

# The Role of the Spirit in Christian Initiation: The Pneumatology of RCIA

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**The Role of the Spirit in Christian Initiation:  
The Pneumatology of RCIA**

A Thesis  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements of the S.T.L. Degree  
from the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry

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## **Introduction**

When I was working as a parish priest in Japan, I was entrusted by the pastor with the preparation of catechumens for Christian initiation. Concretely, what I had to do for the preparation was to give them a series of lectures, catecheses, for the duration of one year. My primary concern was on the content of my lectures, so that they might understand adequately the message of the Bible and the teachings of the Church to become a Catholic. I did my best in the lectures and may have achieved a certain result. Nevertheless, in hindsight, I had failed to recognize what was primarily essential for the preparation for Christian initiation: the presence and actions of the living God who called the catechumens and was leading them into the completion of the initiation. I should have made them aware of God's guidance during their preparation by repeatedly reminding them of this in the lectures and other occasions.

Furthermore, I really did not consider the significance of the rituals in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA), except for the celebration of the sacraments of initiation. I took those preparatory rites rather as requirements for the initiation than as crucial opportunities in which how the guidance of God for the catechumens was demonstrated in a shape of the liturgy. Therefore, I had spent little time in explaining to the catechumens the value and meaning of those rites. I feel much regret for they may have participated in the preparatory rites without understanding the importance of those rites due to my own deficient attitude toward them.

After all, these oversights happened because of my lack of recognition of the fact that the preparation for Christian initiation is a journey directed by God. Furthermore, I failed to grasp that it is the RCIA that demonstrates very well what this journey is like and how it proceeds. Each rite described in the RCIA teaches catechumens where they are on the journey and where they will go in the future. Therefore, any rites in the RCIA have to be considered seriously.

Lectures of catechesis would be meaningful for the preparation, only when they are done in the context of the journey described in the RCIA. Unwittingly, I had reversed the order of priority.

These are the lessons that I have learned from my pastoral experience. If I could have another chance to help the catechumens prepare for their initiation, I would definitely take a different approach. I would give priority to encouraging them to be aware that they are on a journey guided by God during the preparation, rather than putting the knowledge of Christianity into their head as much as possible.

In actuality, it is very important not only for catechumens but also for all Church members to be aware of the presence and actions of God throughout the Christian initiation journey, because all of the faithful are expected to participate in it. It is necessary for all of them to discern the guidance of God during that process, so that both catechumens and the faithful, both clergy and laity may “take that full, conscious, and active part in”<sup>1</sup> in the initiation process depicted in the RCIA,

What can we do, so that we may achieve such awareness? I believe that the best way would be to carefully study the texts of the RCIA, because it is in these texts that we may find how God is present and working throughout the whole process of Christian initiation. If someone regards the RCIA just as a “manual” of ceremonies, it is a huge misunderstanding. In fact, the texts of the RCIA is filled with an abundance of theology and affirms what Christians believe.

Therefore, in this thesis, I will analyze the texts of the RCIA, in order to deepen my understanding on the presence and actions of God and facilitate more awareness of them. I will specially focus on the Holy Spirit in this analysis. The reason why I will pay attention to the Third Person of the Trinity while discussing the RCIA is that the Spirit plays a leading role at the

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<sup>1</sup> Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, §14.

goal of the initiation journey, the full incorporation into the Body of Christ, the Church. This is indicated in the second epiclesis of the Eucharistic prayers: “Humbly we pray that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit” (Eucharistic Prayer II). Here, in other words, it is attributed to the Spirit who brings about the full incorporation of the newly baptized into the Body of the Christ. If we regard the journey to the Christian initiation as the process of such incorporation, and if we presume that the Holy Spirit also plays an important role throughout the process, it is reasonable to suspect that the Paraclete takes an important role throughout the initiation journey. I will try to prove this hypothesis, by examining the texts of the RCIA.

Motivated and inspired by these experiences and reflections, I will demonstrate in this thesis that when we fully understand and become more aware of the dynamic presence and actions of the Holy Spirit in the process of Christian initiation, what the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* represents appears as a journey to the completion of the initiation always guided by the Third Person of the Trinity.

To prove this statement, I will write three chapters as well as a conclusion. The first chapter will be on a working summary of understanding on the Holy Spirit; I will explore who the Paraclete is and how the Spirit is present and works, by referring to the Scriptures, Church Fathers, and some authors, especially Yves Congar’s monumental work *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*. In the second chapter, I will analyze the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, especially baptism and confirmation, because the actions and presence of the Spirit are depicted more and clearer in this part of the RCIA than other sections. In addition to the analysis of the texts of the RCIA in which the Spirit is explicitly mentioned, I will refer to the study of Hugh M. Riley on catecheses of four Church Fathers on Christian initiation. This second chapter also

handles an issue of the relationship between baptism and confirmation. In the third chapter, I will demonstrate that the action and presence of the Holy Spirit can be acknowledged throughout the Christian initiation journey represented in the RCIA. In the conclusion, I will evaluate the RCIA and show how this paper could be helpful for those who make a journey of Christian initiation.

I will refer to the texts of the RCIA in the following parts. Whenever I directly quote the RCIA texts, those are from Catholic Church, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: Approved for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1988). Each quotation from the RCIA will be indicated with the number of the paragraph of that edition of the RCIA. When I directly refer to passages of the Scriptures, those are from the Revised Standard Version. References to the documents of the Vatican II are from Austin Flannery, ed., *Vatican Council II: Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations: A Completely Revised Translation in Inclusive Language* (Northport, N.Y.: Costello; Dublin, Ireland: Dominican Publications, 1996).



## **Chapter 1 The Spirit at Work**

In this chapter, I will demonstrate the following statement: As represented in the relationship with Christ and the Church, and as Yves Congar argues, the Holy Spirit is present and working dynamically among us in various ways with the other two Persons of the Trinity.

The purpose of this chapter is to obtain basic knowledge of pneumatology. Although I will focus on analyzing and commenting on the explicit references to the Holy Spirit in liturgical texts of the RCIA in later chapters, I will explore scriptural and dogmatic understanding of the Third Person in this chapter. I believe that such understanding is complementary to the comprehension of the Spirit through liturgical analysis and also helpful to fully grasp the role of the Spirit in the Christian initiation journey.

This chapter consists of four sections. In the first section, in order to explore who the Spirit is and how the Paraclete works, I will reflect on the two significant relationships of the Holy Spirit: with Christ and with the Church. The second section will be on the important and fundamental acts of the Spirit. In the third section, I will discuss how the Third Person is working closely with the other two Persons of the Trinity. Finally, I will deal with three loci where the Spirit is present and at work.

### **1. The Spirit and Christ, the Spirit and the Church**

In this section, I will analyze the two fundamental relationships of the Holy Spirit: Holy Spirit with Jesus, and Holy Spirit with the Church. It is both necessary and helpful to grasp these relationships in order to establish the foundation in understanding the work of the Spirit. In other words, how the Third Person of the Trinity works with Christ and in the Church will demonstrate

what the Spirit's fundamental tasks are. I will demonstrate that those two relationships of the Spirit are also connected with one another.

Congar seems to value these two connections of the Spirit. For example, he underscores the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit by contending the close link between Christology and pneumatology: "pneumatology and Christology...[are] inseparable and as together forming access to the Father."<sup>2</sup> He also highlights, "the Christological reference...is the essential condition for the soundness of any pneumatology."<sup>3</sup> Thus, we cannot consider the Spirit and the Spirit's work without contemplating Jesus and his work. Congar emphasizes this point, too: "The Spirit...does not do any work other than that of Christ."<sup>4</sup> These are the reasons why it is very important to understand the relationship between the Spirit and the Son, in order to truly comprehend the Paraclete's actions.

The significance of the connection between the Third Person of the Trinity and the Church is also stressed by Congar. He says, "Pneumatology should, I believe, describe the impact, in the context of a vision of the Church, of the fact that the Spirit distributes his gifts as he wills and in this way builds up the Church. A study of this kind involves not simply a consideration of those gifts or charisms, but a theology of the Church."<sup>5</sup> He also insists that the Paraclete had not only built up the Church (1 Cor 12:13), but had also been dwelling in her (Eph 2:22, 1 Cor 3:16). Thus, when we consider the Spirit, it is crucial to reflect upon the Church.

