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# THE PARACLETE

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## THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS LIFE, FREEDOM AND UNITY

By Fr. John Gordon

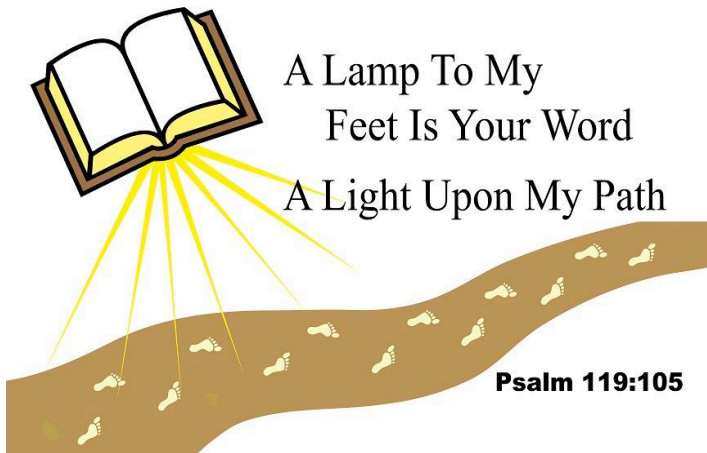
What a great time it is in the life of the Church! What a wonderful time it is to be in this, the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Third Millennium of Christianity, and to see what we see and hear what we hear! We, who have lived through the graced pontificate of Pope John Paul II, now live in this prophetic pontificate of Benedict XVI. I believe that in Pope Benedict XVI we have a Holy Father, a true papa, who loves us and who desires to teach us. His manner and style are very much different from John Paul II. These men are different Popes for the different purposes and needs that the Body of Christ has at this time.

Pope Benedict XVI invited all the Ecclesial Movements to come to Rome for a wonderful celebration of the whole Church in 2006. With less than a year's notice, the gathering was announced and on that Pentecost weekend 400,000 people gathered in St. Peter's Square, filling the piazza and the whole street, all the way to the Tiber River! It was glorious celebration! During that weekend, our Holy Father led us in a wonderful meditation in which he gave a teaching about the nature of the Holy Spirit. He spoke of three particular expressions or fruits that the Holy Spirit always brings: Life, Freedom, and Unity.

### **Life in the Spirit**

When Benedict XVI reflected on the *life* that the Creator Spirit breathes upon the earth, he used the image of the prodigal son who thought he had life by taking it. By taking what was his inheritance from his father he thought he had all that life had to offer with all its abundances. He thought life was about possessing and taking, and he ended up in a pigsty. The truth of the matter is that life isn't about possessing and taking; it is about receiving. God tells us "I came that they might have life and have it abundantly, to the full" in John 10:10. Life is a gift we receive, a pure gift from God Himself. Isn't that what we experience in the baptism of the Holy Spirit: the life of God coming within us?

When I was baptized in the Holy Spirit I knew that God was real, not because I read about Him in a



A Lamp To My  
Feet Is Your Word  
A Light Upon My Path

Psalm 119:105

### **Praise the Lord!**

We now have more information to share with you concerning the up-coming Conference on the weekend of October 12,13,14, 2007. It will be held at the same place as last year. The name of the hotel is the Hilton Fort Lauderdale Airport Hotel, located at 1870 Griffin Road, Dania Beach, Florida. We have been given a rate of \$104.34 per night, which includes 11% tax, for a single or double occupancy room. For a triple or quadruple occupancy room the cost is \$120.99, including the 11% tax. Be sure to make your plans early to attend this wonderful weekend. Invite your family and friends to come and receive all the healing love that the Lord desires to give us.

We are pleased to inform you that Chuck and Peggy Hornsby will be ministering to us at the Conference. In 1976 Chuck joined the Alleluia Community, a multi-denominational charismatic covenant community where he currently serves in pastoral leadership and as the head of the Alleluia Community Schools. Chuck is currently serving a second term as a member of the National Service Committee. He married his wife, Peggy, in 1978. They have three adult children. Chuck and Peggy often team together in doing prayer ministry for inner healing and deliverance.

book, or that somebody else told me about Him. I knew He was real because He was alive in me! He was alive already in me by that grace of sacramental Baptism in which I was baptized in water and Spirit. But in the baptism of the Spirit, I could say “Yes, Lord! I want this grace! I want this gift! I need your life!” I remember when I was first exposed to this grace it awakened in me a hunger I didn’t know I had. Before, I thought life was all about the dead ends, the struggles, the trials, and the difficulties. Then I discovered people who were joyful and alive—not because everything around them was going great, but because everything *within* them was; it was He who was alive in them. “Greater is He in me than he who is in the world.”

