

# The Sixth Stage in Contemplative Prayer

## PRAYING FOR THE INFILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

### Teaching for Oct. 19<sup>th</sup> Prayer Session

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#### Introduction

As we reflect on the sixth stage of Contemplative Prayer tonight, let us recall once again the first five stages of prayer we have already seen—experiencing God’s love, asking God’s forgiveness with deep repentance, forgiving others from our hearts, purification of our conscience and mind, and inner healing. I hope that you haven’t forgotten what we said in the beginning that this particular pattern of Contemplative Prayer is based on the Lord’s Prayer and the seven stages are only the elaborations of the seven parts of the Lord’s Prayer. The first stage—experiencing God’s love—is based on the first part of Lord’s Prayer, namely: “our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name”. The second and third stages—asking God’s forgiveness and giving forgiveness to others—are based on the petition “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us”. The fourth, fifth and sixth stages—purification of heart, inner healing and in-filling of the Holy Spirit—are based on the entreaty: “Thy Kingdom come”. We have already seen the first two elements that come under “Thy Kingdom come”. The third one, the in-filling with the Holy Spirit is today’s theme.

In-filling with the Holy Spirit is one of the most important aspects of the Contemplative Prayer because it is the very essence and fruit of prayer. Catechism of the Catholic Church refers to it very specifically: “Contemplative prayer is also the pre-eminently *intense time* of prayer. In it the Father strengthens our inner being with power through his Spirit "that Christ may dwell in [our] hearts through faith" and we may be "grounded in love."(CCC 2714).

An understanding of ‘the Kingdom of God’ is necessary to know the significance of the sixth stage—praying for the in-filling of the Holy Spirit. What is meant by the term ‘the Kingdom of God’ is obviously the reign of God, the lordship of God in our lives. Paul describes it as life led by the Holy Spirit: “*God’s kingdom is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of the righteousness, peace, and joy which the Holy Spirit gives*”(Rom. 8:17). It is a state of living exactly as children of God: “*Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God*” (Rom. 8:14). Its opposite is living according to the flesh: “*For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*”(Rom.8: 13-15).

### Destiny of man to live in 'God's Kingdom'

The original destiny of man was to live in God's Kingdom. That is why the Bible says that God put Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, the place where God walked: *"The LORD God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living being. Then the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and he placed there the man whom he had formed"* (Gen. 3:7-8).

As long as Adam and Eve lived under the reign of God, that is, they stayed in the "Kingdom of God", they enjoyed all the privileges of the children of God. Those privileges were. (1) the grace of original holiness that enabled them to live in the presence of God. (2) the unselfish love between them that enabled Adam to view Eve as the 'bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh'(3) the dominion over all creation which enabled him to master all creation. The Book of Sirach tells of this very clearly: *"The LORD from the earth created man, and in his own image he made him. He endows man with a strength of his own, and with power over all things else on earth. He puts the fear of him in all flesh, and gives him rule over beasts and birds.."* (Sirach. 17: 1, 3-4).

### "Kingdom of God" lost by sin

But through sin the first parents lost the Kingdom of God; with that the son-ship and all its privileges. The Catechism of the Catholic Church speaks of the consequence of sin thus: "Adam and Eve immediately lose the grace of original holiness. They become afraid of the God of whom they have conceived a distorted image - that of a God jealous of his prerogatives".

"The harmony in which they had found themselves, thanks to original justice, is now destroyed: the control of the soul's spiritual faculties over the body is shattered; the union of man and woman becomes subject to tensions, their relations henceforth marked by lust and domination. Harmony with creation is broken: visible creation has become alien and hostile to man. Because of man, creation is now subject "to its bondage to decay". Finally, the consequence explicitly foretold for this disobedience will come true: man will "return to the ground", for out of it he was taken. *Death makes its entrance into human history* (CCC.399,400).

### Redemption=Re-establishing the "Kingdom of God"

It is to give back man the Kingdom of God again, that God sent his son to the world and accomplished the Redemptive works. Hence, all what Jesus had to preach at the very beginning of his public ministry was that the Kingdom of God was at hand. Mark puts it thus: *"After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."* (Mk. 1:14-15). "In fact the theme of Jesus' whole

teachings was the kingdom of God. That is why all the parables were used to illustrate the Kingdom of God.

And, through the merits of Jesus' death and resurrection man again became the heir of the Kingdom of God. In other words, it is to redeem man from the slavery of the flesh to the freedom of the Spirit that Jesus offered his life on the cross. Hence, we can say that the whole purpose of Jesus' redemptive work was to fill man with the Holy Spirit, so that he may no longer be led by his lower nature but by the power of God, the Holy Spirit. This is what is meant by the meaning of "coming of God's kingdom into one's life".

