

# KSC 2019 FORMATION PROGRAMME

## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR TIME

### Session Four: Theme: Transmits Holiness

When one enters St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican the feature that draws our attention is the High Altar built over the Tomb of St. Peter. This Altar and its surrounds and Canopy were designed and built by Bernini in about 1660AD. Looking beyond the Altar we are drawn to the stunning alabaster window that sheds beautiful light into the church. This window (also designed by Bernini) depicts the Holy Spirit. The sun's rays are magnified by this window and pierce the whole area with a warm and peaceful glow.



**Step 1: Opening prayer:** from the Order's Prayers

### Step 2: READINGS ON THE THEME

"You know that the Holy Spirit constitutes the soul, the life blood of the Church and of every individual Christian: He is the Love of God who makes of our hearts his dwelling place and enters into communion with us. The Holy Spirit abides with us always, he is always within us, in our hearts. The Spirit himself is "the gift of God" par excellence (cf. Jn 4:10), he is a gift of God, and he in turn communicates various spiritual gifts to those who receive him." (Pope Francis, General Audience, April 2014)

In addressing the faithful on the Gift of Piety in June 2014, Pope Francis had this to say: "This relationship with the Lord is not intended as a duty or an imposition. It is a bond that comes from within. It is a relationship lived with the heart: it is our friendship with God, granted to us by Jesus, a friendship that changes our life and fills us with passion, with joy. Thus, the gift of piety stirs in us above all gratitude and praise. This is, in fact, the reason and the most authentic meaning of our worship and our adoration. When the Holy Spirit allows us to perceive the presence of the Lord and all his love for us, it warms the heart and moves us quite naturally to prayer and celebration. Piety, therefore, is synonymous with the genuine religious spirit, with filial trust in God, with that capacity to pray to him with the love and simplicity that belongs to those who are humble of heart.

If the gift of piety makes us grow in relation to and in communion with God and leads us to live as his children, at the same time, it helps us to pass this love on to others as well and to recognize them as our brothers and sisters. And then, yes, we will be moved by feelings of piety — not pietism! — in relation to those around us and to those whom we encounter every day. Why do I say "not pietism"? Because some think that to be pious is to close one's eyes, to pose like a picture and pretend to be a saint. In Piedmont we say: to play the "mugna quacia" [literally: the pious or serene nun]. This is not the gift of piety. The gift of piety means to be truly capable of rejoicing with those who rejoice, of weeping with those who weep, of being close to those who are lonely or in anguish, of correcting those in error, of consoling the afflicted, of welcoming and helping those in need. The gift of piety is closely tied to gentleness. The gift of piety which the Holy Spirit gives us makes us gentle, makes us calm, patient, at peace with God, at the service of others with gentleness.

Dear friends, in the Letter to the Romans the Apostle Paul states: "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship", from which, "we cry, 'Abba! Father!'" (Rm 8:14-15). Let us ask the Lord for the gift of his Spirit to conquer our fear, our uncertainty, and our restless, impatient spirit, and to make of us joyful witnesses of God and of his love, by worshipping the Lord in truth and in service to our neighbour with gentleness and with a smile, which the Holy Spirit always gives us in joy. May the Holy Spirit grant to all of us this gift of piety." (*Pope Francis, General Audience 4<sup>th</sup> June 2014*)

When Jesus appeared to the disciples after His Resurrection – the first Scripture Reading from John's Gospel today – He says twice 'Peace be with you'. He said it to them many times previously – it was (is) His personal greeting that helped them to recognise Him. The previous verse (verse 19) tells us that He found the disciples all gathered in fear behind closed doors! This was not going to do much for achieving the mission! That changed to joy when they recognised Jesus and received the Holy Spirit from Him. This was before Pentecost but it set them up for it.

**Step 3:**            *Allow a few moments reflective silence.*

**Step 4:            SCRIPTURE READING**

"Jesus said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and, after saying this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy at seeing the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I am sending you.' After saying this he breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit.' (*Jn 20: 20-22*)

"There are many different gifts, but it is always the same Spirit; there are many different ways of serving, but it is always the same Lord. There are many different forms of activity, but in everybody it is the same God who is at work in them all. The particular manifestation of the Spirit granted to each one is to be used for the general good." (*1 Cor 12 4-7*)

**Step 5:            REFLECTION (5 Mins)**

**Step 6:            SHARING (10 Mins)**

The Oxford definition of 'holiness' is 'the state of being holy'. And 'holy' is defined as 'a state of dedication or consecration to God'.

Pope Francis uses many examples that point to the of the working of the Holy Spirit in our life.

Can you identify examples of everyday life which would merit the term 'holy'? What about them makes them 'holy'?

**Step 7:            CONCLUSION**

We pray together;

**O God,**

**Who enlightens the minds and inflames the hearts of the faithful by the Holy Spirit,  
grant that through the same Spirit I may know my true vocation in life,  
and may have the grace to follow if faithfully.**

**I ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord,**

**who I am privileged to receive into my heart and soul in Holy Communion.**

**Amen**

**Step 8:            *The meeting proceeds***

**Step 9:            CLOSING PRAYERS – FROM THE ORDER'S PRAYERS**