This section consists of two parts. In the first part, I will discuss the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the Son, Jesus Christ. The connection of the Paraclete with the Church will be

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<sup>2</sup> Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1 (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), 97-98.

<sup>3</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 167.

<sup>4</sup> Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2 (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), 210.

<sup>5</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 156.

the topic of the second part, but I will also insist that Christ is deeply involved in this connection. Through this section, I refer to several passages of the Scriptures. I understand that each book of the Scriptures has its own theology, including pneumatology. However, I will quote the passages related to the Third Person without emphasizing these differences, because I believe that they eventually discuss the same Spirit from different perspectives. Since the work and grace of the Holy Spirit is too deep and diverse to be understood, we need to employ various viewpoints on the Paraclete. Such an approach will be helpful to grasp the richness of the work of the Spirit.

### 1-1. The Spirit and the Son

The relationship between the Holy Spirit and the Son is evident at the time of Creation. It is clearly mentioned that the Son committed to Creation in the Gospel and the Nicene Creed.<sup>6</sup> Although the Spirit is mentioned in the first two chapters in Genesis,<sup>7</sup> it is not obvious from these passages if the Third Person really played an active role in Creation. In the Creed, the Spirit is regarded as “the giver of life,” but the connection between the Paraclete and Creation does not seem evident. Nevertheless, from antiquity, the Church understood that the Third Person of the Trinity was certainly involved in Creation.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, Congar describes that the Son and the Spirit cooperated with the Father in Creation, by referring to a beautiful description of St. Irenaeus of Lyon: “For, by the hands of the Father, that is, through the Son and the Spirit, man is made into the image and likeness of God.”<sup>9</sup> Thus, the Second and Third Persons of the Trinity had a very close relationship from the beginning.

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<sup>6</sup> “the world was made through him” (John 1:10), and “through him all things were made” (Nicene Creed).

<sup>7</sup> “the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters” (Gen 1:2), and “the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” (Gen 2:7). Although the word which represents the Spirit is different from each other (“the Spirit of God” and “the breath of life”, the Church Fathers believed that these two passages describes the works of the same Spirit (See Joel C. Elowsky, etd., *We Believe in the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 47).

<sup>8</sup> Elowsky, *We Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 47.

<sup>9</sup> Irenaeus of Lyon, *Adv. haer.* V, 6, 1. Found in Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 9.

In the New Testament, this intimate relationship became even clearer. First of all, we have to remember that the Jesus was conceived through the Holy Spirit (Matt 1:20, Luke 1:35). In other words, the Paraclete worked through Incarnation as the life-giver, by giving Jesus a human life. Furthermore, as Congar states, “Jesus had been filled and sanctified by the Spirit since the time of his conception, which had brought about the union of a humanity with the person of the eternal Son.”<sup>10</sup> The Third Person began to sanctify Jesus when he was conceived. Therefore, the Spirit was deeply committed to Jesus at the time of the event of Incarnation, by giving him a life and sanctifying him.

Another significant event that demonstrates the relationship between the Spirit and the Son was the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan. The fourth Gospel describes the witness of John the Baptist to the descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus (John 1:32), but it does not mention Jesus’ baptism. On the other hand, all synoptic Gospels witness the descent of the Paraclete when Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist (Matt 3:16, Mark 1:9-10, Luke 3:21-22). Congar suggests two points about the baptism of Jesus. The first one is related to Jesus’ offering of himself to the Father: “there can be no doubt...that Jesus came to be baptized and that he experienced the event with the intention of offering himself and being open to God’s plan for him.”<sup>11</sup> He also says that this offering of Jesus to God was done through the Holy Spirit.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the Spirit’s descent on Jesus at his baptism facilitated Jesus’ offering to the Father.

Second, Congar also understands the descent of the Spirit at the baptism of Jesus as anointing: “The descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his baptism is described as an anointing, that is, as a prophetic anointing for a mission to proclaim, and as a realization of, the good news

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<sup>10</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 21.

<sup>11</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 19.

<sup>12</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 19.

of liberation from evil and the evil one.”<sup>13</sup> In addition, he connects this event with the statement of Isaiah which was also quoted by Jesus in the Gospel of Luke (4:18-19) : “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted” (Isa 61: 1). Furthermore, he refers to Irenaeus and exhibits his understanding of the Spirit descending on Jesus in the Jordan as: “It was therefore the Spirit of God that descended on him—the Spirit of that same God who had, through the prophets, promised to bestow anointing on him so that, receiving ourselves the superabundance of that anointing, we should be saved.”<sup>14</sup> In other words, Jesus’ evangelical ministry began, as prophesied, when he was anointed by the descent of the Third Person during his baptism.

Thus, by descending on Jesus at his baptism, the Spirit empowered Jesus’ work of salvation. It may be helpful to remember the witness of John the Baptist again: “I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him” (John 1:32). The fact that the Paraclete remained on Jesus means that Jesus was filled with the Spirit in order to fulfill God’s plan. The Spirit descended on Jesus, not only to assign him a mission, but also to give him the power to carry it out.

Although it is not mentioned clearly in the Gospels, the Spirit also worked in the resurrection of Jesus. In fact, Congar summarizes the work of the Third Person in Jesus’ life and demonstrates its role in the resurrection with his conception and baptism: “It was the Spirit who sanctified Jesus’ humanity from the moment of his conception (Lk 1:35) and at his baptism, with his messianic ministry in view (4:27; Acts 10:37-38), through his resurrection (Rome 1:4: the ‘Spirit of holiness’).”<sup>15</sup> Here, sanctification is emphasized as the work of the Paraclete in Jesus’

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<sup>13</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 19.

<sup>14</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* III, 9, 3. Found in Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 20.

<sup>15</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 18.

resurrection. James D. G. Dunn also insists on the strong relationship between Jesus and the Spirit at Jesus' death and resurrection: "Jesus appears...as the one whose relation with the Spirit as God's son continued and developed through death to resurrection life. Through the unique event Jesus attained the life-giving power of the Spirit and the Spirit became recognizably the life-giving power of the crucified and risen Jesus."<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, the Spirit worked in the resurrection of Jesus as "the giver of life." In either case, the Third Person of the Trinity played a significant role in the event of the resurrection.

Ultimately, the relationship between Jesus and the Spirit was always present in Jesus' life. Congar says, "'There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit' (1 Cor 12:4). The Spirit was in Jesus during his life on earth."<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, this relationship had existed even before Incarnation, as I had mentioned above. Likewise, this connection has continued even after Jesus' resurrection. In the second part of this section, I will discuss how this relationship has continued after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, which involves the Church, the Body of Christ.

### 1-2. The Spirit and the Church, the Body of Christ

Congar describes the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church in very simple words: "The Spirit gives life to the Church and enables it to grow as the Body of Christ."<sup>18</sup> It would be helpful to begin with this sentence, in order to see the relationship between the Spirit and the Church.

Pentecost<sup>19</sup> is the moment when the Spirit gave life to the Church for the first time. Congar sees a parallel relationship between the baptism of Jesus and the event of Pentecost: "Pentecost was for the Church what his baptism was for Jesus, that is, the gift and the power of the Spirit,

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<sup>16</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit—A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1975), 358.

<sup>17</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 18.

<sup>18</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 7.

<sup>19</sup> "Pentecost" may be understood in various ways. In this section, I refer to "Pentecost" as the event in which the Spirit descended on the disciples of Jesus after his resurrection.

dedication to the ministry, mission and bearing witness.”<sup>20</sup> He also says, “In Acts, the Holy Spirit is the dynamic principle of the testimony that ensures the spread of the Church. This is why he appears at Pentecost, which marks the beginning.”<sup>21</sup> Thus, the descent of the Paraclete at Pentecost began the life and mission of the Church by giving life and power to her.

