



Fifth Meditation on the Holy Spirit

The Joy

Beloved Holy Spirit, one of the most wonderful gifts that You can make grow in us as fruit is joy. It is that joy which, like love, makes everything easier and overcomes the weight that life so often brings with it. A joy that is contagious, and gives a ray of light and some comfort to the other person, as long as they are not closed.

Your friend, St. Paul, even tells us to rejoice at all times (cf. Phil 4:4).

Joy, then, is not only a reaction to the reception of pleasant earthly goods or particularly beautiful circumstances that fills our hearts; rather, St. Paul shows it to us as a constant state, a state of mind of the heart, which remains even when circumstances become difficult and the soul tends to be troubled.

By this, O Holy Spirit, we cannot then mean that joy which comes and goes and is all too short-term. Nor can it be that mood that comes more from a happy nature of an optimistic mind.

What joy is meant then?

The Scriptures explain this lasting joy:

"I keep Yahweh before me always, for with him at my right hand, nothing can shake me. So my heart rejoices, my soul delights, my body too will rest secure." (Ps 16:8-9)

And:

"If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy be complete." (Jn 15:10-11)

This joy, which can always remain, therefore, dear Holy Spirit, comes from You. Living in conformity with you brings joy as a fruit; it is the joy of Jesus in our heart that completes our joy!

Then, O Holy Spirit, all people who sincerely try to serve God should be filled with joy. How contagious and attractive this joy would be, and how much it would support the spread of the gospel!

But it is not unusual to see Christians who do not seem to be joyful at all, perhaps even grumpy, or simply subject to too many moods to live consistently in that joy of which Jesus speaks.

Perhaps we feel in the same way. Holy Spirit, normally we should live in joy, for “*the joy of Yahweh is our stronghold.*” (cf. Neh 8:10)

What, then, can we do with other feelings that contradict joy, and with those moods that cloud the soul? What to do with the inner emptiness that we are tempted to fill with false and unnecessary - in the worst case even sinful - contents?

Holy Spirit, You are ready to touch these feelings and moods with Yourself if we bring them to You and do not forget. We must perceive them and call upon You, for we do not speak into the void or give ourselves over to illusions in order to delude ourselves and reassure ourselves. No! The Father together with the Son has sent You to be our light and comfort, our spiritual Master, to whom we can entrust everything. Since You Yourself are God, You know the depths of our soul and You want to penetrate them with Your light. But You don't just do it without us asking You, without us opening our hearts to You and taking distance from our cloudy sensations and turning towards the light.

But in this way it will go, and if we have patience we will notice that our gloomy moods will diminish, that we will more quickly distance ourselves from those thoughts that leave us in darkness; then the joy that comes from God will also spread more easily in us. And that, Holy Spirit, is then Your wonderful work in our soul!