This is evident from what Jesus did as he finished his redemptive work. *"On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. (Jesus) said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit" ( Jn. 20:19-23).*

Therefore, "breathing the Holy Spirit" was the actual fruit of the Redemption. It was the essence of the Kingdom that Jesus established by his redemptive works. Hence St. Paul says: *" God pored out the Holy Spirit abundantly on us through Jesus Christ our Savior (because of what Jesus Christ our Savior did), so that by his grace we might be put right with God" ( Titus. 3:6-7)* The very fact that with the in-filling of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost the disciples could become literally a "new creation" proves beyond doubt that the in-filling of the Holy Spirit is the essence of and requirement for the Kingdom of God. And thereafter they were not the same any more. They were 'born again' into the Kingdom of God. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and were led by the Holy Spirit in everything. Thus as Paul said they became really the children of God: *"For, those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God" (Rom. 8:14).*

#### In-filling with the Holy Spirit—the fulfillment of redemption

In the revelation given through the prophet Ezekiel with regard to the future redemptive work of Jesus Christ, in-filling with the Holy Spirit is given as the culminating point of Jesus' redemptive work: *"For I will take you away from among the nations, gather you from all the foreign lands, and bring you back to your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you to cleanse you from all your impurities, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. I will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you, taking from your bodies your stony hearts and giving you natural hearts. And I will put my Spirit within you so that you will obey my laws, careful*

*to observe my decrees. You shall live in the land I gave your fathers; you shall be my people, and I will be your God” ( Ez. 36:24-28).*

Here, it is to be noted well that man is enabled to obey God’s laws precisely by being filled with the Holy Spirit. And, keeping the commandments is the requirement to enter the Kingdom of God. Jesus revealed this clearly in his answer to the rich young man who asked ‘Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?’ *“If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.”( Mt. 19:17)* But it is the Holy Spirit who empowers man to fight against his lower nature and obey God. And as a result of being filled with the Holy Spirit man is reinstated to the high position of God’s very son by which God becomes his father.

#### “Born again = To be filled with the Holy Spirit

In his conversation with Nichodemus, Jesus explained the meaning of the Kingdom of God as being filled with the Holy Spirit: *“Jesus answered and said to him, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born<sup>3</sup> from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can a person once grown old be born again? Surely he cannot reenter his mother's womb and be born again, can he?" Jesus answered, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of flesh is flesh and what is born of spirit is spirit”*( Jn. 3: 3-6).

Here, the word ‘being born of water and Spirit ’ not only refers to the sacrament of baptism, but also to the in-filling of the Holy Spirit which effects a tremendous transformation. It is a total transformation of the lower nature into the spiritual nature by the power of the Holy Spirit. The result is a totally new life in which the flesh is completely subordinated to the mighty power of the Holy Spirit in such a way that the flesh becomes completely submissive to the spirit and becomes an instrument of God to accomplish his work. This is what Paul means when he says: *“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body”*( I Cor.6:20). Hence, Paul explains this further *“For those who live according to the flesh are concerned with the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the spirit with the things of the spirit...Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Consequently, brothers, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”* ( Rom. 8:5, 8-12).

The power of the Spirit in this process is so great that the person is totally changed, just as a new-born child. Flesh has no more power on him. Self

is no more the ruler of his life. Instead God becomes all in all for him. As a result, his life produces fruits of the Spirit: “*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control*” (Gal. 5:22) as against the works of the flesh so predominant in natural man: “*the works of the flesh are obvious: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness, dissensions, factions, occasions of envy, drinking bouts, orgies, and the like*” ( Gal. 5:19-21).

#### The whole creation yearns for man to be born again in the Holy Spirit

St. Paul speaks of the need of the inevitableness of this infilling with the Holy Spirit. He says that until this original glory in man is re-established even the other created beings will be restless. The implication, of course, is that the fall of man from his glory has affected the rest of the creation because God has designed man as the crown of creation. “*And the whole creation was awaiting for this redemption: “For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; for creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now; and not only that, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies”* (Rom.8:19-23).

#### Spirit of God—the power behind every outstanding person in the salvation history

##### Moses

We may not find another person in the whole salvation history with such an extra ordinary power, ability and goodness as Moses. He was the one who did the apparently impossible task of leading an incredibly large number of people—600,000 excluding women and children—on a pilgrimage of 40 years through the desert! By merely lifting up his hands he could defeat the Amalakes ( Ex. 17:11) in war! He was the one who turned the sea into dry land. “*Moses himself was by far the meekest man on the face of the earth*” ( Nub. 12:3).