The work of the Spirit in the Church is not limited to Pentecost. According to Congar, “what the Holy Spirit has done for Christ in his conception, baptism and resurrection, he causes to function in the Church and the lives of Christians.”<sup>22</sup> In other words, the Third Person continues working in the whole life of the Church, even after the earthly life of Jesus. Congar also states,

Throughout the time of the Church, there are disciples. The Spirit guides them in a knowledge of the whole truth and even announces or communicates to them what is to come... The Spirit will bring to mind the teachings of Jesus and will bring to maturity in them a testimony which will not be simply a repetition of material facts, but a communication and an understanding of their meaning.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, the Holy Spirit continues guiding the members of the Church and helps them to grow.

Then, what is the purpose of the Church in which she is growing by the help of the Spirit? It is to be the Body of Christ. As I mentioned above, Congar says, “The Spirit...enables [the Church] to grow as the Body of Christ.”<sup>24</sup> Actually, building up the Body of Christ is the primary task of the Third Person of the Trinity. Congar also mentions, “The mission of the Spirit is to bring about the (mystical) Body of Christ.”<sup>25</sup> Certainly, if the Church is the Body of Christ, we have to take into account the presence of Christ when we consider the relationship between the Spirit and the Church. In fact, it is what we really have to explore: the relationship between the Spirit, the Church, and Christ.

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<sup>20</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 19.

<sup>21</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 44.

<sup>22</sup> Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3 (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), 42.

<sup>23</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 58.

<sup>24</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 7.

<sup>25</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 35.

Actually, the mission of the Church is to continue the work of Christ. For this purpose, the Paraclete was sent. According to Congar, “Jesus, before leaving our earth corporeally, sent his Spirit ...as the one who does his work, the task that he received from the Father, in the time of the Church.”<sup>26</sup> Here, the Spirit is called “Jesus’ Spirit.” Congar also states in another place, “The Spirit...is the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*. He does no other work but that *of Jesus Christ*. There is no time of the Paraclete that is not the time of Jesus Christ.”<sup>27</sup> Thus, the Second and Third Persons are in unity and work together as the Spirit of Christ in the Church.

When we try to discuss the relationship of the three, we may find that it is through the Spirit that the succession between the work of Christ and the mission of the Church were brought about. When he discusses the Third Person of the Trinity in Acts, Congar mentions,

All the evangelists stress the existence of a dynamic continuity between Christ and the Church. This continuity is the fulfilment of what God had promised from the beginning in accordance with his plan of grace. It is especially noticeable in Luke’s Acts, in which it appears under the sign of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit, who, according to Luke, brought Jesus to life in Mary’s womb, also brings the Church into the world. The same Spirit who sent Jesus on his mission after his anointing in baptism also animates the apostolate ‘from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth’.<sup>28</sup>

Consequently, the Paraclete played a role as the facilitator of continuity, through which the Church has been able to smoothly continue the work of Christ in this world. In other words, it is the Spirit who brings Christ to the Church and the world.

Thus far, I have focused on the connection between the Holy Spirit and the Church as a whole. However, it is also important to consider the relationship between the Third Person and each member of the Church, because the Church is a community of members. Certainly, “The Holy Spirit is given to the community and individual persons” (Congar).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 59.

<sup>27</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 35.

<sup>28</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 44.

<sup>29</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 15.



Then, how does the Paraclete work on each member of the Church? Congar calls the Spirit “the principle of unity”<sup>30</sup> and “the principle of the communion.”<sup>31</sup> He also says, “the Spirit makes the Church *one*.”<sup>32</sup> Therefore, we are able to comprehend that the Spirit works on each member of the Church in order to bring them together and build up the Body of Christ. In other words, the Third Person brings about the unity and communion of the Church, by transforming the individual members.

St. Paul describes this transformation. According to Congar, for Paul, the Spirit is the one who “makes us sons of God in accordance with a truth that the status of adoption, which corresponds to our condition as creatures, situates but does not contradict.”<sup>33</sup> He also writes, “The Spirit...makes us sons of God, sons in the Son and called to inherit with him and to say after him: ‘Abba, Father!’ (Rom 8:14-17).”<sup>34</sup> Thus, the transformation brought by the Paraclete makes us children of God, and life as the children of God begins with faith and baptism.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, Paul declares that “no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 12:3). So, the Spirit also gives us faith in Jesus. This work of the Third Person is eventually ecclesial. Congar states, “The Spirit plays a decisive part in building up the Church. ‘By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body’ (1 Cor 12:13).”<sup>36</sup> Therefore, each member of the Church is transformed by the Holy Spirit, especially through baptism, into children of God, so that they are incorporated into the Body of Christ.

Thus, the Church and the Spirit are deeply connected to each other. Congar refers to Irenaeus, in order to describe this intimate relationship: “Where the Church (*ecclesia*) is, there is

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<sup>30</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 15.

<sup>31</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 18.

<sup>32</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 18.

<sup>33</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 31.

<sup>34</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 31.

<sup>35</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 31.

<sup>36</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 32.

also the Spirit of God and where the Spirit of God is, there are also the Church and all grace. And the Spirit is truth.”<sup>37</sup> It is also clear that Christ is involved in the relationship between the Paraclete and the Church, especially when we remember that the Church is the Body of Christ. Congar depicts the relationship between the three, saying, “the Holy Spirit himself plays, in the Church, the part played in the body by the soul...the identically and personally same Spirit...is both in the Head, Christ, and in his Body, the Church or its member, that is, us as believers.”<sup>38</sup>

In this section, I have explored the two relationships of the Holy Spirit, with the Son and with the Church, in order to understand the work of the Third Person of the Trinity. In the following section, I will explore the kinds of actions the Spirit carries out. I have done that to some extent, but the focus will be on the contents of the work of the Paraclete rather than the relationships the Spirit has, as discussed in this section.

## **2. Ten Actions of the Holy Spirit**

In this section, I will list the actions of the Holy Spirit, which are stated in *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*. It is not the purpose of this section to make a complete list of actions of the Third Person. In fact, this is impossible. Rather, I will try to grasp the primary tasks of the Spirit, in order to develop a broad picture of the dynamism of the work of the Paraclete. Some contents of the list were already mentioned in the previous section, but I will mention them again in this section as needed.

I am aware that each action of the ten is not separated from the others. Rather, those ten are merely elements of the dynamic work of the Spirit. Nevertheless, I will try to make a list, in

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<sup>37</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* III, 11, 9. Found in Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 68.

<sup>38</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 19.

order to deepen our understanding of the role the Third Person does play. The order of the list is neither inspired by Congar nor ranked of the importance on the actions of the Spirit.

### 2-1. Giving Life

I would like to begin with the Holy Spirit as “the giver of life,” because this work is mentioned in our Credo. This action of the Paraclete may be found in at least three events in the Scriptures. First, When God created a human being, it is said, “the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Gen 2:7).<sup>39</sup> Therefore, without the Spirit, we would not have become a living being. Second, the Third Person worked at Jesus’ conception and resurrection, by giving him life. According to Luke, the angel Gabriel declared to Mary, “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” (Luke 1:35). Here, the incarnated life of Jesus was brought about by the coming of the Holy Spirit. Concerning Jesus’ resurrection, both Congar and Dunn insists that the Paraclete also worked at his resurrection, as I had mentioned above in the first section. Third, “The Spirit gives life to the Church”<sup>40</sup>, as claimed by Congar. I insisted in the previous section that Pentecost was the event in which the life of the Church had begun with the Third Person of the Trinity. Thus, it is very reasonable that the Holy Spirit is called “the giver of life.”

### 2-2. Making Us the Children of God

This action of the Spirit is emphasized by St. Paul in his letters. He says, “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God...you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom 8:14-16. See also Gal 4:6). Furthermore, Congar refers to the statement of St.

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<sup>39</sup> As I had mentioned in the first section, “the breath of life” can be regarded as the Holy Spirit.

<sup>40</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 7.

