

Mother of God Community  
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting  
Feb. 22, 2009  
**The Grace of Revelation**  
Fr. Francis Martin

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Father of glory, give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in knowledge of him.

I. God's desire to converse with us:

It pleased God in his goodness and wisdom to reveal himself and to make known the mystery of his will (see Eph 1:9) by which men have access in the Holy Spirit to the Father, through Christ, the Word of God made flesh, and become sharers in the divine nature (see Eph 2:18; 2Pet 1:14). By this revelation, therefore, the invisible God (see Col 1:15; 1Tim 1:17), out of the immensity of his love, speaks to men and women as friends (see Ex 33:11; Jn 15:14-15) and associates with them (see Bar 3:38) that he might invite them to communion with himself and receive them into his company. (Vatican II On Revelation., #2)

II Some Distinctions

- Idea = a notion
- Insight = some understanding
- Revelation = a touch, a living contact; there is a change ("to know" biblically)

III The Way to Revelation

- Obedience: "The one who has my commandments and keeps them; that is the one who loves me, and he will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and make myself known to him (Jn 14:21).
  - Obstacles: resentments [division], sensuality [food, sexuality, TV, internet], sloth, distraction, gossip, unrepented sin.
- Prayerful reading of Scripture: "All the Scripture is inspired by God (*theopneustos*) and effective for instruction, for censuring, for straightening people out, for giving training in right conduct, so that the man of God may be complete, that is, completely equipped for every excellent deed." (2Tim 3:16).
- Devotion to the Mother of God: "The Gospels are the first fruits of all Scripture and the Gospel of John is the first of the Gospels: no one can grasp its meaning without having leaned his head on Jesus' breast and having received from Jesus Mary as Mother." (Origen).
- Earnest study of the theological and spiritual masters.
- Guarding the heart

IV. Scripture's Unique Mode of Teaching

- Then (v.16) St. Paul manifests the same thing through the testimony of the Holy Spirit, to show that we are not deceived in our confession; hence he says: The reason I say that "we cry,

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Abba, Father" in the Holy Spirit is that *the Spirit himself is bearing witness to our spirit that we are children of God*. He bears this testimony not with external words that reach men's ears, as the Father gave testimony to his own Son in Mt (3:17), but through the effect of filial love he produces in us. Therefore, he says that *he bears testimony not to our ears but to our spirit*. (St. Thomas on the Letter to the Romans).

- There is a twofold knowledge of God's goodness or will. One is speculative and as to this it is not lawful to doubt or to prove whether God's will be good, or whether God is sweet. The other knowledge of God's will or goodness is effective or experimental and thereby a man experiences in himself the taste of God's sweetness, and complacency in God's will, as Dionysius says of Hierotheos (De Divinis Nominibus ii) that "he learnt divine thing through experience of them." It is in this way that we are told to prove God's will, and to taste His sweetness. (St. Thomas, Summa Theologiae 2-2, 97,2 ad3)
- Our faith rests on the revelation made to the Prophets and Apostles who wrote the canonical books, not on a revelation, if such there be, made to any other teacher (ST 1,1,8, ad 2).
- "And thus in man God instructs the intellect both immediately through the sacred letters and mediately through other writings
- Scripture is not only divinely guaranteed, it is divinely true. The Spirit did not only dictate it; he is, as it were, contained in it. He inhabits it. His breath perpetually animates it. The Scripture is "made fruitful by a miracle of the Holy Spirit." It is "full of the Spirit." (Cardinal Henri de Lubac)
- In the letter of Scripture, the Logos is not incarnated properly so called in the way he is in the humanity of Jesus...nevertheless, he is truly incorporated there, he himself dwells there and not only some idea about him. (Cardinal Henri de Lubac).

V. Questions for Reflection

- How much quality time do I devote to the prayerful study of Scripture?
- What are the obstacles in my life to experiencing the immediate action of the Holy Scripture imprinting the divine realities on my spirit? Do I desire this?
- How often, recently, have I had a revelation to share with others?
- Do I earnestly desire to be "taught by God"?
- What does the phrase "she pondered in her heart" mean to me?