The secret behind all the strength of Moses was that he was the Spirit of God that worked in him and through him. The fullness of the Spirit in him was so overwhelming that when God wanted to give some portion of the Spirit to the Seventy Elders he gave them the Spirit taking from Moses: “*The LORD then came down in the cloud and spoke to him. Taking some*

*of the spirit that was on Moses, he bestowed it on the seventy elders; and as the spirit came to rest on them, they prophesied.”( Num.11:25).*

### Joshua

It was in Joshua that God found the successor of Moses. It was he who was chosen to complete the mission of Moses—to place the Israelites in possession of the land which God had promised to their forefathers. It was him that God armoured with the unique promise: *“No one can withstand you while you live. I will be with you as I was with Moses: I will not leave you nor forsake you”* ( Nomb. 1:5-6). The reason why God was so pleased with him was : *“Joshua, son of Nun, was filled with the spirit of wisdom, since Moses had laid his hands upon him; and so the Israelites gave him their obedience, thus carrying out the LORD'S command to Moses”* ( Deut. 34:9).

### Gideon

Gideon was an ordinary man among the Israelites. God delivered them to the tyranny of Midian for seven years as a punishment for their sins. The way God delivered Midian to the Israelites under the leadership of Gideon was very strange indeed. The enemy Israelites had to fight with was incredible big in number and might: *“The Midianites, Amalekites, and all the Kedemites lay in the valley, as numerous as locusts. Nor could their camels be counted, for these were as many as the sands on the seashore”* ( Judges. 7:12).

But God gave victory to the Israelites through a small number of 300 soldiers led by Gideon. God gave strict order to Gideon to send back the 20,000 soldiers who had already been deployed to fight against the enemy lest the Israelites should not claim that victory was due to their strength.

Without resorting to violence, by the mere blowing of horns Gideon and his small group could defeat the enemy, who were as large as locusts and sands of the seashore!

*“All three companies blew horns and broke their jars. They held the torches in their left hands, and in their right the horns they were blowing, and cried out, "A sword for the LORD and Gideon!" They all remained standing in place around the camp, while the whole camp fell to running and shouting and fleeing. But the three hundred men kept blowing the horns, and throughout the camp the LORD set the sword of one against another. The army fled as far as Beth-shittah in the direction of Zarethan, near the border of Abel-meholah at Tabbath”*( Judges 7:20-22).

We may wonder how this could happen! The Scripture gives the reason: *“The LORD turned to Gideon and said, "Go with the strength you have and save Israel from the power of Midian. It is I who send you”* ( Judges.

6: 14—read also from 11 to 14). What type of strength was that, that without a fight he could defeat an incredibly huge army by mere by blowing the horn? The Scripture says that it was the overshadowing of the Spirit of God that enabled Gideon to do this unbelievable thing: *“Then all Midian and Amalek and the Kedemites mustered and crossed over into the valley of Jezreel, where they encamped. The spirit of the LORD enveloped Gideon; he blew the horn that summoned Abiezer to follow him.”* ( Judges 6:33-34).

### Samson

The episode of Samson is equally interesting. He was literally a super-man. He surprisingly defeated the Philistines several times. He was a hero with mysterious power and might. The reason that Scripture repeatedly gives is that he was a man filled with the Spirit of God in abundance.

*“The woman bore a son and named him Samson. The boy grew up and the LORD blessed him; the spirit of the LORD first stirred him in Mahanehdan, which is between Zorah and Eshtaol”* ( Judges 13:24-25).

*“Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother. When they had come to the vineyards of Timnah, a young lion came roaring to meet him. But the spirit of the LORD came upon Samson, and although he had no weapons, he tore the lion in pieces as one tears a kid”* ( Judges 14:5-6).

*“On the seventh day, before the sun set, the men of the city said to him, “What is sweeter than honey, and what is stronger than a lion? “He replied to them, “If you had not plowed with my heifer, you would not have solved my riddle.” The spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, where he killed thirty of their men and despoiled them; he gave their garments to those who had answered the riddle”* ( Judges 14: 18-19).

*“So they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the cliff. When he reached Lehi, and the Philistines came shouting to meet him, the spirit of the LORD came upon him: the ropes around his arms became as flax that is consumed by fire and his bonds melted away from his hands. Near him was the fresh jawbone of an ass; he reached out, grasped it, and with it killed a thousand men”* ( Judges 15:13b—15).