Simeon the New Theologian which mentions this work of the Paraclete: “If the Holy Spirit is called the key, then it is above all through and in him that...we are purified, illuminated by the light of knowledge, baptized from on high, born anew...and made children of God.”<sup>41</sup> Therefore, the Spirit leads us into a new status and relationship with God, that is, the children of God.

### 2-3. Sanctifying

The Spirit sanctified Jesus Christ from the time of his conception in Mary’s womb. While introducing the theology of Heribert Mühlen, Congar indicates this point.<sup>42</sup> The Third Person also sanctifies us, human beings. Paul writes, “God chose you from the beginning to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.” (2 Thess 2:13). Likewise, in his first letter, Peter called the recipients of his letter “chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit” (1 Pet 1:2). These statements show us that the Spirit sanctifies human beings. Furthermore, Congar mentions the sanctifying action of the Paraclete in the sacrament of Eucharist.<sup>43</sup> He summarizes this work of the Spirit as follows: “The mission of the Spirit is to bring about the (mystical) Body of Christ. The sanctification of the humanity of Christ by the Spirit is the beginning of our sanctification and it is extended to his (mystical) body.”<sup>44</sup>

### 2-4. Revealing God and the Truth

This role of the Holy Spirit is evidently mentioned in the fourth Gospel: “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (John 16:13. See also 14:26). Here, the Third Person is called “the Spirit of truth.” When we remember that Jesus says, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6) and “He who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9), it becomes clear that the Spirit reveals Jesus, who is the truth itself. Furthermore, through the

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<sup>41</sup> Simeon the New Theologian, *Cat.* XXXIII, §6. Found in Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 97.

<sup>42</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 24. See also Luke 1:35.

<sup>43</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 117.

<sup>44</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 35.

revelation of Jesus by the Paraclete, the Father is revealed. Congar also mentions, “The Church Fathers affirmed again and again that, just as the Son revealed the Father, the Spirit reveals the Son.”<sup>45</sup> This revealing action of the Spirit is necessary for us to know the Father and the Son, and this action is particularly important when we read the Scriptures. As for this point, Congar states, “The only really adequate way of reading and interpreting Scripture is to do so subject to the movement of the Spirit.”<sup>46</sup> Thus, the Third Person of the Trinity reveals to us God and the truth by revealing Jesus, and deepening our understanding of the Scriptures.

### 2-5. Anointing- Sending for Mission

This action of the Holy Spirit is particularly described in the stories of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan. Just after he was baptized, the Paraclete descended upon him accompanied by the voice from heaven (Matt 16:17, Mark 1:10-11, Lk 3:21-22). Congar regards this incident as anointing, and he insists that this anointing is prophetic and for the mission to proclaim the Gospel.<sup>47</sup>

Another important story of the anointing by the Spirit is the story of Pentecost in the Acts of the Apostles (2:1-4). Concerning this event, Congar states that the Church received the gift and power of the Third Person for her ministry at Pentecost, as Jesus was given them through at baptism.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, the descent of the Spirit on the disciples on the Pentecostal day can also be regarded as an anointing by the Spirit for the evangelical mission. The Second Vatican Council seems to see this anointing in the context of the sacrament of Confirmation: “By the sacrament of Confirmation they are more perfectly bound to the church and are endowed with the special strength of the holy Spirit. Hence, as true witnesses of Christ, they are more strictly obliged both

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<sup>45</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 103.

<sup>46</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 27.

<sup>47</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 19.

<sup>48</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 19.

to spread and to defend the faith by word and deed.”<sup>49</sup> Thus, the Paraclete anoints us to send us on Jesus’ mission.

### 2-6. Forgiving Sins- Leading to Conversion

At the Pentecost event in the Gospel of John on the day Jesus was resurrected, he came to the disciples and “breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained’” (John 20:22-23). Here, the Third Person of the Trinity is regarded as the one who has the power and authority to forgive sins. Congar explains this of the Spirit, saying, “The glorified Lord...acts through his Spirit and, in what is sometimes called the ‘Johannine Pentecost’, the ‘power’ to remit sins is attributed...to the virtue of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>50</sup> Actually, the Paraclete is working in the process of conversion which culminates in the forgiveness of sins. For example, according to Congar, “The Holy Spirit...makes us...conscious of the sovereign attraction of the Absolute, the Pure and the True, and of a new life offered to us by the Lord, and he also gives us a clear consciousness of our own wretchedness and of the untruth and selfishness that fills our lives.”<sup>51</sup> Thus, the Spirit is working throughout our conversion process and brings about the forgiveness of our sins.

### 2-7. Guiding to God

In order to explain this action of the Third Person, I need to refer again to the passage of the Gospel of John: “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (John 16:13). While describing Johannine pneumatology, Congar referred to H. B. Swete, saying, “According to Swete, Jesus is the way (*hē hodos*) and the Spirit is the guide (*ho hodēgos*) who

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<sup>49</sup> Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, §11. See also Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 219-210.

<sup>50</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 123-124.

<sup>51</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 123.

enables man to go forward on that way.”<sup>52</sup> Moreover, Jesus was taken into the desert by the Holy Spirit just after his baptism (Matt 4:1, Mark 1:12, Luke 4:1). Here, the Paraclete guided Jesus to where he had to go, according to the Father’s will. Another important passage is the story of Philip in Acts. There, the Spirit told him to go to meet the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:20), and took him from the road going down from Jerusalem to Gaza to Azotus (Acts 8:40). This seems like a good example of the Third Person as a guide. Furthermore, Congar mentions, “The Holy Spirit is the eschatological gift through and in which we return to the Father.”<sup>53</sup> Therefore, the Spirit is the guide who leads us to the place of our mission and eventually takes us back to God.

### 2-8. Continuing the Work of God and Christ

Although I had already discussed this action of the Holy Spirit in the previous section, I will just add a few points here. Congar states that both missions of Christ and the Spirit aim at “achieving the same task of saving communion with the mystery of God or deification.”<sup>54</sup> So the works of the Second and Third Persons are deeply related with one another and intend to do what the First Person desires. Furthermore, Congar shows us the continuity between the works of Christ and the Spirit, by quoting the statement of J. Grégoire: “In the divine activity, the Son provides the basis of the work that is wanted by the Father and the Spirit perfects it.”<sup>55</sup> Thus, the Paraclete succeeded Christ’s work and continued it.

### 2-9. Unifying People

This action of the Holy Spirit was also mentioned in the first section. However, I would like to introduce a statement of Congar, in order to get deeper comprehension of this role of the Third

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<sup>52</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 57. See also H.B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament* (London: Macmillan and co., limited, 1909), 162.

<sup>53</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 267,

<sup>54</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 222.

<sup>55</sup> José Grégoire, “Le Relation éternelle de l’Esprit au Fils d’après les écrits de Jean de Jean de Damas,” *Revue d’histoire ecclésiastique* 64 (1969), 754-755. The translation of the quotation can be found in Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 40.

Person. He understands the Spirit as the source of power of the ecumenical movement: “The Spirit is the principle of unity. He is present and active everywhere, but he is that principle in a more formal and intense way in the Christian communions...The ecumenical movement was given life and has been kept alive by him.”<sup>56</sup> In other words, the Paraclete has actually been working for unifying Christians and will also continue working to bring about the true unity.

### 2-10. Building up the Church, the Body of Christ

I have explained in detail about this action of the Holy Spirit in the previous section. As a summary of this activity of the Third Person, I refer to Congar’s statement previously introduced before: “The Spirit gives life to the Church and enables it to grow as the Body of Christ.”<sup>57</sup>

Thus, the work of the Holy Spirit includes a variety of activities. Certainly, the tasks of the Paraclete are not limited to these ten, since the Spirit works in an extremely dynamic and diverse way. Nevertheless, I believe that the attempt to list the actions would be helpful to comprehend the richness of the contents of his work.

### 3. The Spirit and the Other Two Persons of the Trinity

In the previous section, I have listed some essential acts of the Holy Spirit. However, I did not mean that those divine actions should be attributed to the Third Person exclusively. As the traditional principle on the Trinity declares, “All the actions of the Trinity outside itself are indivisible (*Omnia opera Trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt*).”<sup>58</sup> Whenever the Spirit is working, the Son is also working, since “The Spirit...is the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*. He does no other work

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<sup>56</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 272.

