



SIEBENQUELL

Spirit-filled



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Children often grow up in a world emptied of religious language and Christian images. This is not surprising, as the adults who surround them have usually grown up without these worlds themselves. Words and symbols that used to be part of everyday life in a predominantly Christian society are foreign to many people. When I talk to children about the Holy Spirit, the word spirit very often triggers the association of ghosts. If I point out the sacred to them, the most they do is pause or fantasise a little.

How can it be that the awareness of the sustaining, life-giving gift that Jesus promised to his own (and therefore also to us) before his death and gave to us after his resurrection seems to have been lost to such an extent? Rarely do we feel so spiritless, without knowing where we could turn, who could help us.

»But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have told you.« (Jn 14, 26) says Jesus. But we resist being lectured to - we know everything better ourselves.

»Receive the Holy Spirit.« (Joh 20, 22) says Jesus. But we are used to taking care of ourselves and are not dependent on anyone. We give ourselves what we need – at least we think we do.

However, it is not like that, it is not working and we are feeling more and more helpless, because old ways of doing things have had their day, uncertainty is growing everywhere, indeed despair and hopelessness are spreading. We are not in control of life. Where can we turn? In the emptiness and spiritlessness that surrounds us, we no longer see any points of contact with the possibilities and gifts that are offered to us from a reality that is deeper and higher and truer than anything we are still capable of perceiving. More than ever, we need the gifts of divine spiritual power that we cannot give ourselves. And we do not even realise what abundance it can bestow upon us.

In his 1st Breviary »Time with God« Bishop Franz-Josef Bode unfolds, how the gifts of the Holy Spirit, of which Isaiah already spoke, could become decisive for us today:

»The gift of **wisdom** to distinguish between important and unimportant, between right and wrong;
 the gift of **understanding**, to see deeper than just the computer screen or TV screen;
 the gift of **counsel**, to share advice, i.e. to accept and give advice, to share gifts;
 the gift of **knowledge**, to become more objective, not just to be driven by feelings - as important as feelings are;
 the gift of **fortitude** to carry something through;
 the gift of **piety**, not to let the connection to what is above break off;
 the gift of the **fear of the Lord**, to remain calm because there is one who is greater than us.«

May we be followers of those to whom Jesus once promised: »And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot receive Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you do know Him, for He abides with you and will be in you.« (Joh 14, 16-17)

May we be witnesses of this renewing spirit of truth, who, living from this power, shape upright lives and thus help to drench the deserts of the world.

Perhaps we can then sit down with the children and tell them that we cannot do everything ourselves, but that we are often surprised by the one who carries and holds everything. We could tell them about gifts that transform us, about new paths that we have dared and will yet dare to take. In this way, we would become witnesses who are grateful for this gift from God, the Holy Spirit, with whom the first people of our Christian faith courageously set out, with whom we live through each day as pilgrims today and who will continue to work through them in the future - so that the world may be full of the Holy Spirit.

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