### Saul, the first King of Israelites

Israelites had no king as other people had. Yahveh himself was their king, But since people insisted on having a king, God gave them a king to rule over them. But the only qualification for this king about which God was insistent was that he should be filled with the Spirit of God: *“Then, from a flask he had with him, Samuel poured oil on Saul's head; he also kissed him, saying: “The LORD anoints you commander over his heritage... The spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will join them in their*

*prophetic state and will be changed into another man. When you see these signs fulfilled, do whatever you judge feasible, because God is with you. As Saul turned to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart. That very day all these signs came to pass. . . . When they were going from there to Gibeah, a band of prophets met him, and the spirit of God rushed upon him, so that he joined them in their prophetic state”( I Samuel.1, 7, 9-10).*

#### David, the greatest king of the Israelites

David was not the smartest among the sons of Jesse. In fact in Jesse’s evaluation David was not at all competent for the kingship. So even after bringing all other sons before prophet Samuel for selection, Jesse didn’t even dare to show up David the shepherd boy. But God filled him with the Holy Spirit and made him the greatest king the Israel has ever produced: *“Then Samuel, with the horn of oil in hand, anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and from that day on, the spirit of the LORD rushed upon David”* ( I Sam. 16:13).

The Spirit of God was the greatest treasure as far as David was concerned. The secret behind all his unusual gains was the presence of the Spirit of God in him. Even, when he was punished severely for his sins the only prayer he had was: *‘do not take away the Holy Spirit from me’*

#### Jesus—filled with the Holy Spirit in the vision of the prophets

Jesus was pictured by the prophets as the one to whom the Spirit was given in its fullness: *“Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one with whom I am pleased, Upon whom I have put my spirit; he shall bring forth justice to the nations”* ( Is. 42:1). Jesus’ whole mission was pictured as the work of the Holy Spirit: *“The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners,”* ( Is. 61:1). Through prophet Joel God announced that on the last days( with Jesus’ death and resurrection) the Spirit of God will be poured out upon every one: *“Then afterward I will pour out my spirit upon all mankind. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; Even upon the servants and the handmaids, in those days, I will pour out my spirit. And I will work wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood, fire, and columns of smoke; The sun will be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, At the coming of the Day of the LORD, the great and terrible day. Then everyone shall be rescued who calls on the name of the LORD”*.

### Mary

The only explanation the angel gives to Mary about Jesus' incarnation in Mary's womb was the overshadowing of the Spirit upon her: *"How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God"* ( Lk. 1:34-35).

### The whole of Jesus' ministry accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit

The very essence of Jesus' manifestation at Jordan in preparation of his public ministry was the out pouring of the Holy Spirit: *"After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened (for him), and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove (and) coming upon him"* ( Mt. 3:16). It was the Holy Spirit who led Jesus through every step, even to the desert to be tempted by the devil: *"Filled with the holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil"*( Lk. 4:1-2). Jesus' return to Galilee was marked with the power of the Holy Spirit. *"When the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him for a time. Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news of him spread throughout the whole region. He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all"* ( Lk. 4:14-15).

It was this power of the Holy Spirit that worked great healings through Jesus, healing all the sick and the possessed: *"the power of the Lord was with him for healing. And some men brought on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed; they were trying to bring him in and set (him) in his presence"*( Lk. 5:17-18). *"A great crowd of his disciples and a large number of the people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and even those who were tormented by unclean spirits were cured. Everyone in the crowd sought to touch him because power came forth from him and healed them all"* ( Lk. 6:17—19).

### Jesus taught about the Holy Spirit with great zeal

To Nicodemus Jesus told the secret of salvation as being born again of the Holy Spirit( Jn.3). To the woman of Samaria Jesus revealed that in order that she may not run after sinful pleasures she has to drink from the living water—the Holy Spirit. And Jesus himself took initiative to engender faith in her which is the pre-requisite of receiving the Spirit by introducing himself as the Messiah.( Jn. 4) At the Jerusalem Temple he invited the whole congregation to drink from him the Holy Spirit, the only means of satisfying their thirst for God( Jn. 7).

In his last discourse, several times Jesus spoke about the Holy Spirit at greater length:

### **About the promise to send the Spirit**

*“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains with you, and will be in you” ( Jn. 14: 16)*

*“But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.” (Jn. 16:7)*

### **About the functions of the Spirit**

*“The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name--he will teach you everything and remind you of all that (I) told you” ( Jn. 14:26)*

*“And when he comes he will convict the world in regard to sin and righteousness and condemnation: sin, because they do not believe in me; righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see me; condemnation, because the ruler of this world has been condemned. <sup>5</sup> “I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming. He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. Everything that the Father has is mine; for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.” (Jn. 16:8-15)*

### The Holy Spirit—the Church’s back- bone and foundation

Right after the Resurrection Jesus breathed the Spirit up on the disciples as if the Spirit is the fruit of his death and resurrection. He gave the Apostles the Spirit in a special way so that they might be able to absolve sins. He asked them not to start preaching the gospel until they were clothed in the Spirit and for that he strictly ordered them to pray at Cenacle.