<sup>57</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 7.

<sup>58</sup> Stephen T. Davis, *Christian Philosophical Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 71. According to Davis, this principle “is attributed to him [St. Augustine], but is not locatable in his extant writings” (p. 71).



but that *of Jesus Christ*”<sup>59</sup>, as quoted before. Furthermore, as Congar says, “The Spirit...does not do any work other than that of Christ. There is only one economy of salvation.”<sup>60</sup> Therefore, wherever Christ is working, the Paraclete is also working there. According to Congar, St. Paul acknowledges this strong relationship between Christ and the Spirit in their actions: “According to Paul, the glorified Lord and the Spirit may be different in God, but they are functionally so united that we experience them together and are able to accept the one for the other.”<sup>61</sup>

Moreover, the work of Christ is exactly the work of the Father, and the Paraclete is doing this work as the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ. Congar states, “Jesus...sent his Spirit...as the one who does his work, the task that he received from the Father.”<sup>62</sup> Therefore, all three Persons of the Trinity are involved in the same work. As Augustine says, “just as Father and Son and Holy Spirit are inseparable, so do they work inseparably.”<sup>63</sup> Congar explains the argument of P. Galtier, who “studied fourteen [Greek Fathers], but found that none of them attributed to the Holy Spirit a role of sanctification on the basis of his hypostasis that was not carried out by the Father and the Son...None of the Persons did anything on his own.”<sup>64</sup> Thus, any divine action is carried out not by one Person exclusively, but by the three Persons. In the previous section, I put “sanctification” on the list, but I did not mean that this action is attributed only to the Holy Spirit. Rather, it is more accurate to say that the Third Person did the work of sanctification in relation to the other two Persons, the Father and the Son.

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<sup>59</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 35.

<sup>60</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 210.

<sup>61</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 12.

<sup>62</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 59.

<sup>63</sup> Augustine, *De Trinitate*, I, 2, 8. Found in Edmund Hill, trans., *The Trinity* (Brooklyn, NY: New City Press, 1991), 70.

<sup>64</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 87. See also P. Galtier, “Temples du Saint-Esprit,” *Revue d’histoire ecclésiastique*, 7 (1926): 365-413; 8 (1927), 40-76, 170-179; *idem*, *Le Saint-Esprit en nous d’après les Pères grecs*, Anal. Greg. 35 (Rome: Apud Aedes Universitatis Gregorianae, 1946).

#### **4. The Loci of the Spirit**

In this section, I will suggest three particular loci where the work and presence of the Spirit can be found particularly: 1) the Church; 2) the liturgy and sacraments; and 3) the world and individuals. First of all, the Paraclete is present and working in the Church. I had already discussed the intimate relationship between the Spirit and the Church. It would be helpful to remember the statement of Irenaeus: “Where the Church (*ecclesia*) is, there is also the Spirit of God and where the Spirit of God is, there are also the Church and all grace.”<sup>65</sup> Then how can we understand what “the Church” means here? Alexander Schmemmann regards “the Church” as the assembly of the faithful in a local community.<sup>66</sup> Likewise, the Second Vatican Council declares, “This church of Christ is really present in all legitimately organized local groups of the faithful.”<sup>67</sup> If this understanding is correct, the Third Person is really present wherever the community of the faithful is present.

Second, the Holy Spirit works through the liturgy and sacraments in a particular way. Concerning the Third Person of the Trinity in the liturgy, Congar says, “The whole of the liturgy expresses and brings about a movement of God towards us and of us towards God. This movement passes from the Father through the Son in the Spirit and return in the Spirit through the Son to the glory of the Father, who takes us, as children, into communion with him. The Spirit is therefore invoked in every liturgical action, to be active and present in the liturgy.”<sup>68</sup> In other words, the Paraclete plays an essential role in the movements between God and us in the liturgy, and is active and present in response to the invocation of the participants of the liturgy.

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<sup>65</sup> Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* III, 11, 9. Found in Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 68.

<sup>66</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, trans. Paul Kachur. (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1987), 11, 16.

<sup>67</sup> Vatican Council II, *Lumen Gentium*, §26.

<sup>68</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 104.

We also need to note that liturgy is the occasion that the community of the faithful profess their faith<sup>69</sup> as well as “the worship of the new people of God, the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit offered to ‘God’ the Father.”<sup>70</sup> Here, the Third Person among the people of God is emphasized. Thus, in the liturgy, the Spirit is not only with the assembly of the faithful, but also working for liturgical communication between God and His own people.

The sacraments are also a special locus of the Holy Spirit. Congar states, “Without the Spirit, the sacrament is empty.”<sup>71</sup> This statement implies that the sacraments cannot be brought about without the Paraclete. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “The Father always hears the prayer of his Son’s Church which, in the epiclesis of each sacrament, expresses her faith in the power of the Spirit. As fire transforms into itself everything it touches, so the Holy Spirit transforms into the divine life whatever is subjected to his power.”<sup>72</sup> Accordingly, the Spirit exercises the transforming power on each sacrament. As for the sacraments of Christian initiation, Congar mentions the relationship of each sacrament with the Third Person. He says, “Christian baptism is, of course, baptism of the Spirit... The Spirit is, then, given in baptism.”<sup>73</sup> He also explains that through the sacrament of confirmation, believers are strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit, so that they may truly become witnesses of Christ and the royal priesthood.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, concerning the Eucharist, he makes detailed explanation of the

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<sup>69</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 104.

<sup>70</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 113.

<sup>71</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 98. Here, Congar interprets the pneumatology of St. Simeon the New Theologian.

<sup>72</sup> Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 2000), §1127.

<sup>73</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 218.

<sup>74</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 219-221. See also Vatican Council II, *Lumen Gentium*, §11 and Vatican Council II. Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, §3.

Eucharistic epiclesis.<sup>75</sup> Thus, the Paraclete is working in and through the sacraments in a special way.

On the other hand, the Holy Spirit is present and at work anywhere and anytime. Jesus describes this trait of the Third Person in the Gospel of John, “The wind blows where it wills...but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes” (John 3:8). Congar also states, “The Spirit...is unique and present everywhere, transcendent and inside all things, subtle and sovereign, able to respect freedom and to inspire it.”<sup>76</sup> Therefore, the Spirit can be present and working even outside the Church, her liturgy, and her sacraments. Certainly, the Third Person of the Trinity are at work in a special in the Church as a community in a special way. Nevertheless, the Spirit may come directly to individuals’ heart and works there. Furthermore, the Paraclete was involved in Creation and has been giving life to all creatures throughout history. So, the entire world can be a locus of the Spirit, too. However, it does not reduce the significance of the presence and actions of the Third Person through the Church. While we believe that the Spirit is anywhere in this world, we are also sure that the special relationship between the Paraclete and the Church, and her liturgy and sacraments.

In this chapter, I have considered the work of the Holy Spirit, while consulting Congar’s *I Believe the Holy Spirit*. I have discussed two important relationships and ten essential acts of the Spirit. I also confirmed that the Third Person always works with the other two Persons of the Trinity and is present in the Church, in the liturgy and sacraments, within each human being, and even anywhere in the world. Although I am well aware of this this omnipresent character of the Paraclete, I will deal with the explicit references to the Spirit in the texts of the RCIA in the

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<sup>75</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, part 2, chapter 2 “Eucharistic Epiclesis.”

<sup>76</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 17.

following chapters. I could simply say that the Third Person is always present and working throughout the Christian initiation journey by simply applying what I had discussed in this chapter, but it would not be an appreciate method, because it is still true that the Spirit is more mentioned in some places in the RCIA, while in other places it does not take place. In order to explore the understanding of the RCIA on the role of the Third Person, I will analyze the explicit references to the Holy Spirit. Only after such an analysis has been done, it will be more meaningful to apply the contents of this chapter to the Christian initiation journey.

