

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you,
and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.!”

At creation the Holy Spirit hovered over the chaos and void of nothingness and brought about order and life. In Mary, long after the sin of our first parents, the Holy Spirit hovered again, this time over a young maiden of Jewish ancestry. Once again, the Holy Spirit brought life out of the disorder and chaos of sin by overshadowing the maiden and conceiving within her one who would be called Son of God. Once again, order and life. From the Holy Spirit. And then at Pentecost, fifty days after the resurrection of her crucified Son now ascended into heaven, the Spirit comes again, this time to bring order to the church and new life. The new life of Christ.

Are you beginning to sense a pattern here? The Spirit is always present where order is being restored and new life is beginning. Always. And in two of the most significant outpourings of the Holy Spirit in the history of life on this planet, Mary was a player. She was actually the catalyst. She was the catalyst for the incarnation bringing us the Incarnate Son of God. She was the catalyst for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the nascent Christian community, gathered but trembling. With the Spirit come order and life and more. With the Spirit comes the gifts of the Spirit—courage and wisdom. The Spirit helps us to grasp truly, to “get” what is really going on. The Spirit helps us both to understand and to know and to help others to grasp as well. The Spirit produces a profound respect and awe in us, awe for the Living God and leads us to deeper prayer, greater piety.

And there is no person who ever lived who is more attuned to the working of the Holy Spirit than Mary of Nazareth. She allowed God to move on her. She gave entrée to the Lord’s Spirit. Let it be done to me as you say. If we want to know what is the best way we can respond to God, we don’t have to look any farther than Mary’s response at the Annunciation. “Let it be done in me.” Mary sang it in her heart long before before Paul McCartney sang it. “Let it be!”