Jesus sent the Pentecost according to his promise as the foundation of the Church. The first Christians were literally people filled with the Holy Spirit. Only those who were filled with the Holy Spirit were considered as Christians at all. Hence St. Paul dared to write: ‘Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him’ (Rom. 8:9). All of the members of the first Church were those present at the Upper room for the Pentecost. Only those who had the personal Pentecost experience became the members of the first Christian community.

The missionary work of the early Church was directly the work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit literally led the apostles by hand to different places to preach the gospel ( See. Acts. 13:1-34-5; 16:6-8)). And it was by the

power of the Spirit that the Apostles did great wonders and worked miracles.

Though the turning point in Saul's transformation started with the Risen Lord's apparition on his way to Damascus, it was actually realized when Ananias' prayed on him for the anointing with the Holy Spirit( see Acts. 9: 17-20).

Christian life—life of great power with the strength of the Holy Spirit.

Paul reveals the true nature of Christian life. It is a virtual war. The enemy far excels us in strength and is far more powerful than us. The enemy is not of this world, but of the spirit-world: *“For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens. Therefore, put on the armor of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground. So stand fast with your loins girded in truth, clothed with righteousness as a breastplate, and your feet shod in readiness for the gospel of peace. In all circumstances, hold faith as a shield, to quench all (the) flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and supplication, pray at every opportunity in the Spirit. To that end, be watchful with all...”* ( Eph. 6:12-18).

Jesus gives us a direct warning regarding this in Mathew's gospel. *“When an unclean spirit goes out of a person it roams through arid regions searching for rest but finds none. Then it says, 'I will return to my home from which I came.' But upon returning, it finds it empty, swept clean, and put in order. Then it goes and brings back with itself seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they move in and dwell there; and the last condition of that person is worse than the first. Thus it will be with this evil generation”* ( Mt. 12: 43-45)

Paul, goes on saying further that, besides the attack from outside, there is a fight within us between our lower nature and higher nature—between flesh and spirit.: *“I say, then: live by the Spirit and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh. For the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; these are opposed to each other. But if you are guided by the Spirit, you are not under the law”* (Gal. 5:16-18.. See Cath Living Bible also). This makes the problem more trivial.

**The only solution!**

But there is solution. The only effective way to succeed in this fight against our lower nature and our Enemy is to be filled with the Holy Spirit

that strengthens us to repel even the fiercest attack of the malicious enemy. Paul explains it thus: “ If you keep on following your sinful nature you are lost and will perish, but if through the power of the Holy Spirit you crush it and its evil deeds you shall live. This power of the Spirit shall never dim even for a moment St. Peter warns that the enemy is prowling around all the time to devour us. And those who seriously try to live their faith, those who really love Jesus are the evil one’s number one enemy. Hence they need a constant empowering with the Holy Spirit. This explains why the saints had so much to suffer and such great temptations to face. But the power within us—the Holy Spirit—is greater than all other powers.

This is why we need to pray for the infilling of the Holy Spirit in the daily Contemplation.

Traditional prayers to the Holy Spirit such as: “ Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of thy faithful....”can be used. We can repeat the same prayer several times until we experience an infilling in us. But we should take care to see that does not become a mere vocal exercise. Consecration to the Holy Spirit, Novena to the Holy Spirit, Rosary to the Holy Spirit etc. are effective prayers. Besides all these spontaneous invitation to the spirit to possess you, will yield best results.

Besides praying for the infilling of the Spirit in general, we need to pray also for the gifts, and the fruits and the boons of the Holy Spirit regularly.

The most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a perfect prayer for getting anointed with the Holy Spirit. Because, it is through the Incarnation, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus that the full release of the Spirit was made possible. And, of course, Rosary is recalling these mysteries of our redemption. Moreover, by praying the Rosary a new easy way to Jesus is opened up through his most beloved Mother. What else can be more pleasing than seeing us approach him with his Mom! And she has already proved at Elizabeth’s house that she is specially endowed with the power of filling people with the Holy Spirit, of course by the power of Christ.

Therefore, when we pray each time: “ Holy Mary....pray for us sinners” the intention in our mind should be infilling with the Holy Spirit. If we pray like that in one Rosary we will get anointed with the Spirit fifty times!