Promised That the Father Gives the Holy Spirit to Whomever Asks:** Jesus did not say that the Father gives the Spirit to one who merits Him, who is worthy. He said He gives the Spirit to the one who asks. Well, we need to ask with faith and constancy, with perseverance. The Holy Father says in No. 65, "The Holy Spirit is the Gift that, together with prayer, comes into the heart of man."

**10. The Holy Spirit is the Love of God Poured Out Into Our Hearts:** The more we live in love, the more we live in the Holy Spirit. The more we follow our selfishness, our egotistical desires, the more we move away from the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit never gives up; He continually spurs us on in love. The Holy Father says, "The Holy Spirit is Person-Love/Personal Love; in Him the intimate Life of God becomes Gift." The Holy Spirit gives me His intimate Life unceasingly, because **THE LOVE OF GOD Poured OUT INTO OUR HEARTS IS THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

**Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

**St. Joseph, chaste and just, prudent and brave, obedient and loyal, protector of the Church, pray for us.**

**Come Holy Spirit, come by means of the powerful intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, your well-beloved spouse.**

**Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be recreated, and you shall renew the face of all the earth!**

**Heavenly Father, who by the brilliant light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful, radiant in that same Spirit, that we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**