We are familiar with the story of the widow of Zerapheth, where Elijah tells her he wants something to eat. She tells him that she has nothing left. She was about to bake her last loaf of bread and then she and her son were going to die. She thought that life was about what you get, what you have, and what you need. These people thought that the absence of the stuff meant that life was over. Then Elijah invites her, and by the grace of God, somehow she responds positively.

Our Holy Father, Benedict XVI, reminded us at that vigil celebration that the source of life is the Holy Spirit of God. We need to always come to that well and drink deeply from the grace of the Holy Spirit. We need to come often and be refreshed. Let’s be renewed in the grace of charisms, of yielding ourselves to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, of the power of the Holy Spirit, and to the Father’s love.

### **Freedom in the Spirit**

The next thing that Benedict XVI reflected on is that this life leads to **freedom**. He connected freedom with sonship—to be free is to be a son, a daughter of God. He quoted Romans 8:15 that the “Spirit of God is given to us that we might cry out ‘Abba, Father.’” We know that in John 8:36 the Word of God tells us that “if the Son sets you free you are free indeed.” The Son has set us free, to be sons and daughters of God. Now there’s true freedom. Therefore we have a place in the house of the Lord. But if we are a son or a daughter, a member of the family, we also have what: chores and responsibilities. Guests don’t have to clear the dishes, the children do. As a child of God, we are responsible for the ongoing work of the Creator Spirit.

The Creator Spirit is about breathing new life—the new life of God’s love, of God’s mercy, of God’s justice and freedom. It is our task to cultivate and foster that and to encourage it wherever it might be. It is the gift and the freedom of the Spirit that people are receiving today. We have an eagerness to welcome everyone into the home as our brothers and sisters in

Christ. Therefore everyone who is a son and a daughter is a brother and sister to us without exception.

The widow of Zerapheth gave everything that she had to feed Elijah. How freeing was that! If you have a lot of stuff, you’ve got to worry about it and you can be burdened by it. What do you give a man who has everything? A burglar alarm! If he has everything, he needs to possess it, he needs to protect it, and to hold on to it, he needs to circle the wagons, and he is not free. He does not have his possessions, his possessions have him. If we are not free, we are not sons and daughters. And I, for one, want to cry out with the Holy Spirit “Abba, Father.” So the freedom that we have as sons and daughters of God is to give everything over to the Lord.

When I hear people speak of tithing, for example, it’s a wonderful, biblical concept. It is an important concept but it’s not a full concept. If we approach tithing as ten percent of what we have belongs to God, we are far from the Spirit that it involves. How much of what we have belongs to God? *Everything!* Everything belongs to God—my time, my talent, my treasure, all the gifts, all my life, my children, my parents, my ministry—everything I have belongs to Him because He is my father. That’s freedom! Oh, brothers and sisters, we need this grace for our own lives. I need this grace to grow in the holiness to which God calls me. I cannot live this kind of freedom this kind of abandonment, this kind of sonship and daughterhood except in the power of the Holy Spirit. If I try on my own, it’s just too strained—I’m measuring, I’m counting, I’m weighing, and I’m balancing. But if I’m a son or a daughter, everything in the house belongs to the Father and everything in the house belongs also to me.

### **Unity in the Spirit**

The third fruit or grace that the Holy Father spoke of is **unity**. Unity gathers us towards Christ Jesus. We know that the plan of God, expressed in Ephesians 1:3, has been revealed to us: “Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens.” In verse 10, it goes on to say that the purpose He has revealed to us is to gather all things together under the headship of Christ Jesus. The plan of God is unity in Christ Jesus. That’s why we proclaim Jesus Christ is Lord—Lord of heaven, Lord of earth, Lord of all creation. It’s the plan of God to bring everything under Christ Jesus.

