

SANCTIFIER

THE LESSON: JOHN 15-16

O God the Holy Ghost, Sanctifier of the faithful: have mercy upon us.

There are many titles given to the Holy Ghost in scripture. The Old Testament uses the Hebrew word “*ruach*” which has the suggestion of divine breath, pointing us to God’s creative power and his presence with his people. But the New Testament goes deeper still. This is because at Pentecost the Holy Spirit was sent to *indwell* believers, signaling the beginning of a much more intimate relationship. St. John refers to him with the Greek word “*Paraclete*” or Helper. St. Paul calls him “the Spirit of adoption”, and in his letter to the Ephesians says this: “In Christ you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were *sealed* with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the *guarantee* of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory” (1:13-14).

As Christians, we live in a kind of limbo. Christ has died for our sins and we have received the Holy Spirit, but there is a completion that we are still waiting for while we live in a world that is characterized by darkness. We are being made perfect, but we have not yet arrived at perfection. There is a sense in which we *have* been sanctified, we *are* being sanctified and we *will* be sanctified. We are a work in progress! Yet we have not been left alone in this transformational work.

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The “farewell discourse” in St. John’s Gospel recounts in detail the teaching Jesus gave to his disciples on his last night with them before his arrest. Jesus wanted them to understand that even though he was about to go away to the Father, and even though they were facing a hostile world, they were *not* abandoned. Jesus’ words at this pivotal moment help us to better understand the “Sanctifier of the faithful”: God’s breath within us, adopting us, helping us, sealing us for a future with him.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer))

At home, take a few minutes to slowly and thoughtfully read the following three scripture quotes. After reading each passage, sit in quiet thanksgiving for a time.

- [Jesus said] “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth... You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you” (John 14:16-18).
- Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5:25-27).
- Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect.

O God, who didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit: Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen. (COLLECT FOR PENTECOST, BCP PAGE 205)

SANCTIFIER

JOHN 15-16: **TAKE HEART (IN THE FACE OF A HOSTILE WORLD)**

15 [Jesus said] ¹⁸“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you... ²⁶But when the Helper [*Paraclete*] comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. ²⁷And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.

16 ¹⁴I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. ²They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. ³And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. ⁴But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you. I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ ⁶But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you...

¹²“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁶A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me... ²²So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you...

³¹Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? ³²Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. ³³I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”