## **Chapter 2 The Role of the Spirit in the Celebration of the Sacraments of Christian**

### **Initiation**

In this chapter, I will consider the role of the Holy Spirit in the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, especially in the celebrations of baptism and confirmation. Although the Eucharist is one of the three sacraments of initiation, I will not deal with it, because it is too big task to handle the three sacraments together. This chapter consists of three sections, in the first section, in order to reflect on the actions of the Third Person of the Trinity at the rite of baptism proper (water bath), I will see the texts of the prayer over the water and quote teachings of Church Fathers on this rite as well as commentaries of contemporary theologians. The second section explores how the Paraclete is working during the celebration of confirmation. In the third section, the focus will be on the unity of the two sacraments, baptism and confirmation. I will discuss how such unity is significant and how understanding the role of the Spirit in both sacraments helps us to be aware of the importance of the unity. Through these discussions, I will demonstrate that the richness of the work of the Holy Spirit can be found and reasonably assumed throughout this particular step of the initiation process described in the RCIA.

#### **1. The Role of the Spirit at Baptism: Comments on the Prayer over the Water**

The prayer over the water contains five options, all of which mention the Spirit explicitly. Option A may well be considered normative among the five, because it is used when the celebration of the sacraments of initiation takes place at the Easter Vigil, which is “the proper time for the sacraments of initiation” (8). Therefore, I will concentrate on this option, in order to examine this part of the baptismal celebration.

In option A, the Holy Spirit is referred to six times. In the first two references, the significant actions of the Third Person are explicitly mentioned in relation to two different occasions in the past: creation in Genesis and Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist in the Jordan. The first reference is as follows: "At the very dawn of creation your Spirit breathed on the waters, making them the wellspring of all holiness" (222A).<sup>77</sup> Here, the text shows that through the breathing action of the Comforter the waters were made holy in creation. Michael Witzak comments on this text, saying, "The initial image from Genesis 1:1-2 takes us to the founding story of our world, where we find water as the context for God's action. God's Spirit is at the heart of holiness."<sup>78</sup> He also insists that this description of the creational events "are not simply story, but living events now present."<sup>79</sup> Therefore, the sanctifying action of the Paraclete on the waters in creation can be interpreted as a typology of the Spirit working during the baptismal celebration; the Holy Spirit makes the baptismal water holy now, as the same Spirit did to the waters during creation. Witzak even points out this connection between the two events by describing the relationship between waters both past and present: "Historic water and present water merge to become the matrix for this act of new birth."<sup>80</sup> Such a strong connection between creation and the baptismal rite indicates that through the baptismal event its recipients experience "new creation" (2 Cor 5:17). Actually, the RCIA understands the newly baptized as a new creation: "N. and N., you have become a new creation" (229). Accordingly, the Holy Spirit, who was active in creation at the beginning of history, continues to act in the anticipation of the new creation.

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<sup>77</sup> Obviously, this comes from the passage in Genesis: "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters" (Gen 1:2).

<sup>78</sup> Michael G. Witzak, *The Sacrament of Baptism* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011), 120-121.

<sup>79</sup> Witzak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 37.

<sup>80</sup> Witzak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 37.

The second reference to the Third Person is this: “In waters of the Jordan your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Spirit” (222A). This statement refers to the Spirit descending on Jesus in the Jordan (Matt 3:16, Mark 1:10, Luke 3:22, John 1:32). Also, this event at the Jordan can be understood as the anointing with the Holy Spirit, as Peter speaks of this in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:38).<sup>81</sup> Here, we find an intrinsic relationship between the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan and the anointing with the Spirit. Regis Duffy quotes two passages from Second Isaiah in which the Spirit of the Lord God descends on His servant.<sup>82</sup> Duffy connects these images with the event at the Jordan and argues that the anointing of Jesus with the Spirit is to enliven his messianic service.<sup>83</sup> Actually, Jesus himself also proclaimed that the Paraclete was upon him to anoint him for his mission (Luke 4:16-21). If the same action of the Third Person of the Trinity now takes place in the sacramental rite, it would be true that the candidates are empowered for mission through the anointing with the Spirit, as Jesus was empowered at the Jordan. As Duffy says, “The Jordan scene is still a normative model for the action of the Spirit in the initiation process of the Christian. The gift of the Spirit is inseparable from the coming reign of God and the service which it calls out of each Christian for the sake of that reign.”<sup>84</sup> Thus, the description of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan in the prayer over the water demonstrates not only a significant role of the Holy Spirit at the baptismal rite, but also an important purpose of the anointing with the Spirit, that is, participation in Jesus’ messianic service.

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<sup>81</sup> See Witczak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 121.

<sup>82</sup> “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound” (Isa 61:1); “Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him, he will bring forth justice to the nations (Isa 42:1).

<sup>83</sup> Regis A. Duffy, *On Becoming a Catholic* (San Francisco: Harper&Row, 1984), 143.

<sup>84</sup> Duffy, *On Becoming a Catholic*, 144.



In order to clarify the connection between the anointing with the Spirit and Jesus' messianic work, I will refer to the original meaning of the prebaptismal anointing in the ancient Syrian Church.<sup>85</sup> Before the fourth century, the initiation rite in the Syrian Church had only one anointing, which was exercised before the immersion in the water. This anointing was "the pouring of the oil over the head" not on the whole body.<sup>86</sup> In order to consider what this prebaptismal anointing signified in the Syrian liturgy then, it is necessary to understand what biblical resource that the Syrians regarded as the foundation of the initiation rite. According to Gabriele Winkler, "in the oldest Syriac documents, Christian baptism is shaped after Christ's baptism in the Jordan."<sup>87</sup> In other words, their initiation rite was based on Jesus' own baptism by John and their prebaptismal anointing should be considered in that context.

In the Syrian Church when they had only one anointing in the baptismal rite, the center of the Christian initiation rite was not the immersion in the water but the prebaptismal anointing, that is, the pouring of the oil over the head. As Winkler states, "it was the anointing [of the head] that became, in Syria, the first and only visible gesture for the central event at Christ's baptism."<sup>88</sup> The reason why the anointing of the head became the center of the rite in the Syrian liturgy is that this anointing was understood as a representation of the culmination of Jesus' own baptism: "his revelation as the Messiah-King through the descent of the Spirit."<sup>89</sup> This comprehension also comes from a deeper understanding on the connection between the descending of the Paraclete on Jesus and the coming of the Spirit of the Lord on newly anointed kings in the Old Testament (1 Sam 10:1, 10; 16:13).<sup>90</sup> As the anointing of Saul and David as a king had brought

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<sup>85</sup> This argument owes to Gabriele Winkler, "The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing and its Implications," *Worship* 52, no. 1 (January 1978): 24-45.

<sup>86</sup> Winkler, "The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing and its Implications," 24.

<sup>87</sup> Winkler, "The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing and its Implications," 36.

<sup>88</sup> Winkler, "The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing and its Implications," 37.

<sup>89</sup> Winkler, "The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing and its Implications," 37.

<sup>90</sup> Winkler, "The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing and its Implications," 33-34.

about the descent of the Spirit upon them, Jesus was anointed with the Paraclete as the Messiah-King through baptism in the Jordan. Thus, in the ancient Syrian Church, the anointing of kings in the Old Testament was understood as not only a type of Jesus' event in the Jordan, but also a type of the Christian initiation, especially the prebaptismal anointing.<sup>91</sup> Accordingly, the pouring of the oil over the head in the Syrian initiation rite demonstrates that the Third Person who descended upon Jesus to anoint him as the Messiah-King also descends and anoints those who undergo the prebaptismal anointing so that they may participate in Jesus' messianic mission. This tradition and theology of the ancient Syrian rite should be taken into account and applied when we consider why the prayer over the water mentions the descending of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus in the Jordan. In other words, we can see in the blessing of the water in the RCIA what members of the ancient Syrian Church saw in their prebaptismal anointing.

The third mention of the Holy Spirit in the prayer over the water includes a reference to the order of Jesus to the apostles after his resurrection: "Go out and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt 28:19). This statement reminds us that the formula of baptism, "N., I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (226), can be traced back to the age of the New Testament. It also shows us that the Church understands baptism as based on God's will through the commandment of Jesus. Furthermore, the fact that the Spirit is mentioned both in the order of Jesus and in the current formula indicates the involvement of the Third Person of the Trinity in Christian baptism. However, this reference does not specify a particular role of the Paraclete.

