

# ***Inspiration***

**Inspiration** is for the Holy Spirit the equivalent of the Incarnation for the Son, the Word.

The Word becomes flesh. In Jesus. Jesus is truly God and truly man. You cannot divide the person of the Lord and say this bit is divine and this bit is human. There is one person who is both human and divine.

We know that this in fact is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is through the Spirit that the Incarnation comes about.

The Spirit comes to help us. There is no "hypostatic union" in us. We do not become another Divine Person. But it is good to consider carefully what Paul says in Romans 8:

The Spirit too comes to help us in our weakness. for when we cannot choose words in order to pray properly, the Spirit himself expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words, and God who knows everything in our hearts knows perfectly well what he means, and that the pleas of the saints expressed by the Spirit are according to the mind of God. (Rom 8:36-37).

Paul is speaking here about prayer, prayer expressed in words. Whose words are they? They are ours, but under the guidance of the Spirit. They are the Spirit's, but expressed through us. We cannot say that they are only our words, or only the words of the Spirit. They are ours both together.

If this is true of prayer, cannot it be true of other actions. For discernment, judgment. We discern, we judge, but with the help of the Spirit. Who discerns? We alone? The Spirit alone? When we pronounce a judgment is it the Spirit speaking like a ventriloquist? We are acting both together. We cannot really divide the two - of course as long as we are really attentive to the Spirit.

Could we not say the same of acts of charity? We are performing them, but the Spirit is working through us.

Could we not say the same about martyrdom? The Christian has the strength to die for Christ, not with his or her own strength, but with the strength that the Spirit gives.

This is why Paul speaks about "united witness" (cf. Rom 8"16).

The Incarnation is a once and for all time event, although Luke says that the young Jesus "increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men" (Lk 2:32).

**"Inspiration"** does not have this permanence. It lasts as long as we are in tune with the Spirit, but we know, from our own experience, that we can shut ourselves off from the Spirit. We have to make constant efforts to be open to the promptings of the Spirit.

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June 2020*