However, we are not there yet, are we? Everything is not yet under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. I express it this way: For whom is Jesus the *Savior*? Everyone? No—only for those who yield to him and accept Him. No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit. Therefore our task and

responsibility is that we, as sons and daughters, in freedom have to let the life of God be so pronounced, be so expressed, be so lived that more and more people accept the Lordship of Jesus Christ. So that more and more people can come home and find their place at the table in the house of the Lord.

Therefore we don't merely run to Jesus, and have a God-and-me relationship. As I've experienced the call to be joined to Christ Jesus, I am sent forth to experience the life that is good and the life that needs to be converted out there. I am sent forth to where the brothers and sisters are, so that we can all come back.

Shortly after he became pope, Benedict XVI addressed the Italian Eucharistic Congress. One of the things he said to them was that the challenge of the Eucharist is that most people don't want God that close. Sometimes we're guilty of that ourselves: "God, I've got my plan. I'm going to work for you, Lord, and I'll do all my programs...but don't get too close, God."

Beg the Lord for the life, the freedom, and the unity to which our Holy Father summons us to experience in the power of the Holy Spirit. Beg that it might be a truth that so captures us, like the baptism in the Holy Spirit has done, that we are able to bring it to the whole Body of Christ and to the whole people of God. Beg the Lord that this breath of the Spirit might be aroused and alive in all of us. Therefore, do not be surprised if the very thing we're holding on to is being wrestled out of our hands by God. That's the life of receiving and not possessing. Don't be surprised if the responsibility and the work is being raised up, not because there are more jobs to be done, but because we are free as sons and daughters and therefore we have a role to play and a work to be done for building up the Body of Christ.

None of this can happen unless we say yes. And if you say yes, I want to warn you, be careful. If your life is already perfect the way it is, then you don't need more of the Holy Spirit or more of God. But, whatever the Holy Spirit touches, the Holy Spirit changes. If you need that more, if you need that life, that freedom, that unity, and if you're willing to let God have His way fully in you, if you want that and only if you're willing to say yes to that, I invite you to say yes.

Reprinted with permission. Fr. John Gordon is a priest for the Archdiocese of Newark. He has been active in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal since 1975. He has served in various local, regional, national and international ways. Currently he is Vice-Chair of NARSC (North American Renewal Service Committee) an ecumenical umbrella group and a member of the National Service Committee. In 2003, he was assigned to assist in the direction of Franciscan University's Pre-theologate program.

## ATTENTION

Because of the increased cost of printing and postage, we regret to have to tell you that this office will now have to ask for a minimum of \$5.00 per year to cover the cost of your "Paraclete" newsletter. For those of you who already send contributions specifically for the "Paraclete", we sincerely thank you. For those of you who have not, we ask you to prayerfully consider sending in your donation. We firmly believe that this newsletter should continue to proclaim the truth of the Gospel and provide you with information concerning up-coming events.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Every Monday - **Healing through the Word**  
7:30 PM - St. Louis Church - Maria Vadia  
Hospitality Room A
- Fourth Monday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**  
7:30 PM - St. Bernard Church  
Celebrant - Rev. Robert Richardson
- First Tuesday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**  
8:00 PM - Nativity Church - Hollywood
- First Tuesday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**  
7:00 PM - St. Mary Star of the Sea-Key West
- First Thursday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**  
8:00 PM - Nativity Church  
Indian Community
- Last Thursday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**  
7:30 PM - St. Monica Church - Opa Locka
- First Friday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**  
8:00 PM - Nativity Church Shrine  
Filipino Community
- Forth Friday - **All Night Adoration**  
St. Stephen Church - 8:00 PM  
Concluding with Mass 8:00 AM-Saturday
  
- May 2, 2007 - **Life in the Spirit Seminar** - 7 weeks  
St Bartholomew - Miramar, Florida  
For info - CCS Office - 954 961-1856
- May 17, 2007 - **Mass and Healing Prayer** - 7:00 PM  
St Maurice Church, Dania Beach - Rev. John Fink  
For info - Anna 954 0967-9533
- May 25,26,27, 2007 - **Life in the Spirit Seminar**  
St Justin Martyr - Key Largo, Florida  
For info -- Valli - 305 772-3073
- July 5-8, 2007 - **Women of Worship Conference**  
Wyndham Lisle Hotel, Chicago  
[www.catholicwow.org](http://www.catholicwow.org) - web site