These three references to the Holy Spirit in the prayer over the water play two important roles. First, those references to the Spirit function as anamnesis. Thanks to the first two

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<sup>91</sup> See Winkler, "The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing and its Implications," 32-37.

references, we may recognize that in the both the Old and New Testaments the Third Person had been working in and through water, which is a gift from God (222A), in order to sanctify it. Furthermore, these two statements describe what takes place through the actions of the Spirit during the baptismal rite to be celebrated at the present time. On the other hand, the third reference clearly shows us that the close connection between the commandment Jesus gave the apostles and the baptismal rite we celebrate today, and that involvement of the Comforter in Christian baptism was believed from the New Testament community. Therefore, through deeper understanding of the meanings of those three statements including the explicit references to the Third Person of the Trinity, we become more aware of the Spirit's presence and actions during baptism.

The other three references to the Paraclete are in the invocation of the Holy Spirit, which concludes the prayer over the water. Witczak divides this part into three petitions for convenience. He also calls the second petition ("By the power of...") and the third one ("We ask you, Father...") "First epicletic moment" and "Second epicletic moment"<sup>92</sup> respectively. Following his distinction, I will discuss the two epicletic moments, in order to explore how the role of the Holy Spirit is understood here.

The text of petition 2 or the first epicletic moment is this: "By the power of the Holy Spirit give to this water the grace of your Son, so that in the sacrament of baptism all those whom you have created in your likeness may be cleansed from sin and rise to a new birth of innocence by water and the Holy Spirit" (222A). Here, three actions related to the Third Person are mentioned: 1) to give the grace of Christ to the water; 2) to cleanse in the sacrament of baptism all those

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<sup>92</sup> Witczak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 122.

whom the Father created in His likeness; 3) to raise them to a new birth of innocence. Discussing the first two actions, Witczak says:

[the Spirit] is the source of the Son's grace that cleanses and gives new birth. We begin with the Spirit and the water, as in the book of Genesis. The water is now named as receptive of Christ's grace, perhaps alluding to the water and blood that flowed from his side on the cross. Creation in God's likeness (Gen 1:27), marred by sin, is now about to be restored ('cleansed').<sup>93</sup>

Here, two biblical images are identified. The first image is of the water and blood flowing from Jesus' side on the cross (John 19:34). The role of water as a receiver of Christ's grace is emphasized with this image. The second image is God's creation of human being in the image of God. Although the dignity of humankind was harmed by sin, it is to be restored through the water, which is filled with the grace of Christ by the action of the Paraclete. In other words, we, who once lost the human dignity given through creation, retrieve it through the power of the Spirit.

Such restoration or cleansing functions as an immediate preparation for new birth, which is brought about by the third action of the Comforter mentioned in this moment of the prayer, that is, to raise those to be baptized to "a new birth of innocence." According to Witczak, "The newness of life granted after the great flood serves as the image of this new birth."<sup>94</sup> Here, the great flood (Gen 7:6-24) is recalled. Actually, this event is also remembered in the prayer over the water itself.<sup>95</sup> Although the Holy Spirit is not explicitly referred to in biblical text, the role of the Paraclete is implied by the intimate connection between water and the Spirit described in the creation story. The flood that cleansed the world in Noah's age is the same water that is sanctified by the Third Person of the Trinity.

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<sup>93</sup> Witczak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 122.

<sup>94</sup> Witczak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 122.

<sup>95</sup> "The waters of the great flood you made a sign of the waters of baptism that make an end of sin and a new beginning of goodness" (222A).

Another biblical scene taken into account here is from the Gospel of John 3:1-15: “One cannot return to the mother’s natural womb (v. 4), but one must be born again of water and spirit in order to have life (v. 5).”<sup>96</sup> David Power elucidates the connection between this biblical image and the baptismal font, saying, “This is the image used in the first part of the epiclesis, which represents the font not only as a pool of cleansing but more forcefully as a place of rebirth, or as a womb in which the candidates are newly conceived and from which they come forth to a new life.”<sup>97</sup> Thus, the new birth mentioned here in the prayer over the water fully resonates with the experience of being born of the water and the Spirit as Jesus told Nicodemus. With these two scenes from the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, we foresee what takes place through water and the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of baptism.

When we see the first two petitions together, we find all the three Persons of the Holy Trinity there. In the first petition, “Father, look now with love upon your Church and unseal for it the fountain of baptism” (222A), the First Person is mentioned. And in the second petition (“By the power...”), the Second and Third Persons are referred to, while the petition itself is offered to the Father. This implies that all the Three Persons are on the water, answering the petitions. Therefore, we can find the trinitarian structure here, which can be also found in the formula of baptism proper (226). This reminds us that every divine action is always taken by all three Persons of the Trinity,<sup>98</sup> although the role of the Third Person is more emphasized than the other two here; the Holy Spirit is mentioned twice, while the Father and Son are both referred to only once.

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<sup>96</sup> Witczak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 122.

<sup>97</sup> David N. Power, “Blessing of the Baptismal Water,” in *Commentaries on the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, ed. James A. Wilde (Chicago, IL: Liturgical Training Publications, 1988), 95.

<sup>98</sup> We should remember here the so-called “Augustine’s principle”: “All the actions of the Trinity outside itself are indivisible (*Omnia opera Trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt*).”

In petition 3 or the second epicletic moment, the trinitarian structure is even clearer: “We ask you, Father, with your Son to send the Holy Spirit upon the waters of this font. May all who are buried with Christ in the death of baptism rise also with him to newness of life” (222A). In the first sentence, while all Three Persons of the Trinity are mentioned, it keeps the shape of an invocation of the Third Person. In other words, this sentence keeps a proper balance between the emphasis on the work of the Spirit and the understanding of Christian baptism as essentially trinitarian.

It is noteworthy that the invocation of the Holy Spirit, which is already done in the previous petition, is repeated here. As Witczak states, “The prayer becomes even more insistent, repeating the request for the gift of the Spirit.”<sup>99</sup> It evidently illustrates the considerable significance of the Third Person of the Trinity on the sanctification of the baptismal water. Likewise, the celebrant’s gesture during this petition, lowering the Easter candle into the water or touching the water with the right hand (222A), also represents the important role of the Paraclete here. According to Witczak, “The dipping of the candle or touching of the water with the right hand highlights the desire not just for the presence of but also for the action of the Spirit.”<sup>100</sup> Thus, this petition consistently emphasizes the necessity of the work of the Third Person of the Trinity for sanctification of the baptismal water.

Nevertheless, this petition also represents a Christological element of baptism, according to the second sentence of the petition. Witczak writes, “The final phrase is a reference to Paul’s Letter to the Romans (6:3-11). Dying and rising with Christ is the last image given us.”<sup>101</sup> This Pauline description is one of the primary images of Christian baptism as well as John 3:1-15, as

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<sup>99</sup> Witczak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 122.

<sup>100</sup> Witczak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 122.

<sup>101</sup> Witczak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 122.

already mentioned above. While the latter image is highly pneumatological, the former is clearly Christological. The fact that this Christological image of baptism is located at the end of the second epicletic moment of the prayer over the water reminds us of the richness of the theology of baptism. It also shows us the purpose of the eventual purpose of the invocations of the Holy Spirit. Power states, “This burial and resurrection with Christ through the water of baptism is made the object in the prayer of blessing of the second petition [, which is the second epicletic moment in Witczak’s terms,] for the Holy Spirit’s action.”<sup>102</sup> Therefore, we can understand that the Holy Spirit inserts the newly baptized into Christ’s paschal mystery, that is, to die with Christ and be raised to new life with him. As Power comments, “The Holy Spirit works within the water and in those baptized to bring them into communion with Christ’s victory through his death over sin and death itself and enlivens in them the hope of the resurrection.”<sup>103</sup> Thus, the Paraclete plays an important role in the passage to newness of life, that is, participation in the paschal mystery.

