

The Holy Ghost Prayer Book: Prayers and Devotions to the Holy Ghost

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This work not only supplies the faithful with a number of very beautiful prayers to the Holy Ghost, it also brings to their notice and stresses a very important dogmatic truth. The prayers reveal the universal activity of the Holy Ghost in the life of the Christian. By what in theology is called "the law of appropriation," the effective agency in the economy of redemption is attributed to the Third Divine Person. That this appropriation is not the indulgence of mere poetic fancy on the part of the theologian is made manifest by the words of our Divine Saviour, at the close of the Last Supper. It goes without saying that there is an indivisible oneness in all the activities of the Divine Nature, as exercised outside the circle of the Divine Life proper. Yet the utter distinction of the Divine Persons from one another is a truth on the same level as the absolute oneness of the Divine Nature which each possesses in its fullness. The Second Person alone became incarnate. Neither the Father nor the Holy Ghost took flesh. On the Son alone, through the humanity He assumed devolved the role of cancelling out sin and meriting redemption for mankind. His part in this divine drama ended, in a certain sense, with His ascension into heaven. The Third Divine Person then appears on the stage as the chief protagonist in all the succeeding scenes which have their denouement in eternity. He carries out the vork of redemption by forming the souls of men to the life von for them by Christ: He had inaugurated the work of redemption by forming Christ Himself in the womb of Mary. All this is adumbrated in the Saviour's parting words to His apostles on the eve of IIis death. He intimated to them that, in a mysterious manner, His own part in their supernatural formation was drawing to a close, and that His place in that work was to pass to another. As the Word of God, that is the Living Expression of what God is, it had been for Him to reveal God and God's mind. He had spent three years developing for them and for others the divine message. He had spoken clearly: men heard His words: but their souls did not lay llold of tlle implications of what He had said to them. The apostles caught the terms but missed the meaning of the sentences which were woven of these terms. Jesus says so explicitly: what is more He implies that it could not but be so. "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach YOU the truth. The Holy Ghost will teach you all things and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you." (St. John XVI. 12, 13, and XIV. 26). Christ's exposition of Divine Truth was but part of a whole process. He revealed: it belonged to Another to carry that supernatural doctrine into the very spirit of men and to cause the intelligence to be illuminated by it. The apprehension of Christ's meaning which was to come only after Christ's exaltation is to be due entirely to the active intervention of the Third Divine Person. Not only does the Holy Spirit enlighten the mind, He, as well, strengthens the will, so that it does not falter in face of the rude discipline of life that becomes of obligation on the apprehension of the Divine Truths. The moral code of Jesus is the logical consequence of the lofty status which He reveals as the condition of man when redeemed. Noblesse oblige. Born of water and the Holy Ghost, the Christian is an adopted child of God and co-heir with Christ. His actions must, of moral necessity, be stamped with the dignity that is his. But no external teaching, no stirring exhortation, will suffice to enable the Christian to play worthily the part that has been assigned to him. There is needed for this a divine energy working from within. The Holy Spirit imparts this divine energy. The Passion generated the exhaustless reservoirs of the divine power. The Holy Ghost engineers the connections between these reservoirs and the soul of man.

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