

Reflections

On

A Common Rule for Monastics

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The Holy Spirit and Us

(Chapter 3)

“To be filled with the Holy Spirit is to be filled with the love of Christ.”

Paragraph 6, Lines 6 & 7

Love, for some strange reason, that is pure love, true love, agape love, is lost on many of us. Lost in the sense that we struggle to define it, express it, and live it. If our nurture and formation was void of this type of love, or it was a functional and clinical reality, we are the poorer for it.

The above may sound like a “testimonial” confession, and to some degree it is. My response to this is, **thank God for His Holy Spirit.**

Having being baptized and confirmed, and the fact that I am a Believer, I am assured that the Holy Spirit dwells within. Also, we are assured that the Father will not withhold His Spirit from us when we ask of Him. He gives good gifts (the Holy Spirit) to His children (Luke 11:13).

We are filled with the love of Christ, in simplest terms, because God **IS** love. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one in the Trinity and we are one with God through Christ. So, we too are love. No, we may not be God, but we are an expression of God. In Christ we live and have our being. It is no longer we who live, but Christ lives through us. This should be enough to convince us that we are one with Christ, and that we must nurture this Christlikeness in our humanity, allowing Him to live through us and be seen in us.

So, now back to my focus on Christ’s love. The Love of Christ facilitated by the filling of the Holy Spirit. I look at the this from two angles:

Firstly, we are filled with God, who is pure love. God, through Christ, loves us with an everlasting love. He loves us with unconditional love. He loves us with a love that does not vary because of our mood or behaviour towards Him. We are loved. We are love.

The second viewpoint is that the love of Christ which, we experience personally from the filling of the Holy Spirit, though personal, is meant to be expressed in community. Just as we are one with Christ, we are one with all others who are one with Him.

Christ's coming to earth was based on the Father's love (John 3:16). In response to that love, we as Christians must continue to carry out His mandate by obeying His supreme law – **LOVE**.

The filling of the Holy Spirit, fills us with Christ's love. It also gives us life. His filling gives us power, comfort, and peace. His filling gives us assurance that we have an Advocate with the Father. His filling strengthens our faith.

How does this filling of Christ's love by the filling of the Holy Spirit relate to my vocation?

My monastic practices so far, have opened up to me a deeper understanding of my part within the Body of Christ and inter-connectedness, the unity, and the oneness with God's creation. I am seeing gradual changes in my behaviour, outlook and thinking towards God and His handiwork. Gradual for sure.

I am enjoying the journey and am grateful and excited every time something new is revealed. I am committed to this life-long journey and to my role of expressing the love Christ, in all its very many ways. It calls for the elimination of old ways of thinking, which the Holy Spirit will guide me to undertake.

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