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### May

1. Acts 11:19-26 Jn 10:22-30
2. Acts 12:24—13:5a Jn 12:44-50
3. 1 Cor 15:1-8 Jn 14:6-14
4. Acts 13:26-33 Jn 14:1-6
5. Acts 13:44-52 Jn 14:7-14
6. Acts 14:21-27 Rv 21:1-5a Jn 13:31-33a,34-35
7. Acts 14:5-18 Jn 14:21-26
8. Acts 14:19-28 Jn 14:27-31a
9. Acts 15:1-6 Jn 15:1-8
10. Acts 15:7-21 Jn 15:9-11
11. Acts 15:22-31 Jn 15:12-17
12. Acts 16:1-10 Jn 15:18-21
13. Acts 15:1-2,22-29 Rv 21:10-14,22-23 Jn 14:23-29
  
14. Acts 1:15-17,20-26 Jn 15:9-17
15. Acts 16:22-34 Jn 16:5-11
16. Acts 17:15,22—18:1 Jn 16:12-15
17. Acts 1:1-11 Eph 1:17-23 Lk 24:46-53
18. Acts 18:9-18 Jn 16:20-23
19. Acts 18:23-28 Jn 16:23b-28
20. Acts 7:55-60 Rv 22:12-14,16-17,20 Jn 17:20-26
21. Acts 19:1-8 Jn 16:29-33
22. Acts 20:17-27 Jn 17:1-11a
23. Acts 20:28-38 Jn 17:11b-19
24. Acts 22:30;23:6-11 Jn 17:20-26
25. Acts 25:13b-21 Jn 21:15-19
26. Acts 28:16-20,30-31 Jn 21:20-25
27. Acts 2:1-11 1 Cor 12:3b-7,12-13 Jn 20:19-23
28. Sir 17:20-24 Mk 10:17-27
29. Sir 35:1-12 Mk 10:28-31
30. Sir 36:1,4-5a,10-17 Mk 10:32-45
31. Zep 3:14-18a Lk 1:39-56

### June

1. Sir 44:1,9-13 Mk 11:11-26
2. Sir 51:12cd-20 Mk 11:27-33
3. Prv 8:22-31 Rom 5:1-5 Jn 16:12-15
4. Tb 1:3;2:1a-8 Mk 12:1-12
5. Tb 2:9-14 Mk 12:13-17
6. Tb 3:1-11a,16-17a Mk 12:18-27
7. Tb 6:10-11;7:1bcde, 9-17;8:4-9a Mk 12:28-34
8. Tb 11:5-17 Mk 12:35-37
9. Tb 12:1,5-15,20 Mk 12:38-44
10. Gn 14:18-20 1 Cor 11:23-26 Lk 9:11b-17
11. Acts 11:21b-26;13:1-3 Mt 5:1-12
12. 2 Cor 1:18-22 Mt 5:13-16
13. 2 Cor 3:4-11 Mt 5:17-19
14. 2 Cor 3:15—4:1,3-6 Mt 5:20-26
15. Ez 34:11-16 Rom 5:5b-11 Lk 15:3-7
16. 2 Cor 5:14-21 Lk 2:41-51
17. 2 Sm 12:7-10,13 Gal 2:16,19-21 Lk 7:36—8:3
  
18. 2 Cor 6:1-10 Mt 5:38-42
  
19. 2 Cor 8:1-9 Mt 5:43-48
20. 2 Cor 9:6-11 Mt 6:1-6,16-18
21. 2 Cor 11:1-11 Mt 6:7-15
22. 2 Cor 11:18,21-30 Mt 6:19-23
23. 2 Cor 12:1-10 Mt 6:24-34
24. Is 49:1-6 Acts 13:22-26 Lk 1:57-66,80
25. Gn 12:1-9 Mt 7:1-5
26. Gn 13:2,5-18 Mt 7:6,12-14
27. Gn 15:1-12,17-18 Mt 7:15-20
28. Gn 16:1-12,15-16 Mt 7:21-29
29. Acts 12:1-11 2 Tm 4:6-8,17-18 Mt 16:13-19
30. Gn 18:1-15 Mt 8:5