

LOVE

Wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is Love. Love is more than just feelings. Otherwise we could only love an utterly sweet little baby. But we should love all babies, even the ugly or deformed ones. When the Holy Spirit kindles the love of God within us, then it's a bit like plugging in to the power socket. You feel within you all the feelings that God himself has for what he has created—the people, the animals, the flowers. God is crazy with love for us. And God's love is unconditional, with no ifs and buts; it is not a passing love, but "never ends". It is utterly faithful. It transforms everything, above all the world of your relationships. With God's love inside you, you see everything with new eyes.

JOY

Wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is joy. Imagine a rock concert where everyone is rejoicing, dancing, waving their arms, jumping in the air. Jesus has defeated death. How cool is that then? We are redeemed! Paradise is waiting for us. We can dance for joy, even if we still have any number of problems on our shoulders. In heaven, they tell us, the angels dance. And there is greater joy over one single person who converts and leaves all his sins behind him "than over than over ninety-nine righteous persons".

PEACE

Wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is peace. All inner unrest ceases. Sadness sinks away. Fear subsides. You find your inner balance and are no longer driven hither and thither by your passions, like a leaf in the wind. Other people seek your company and your friendship because you are in harmony with yourself and with other people—and even with the animals. The peace in your heart makes you totally likeable.

PATIENCE

Wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is patience. Patience means having the courage to play the long game. Where others throw in the towel, you can find that extra stamina. The rapid burnout was yesterday's game. Where once you had the lungs for 800 meters, now you're a marathon runner. You can shrug off setbacks like nobody's business. The Holy Spirit makes you into a fighter who never quits. Other people wonder where you get the strength from. But you know...

KINDNESS

Wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is kindness. You hold the door open for a woman. You help other people with their homework. You practice together on the quiet with the guy who's always fluffing his volleyball serve. Mother

Teresa was always reminding her sisters, who cared for the dying: "It's not enough just to care for them; you must do so with a smile!"

GOODNESS

Wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is goodness. God is all good. Doing good puts us close to God. Anyone who always does good, again and again, is automatically a "goodly" person—that is to say, habitually good to others. You talk to the dropout on the street corner, buy a newspaper off him. You help a child, talk to a lonely person. You spend a long time listening to an old person. You take an interest in other people's cares and worries. Living a life of goodness is the "life-style" of God. When people are with a good person, they can relax and blossom.

FAITHFULNESS

Wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is faithfulness. God does not change from day to day. You can count on him 100 percent, even when your prayers to him are sometimes answered in a rather different way to what you had hoped. He is faithful to you, even if you betray him, and other people, a thousand times over. The Holy Spirit helps you to become firm-hearted and "faithful until death"—a true image of the faithful God. Have you ever read the book *The Little Prince*, by Saint-Exupery? There is a wonderful phrase in it about faithfulness: "You become responsible forever for what you have befriended."

GENTLENESS

Wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is gentleness. What this fruit of the Holy Spirit means is that you will have courage, but a tender courage that is not violent and does not, even in a good cause, destroy rather than build up but instead heals and achieves something beautiful. So you will have courage, but combined with love and patience. To bring about something great in loving patience—that is the kind of boldness that God loves. Jesus redeemed the world through a particular kind of boldness—he walked the path of nonviolence all the way to the Cross.

SELF-CONTROL

Where the Holy Spirit is, there is self-control. The Holy Spirit within you enables you to be fully yourself. You will no longer be possessed by things that hold you prisoner, by people who have kept you in a state of dependency, by powerful people who order you about. You will no longer be driven by your desires, no longer be the slave of your passions. You will be free to do what your heart truly desires to do, namely, the good for which God has created you.

LESSON **7** MATERIALS