Before concluding the analysis of the prayer over the water, I need to reflect on what some Church Fathers say about this prayer, as this is very helpful for us to have further understanding on the RCIA. For this purpose, I will refer to baptismal catecheses of four Fathers, Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Ambrose of Milan, and reflect on their significance.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Power, “Blessing of the Baptismal Water,” 95-96.

<sup>103</sup> Power, “Blessing of the Baptismal Water,” 96.

<sup>104</sup> This part owes a great deal to Hugh M. Riley, *Christian Initiation: A Comparative Study of the Interpretation of the Baptismal Liturgy in the Mystagogical Writings of Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Ambrose of Milan* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1974), 145-150, 301, 304, 310-313, 332-333, 346.

In his Catechesis 3 on baptism, Cyril says, “when ordinary water receives the invocation of the Holy Spirit and Christ and the Father, it acquires the power of holiness.”<sup>105</sup> Here, the sanctifying power which the baptismal font receives is not attributed only to the Third Person, but all the three Persons of the Trinity. On the other hand, John Chrysostom emphasizes the Third Person, saying, “it is the grace of the Spirit which sanctifies the nature of the water and touches your head together with the hand of the priest.”<sup>106</sup> This variation between the two Fathers should not be regarded as contradiction, but as a difference of emphasis. As we have already seen, emphasis on the role of the Spirit does not exclude the trinitarian structure of Christian baptism. Rather, by being aware of both these aspects, we are able to recognize dynamic actions of the Holy Trinity on the baptismal water.

Theodore gives an even greater emphasis to the role of the Spirit for sanctifying the baptismal font. He speaks to the newly baptized,

You are not baptized in ordinary water, but in the water of second birth. Now ordinary water cannot become this other thing except by the coming of the Holy Spirit. Consequently the bishop beforehand pronounces a prescribed form of words, asking God to let the grace of the Holy Spirit come upon the water and make it capable of begetting this awesome birth, making it a womb for sacramental birth.<sup>107</sup>

Through this statement, we can recognize the considerable significance of the role of the Third Person of the Trinity for sanctification of the baptism font. Furthermore, he mentions the image of the baptismal water as a womb for a new birth. As I had discussed above, this image, which comes from John 3:4, also appears in the prayer over the water in the RCIA (222A).

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<sup>105</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, *Bapt. Cat.* III. 3. Found in Edward Yarnold, *Cyril of Jerusalem* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 90.

<sup>106</sup> John Chrysostom, *Stav.* 2. 10. Found in Paul W. Harkins, trans., *Baptismal Instructions* (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1963), 47.

<sup>107</sup> Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Bapt. Hom.* III, 9. Found in Edward Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation: The Origins of the RCIA* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press), 185.



Ambrose of Milan also emphasizes the same image and connects it with Mary's conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit. He states,

Mary did not conceive of a man but was impregnated by the Holy Spirit, as Matthew says: 'She was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit' (Matt. 1:18). If then, the Holy Spirit came upon the Virgin, brought about conception and carried out the function of generation, there must be no doubt at all that, when the Spirit comes upon the font and upon those who are to be baptized, he is bringing about a true rebirth.<sup>108</sup>

Here, Ambrose sees an analogy between the roles of the Third Person of the Trinity both in Mary's conception and in baptism. For the conception of Jesus, the Paraclete "brought about conception and carried out the function of generation," whereas the same Spirit "is bringing about a true rebirth" at baptism. In other words, we can truly understand how the Comforter works during the baptismal ceremony through the water, when we see what the Spirit did for the birth of Jesus. Here, we can recognize that the Holy Spirit is really "the giver of life" (Nicene Creed) and carries out this role at baptism.

Thus, the prayer over the water describes not only the actions of the Holy Spirit in the history of salvation, both the Old and New Testaments, but also the roles of the Paraclete over the waters of the font through which baptism is exercised. Moreover, this prayer describes what is to happen through baptism and how the Third Person is working there. Among the actions mentioned in this prayer, the Spirit's role to bring about the passage of the elect into a new life, a new creation, or "a true rebirth" is particularly emphasized, especially in the epicletic part of the prayer. Patristic teachings also confirm that the Spirit is truly the giver of life. These emphases are helpful to convince those to be baptized that they will really pass into the newness of life through the power and agencies of the Spirit.

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<sup>108</sup> Ambrose of Milan, *Myst.* 59. Found in Boniface Ramsey, *Ambrose* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 160.

Actually, this prayer holds a prominent position in the entire celebration of baptism (218-230). As Witczak insists, “This prayer over the water is the key prayer of the whole celebration of baptism.”<sup>109</sup> The structure of this prayer also represents the importance of this prayer. According to Power, the composers of this prayer “wanted to maintain what was seen as the traditional structure of blessing. This combines an act of thanksgiving to God for creative and salvific action with a prayer for the sanctification of the element to be used, couched preferably in the form of an epiclesis or prayer for the coming of the Spirit.”<sup>110</sup> This statement reminds us of the resemblance of this prayer to the Eucharistic Prayer, whose two fundamental elements are thanksgiving (anamnesis in preface) to God and invocations of the Holy Spirit (epicleses). Witczak emphasizes this point, saying, “[The prayer over the water] is analogous to the eucharistic prayer at Mass... Given that analogy, its theological importance far exceeds its structural role as conclusion to the litany.”<sup>111</sup> As the Holy Spirit transforms bread and wine into the body of Christ and the assembly of the faithful into the Body of Christ, the same Spirit transforms the lives of those to be baptized. Thus, “the work of the Spirit has been highlighted throughout the prayer.”<sup>112</sup>

## **2. Spirit and the Celebration of Confirmation**

The celebration of confirmation has three parts: invitation (233), laying on of hands (234), and anointing with chrism (235). Since each part contains references to the Holy Spirit, I will make an analysis of all these three. I will also look at the prayer for the consecration of the chrism because this prayer helps us to more deeply understand the role of the Spirit during the

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<sup>109</sup> Witczak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 119.

<sup>110</sup> Power, “Blessing of the Baptismal Water,” 92.

<sup>111</sup> Witczak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 119.

<sup>112</sup> Witczak, *The Sacrament of Baptism*, 123.

celebration of confirmation. Furthermore, in order to deepen our theological understanding on this rite, I will explore the teachings of four Church Fathers in the fourth century on the sealing.

### 2-1. Invitation

The invitation consists of three paragraphs and each part contains one or more references to the Paraclete. In the first paragraph, the Spirit is mentioned twice: “Now you are to share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among us, the Spirit sent by the Lord upon his apostles at Pentecost and given by them and their successors to the baptized” (233, underlining added). The first part of this pronouncement describes in a brief but straightforward way what the celebration of confirmation really means: “to share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among us.” Here, the Spirit is understood as the one who is to be given to the newly baptized rather than a subject of particular actions. In other words, the Third Person of the Trinity is not only working among us but is also a primary gift for us. Actually, Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit as the one who will be given to his disciples by the Father (John 14:26; Luke 11:13; Acts 1:4-5, 8).

The second half of the sentence, “the Spirit sent by the Lord upon his apostles at Pentecost and given by them and their successors to the baptized,” has rather an anamnestic character. By reminding us of the event of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), this statement emphasizes the essential connection between the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the apostles and the celebration of confirmation. In other words, the celebration of confirmation is the occasion in which the recipients of this sacrament are given the Paraclete in the same way as the apostles experienced at Pentecost.<sup>113</sup> Furthermore, this remembrance of the Pentecostal event shows us the purpose of the outpouring of the Spirit. After receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, the apostles began to

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<sup>113</sup> “It is evident from its celebration that the effect of the sacrament of Confirmation is the special outpouring the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost.” Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, §1302.

continue the mission of Jesus, that is, proclaiming the Gospel. As Paul Turner says, “Confirmation, then, is more than a symbol of God’s plan, and more than a gift of the Holy Spirit. It is a motivational force for proclaiming the Gospel in the world.”<sup>114</sup> Therefore, the gift of the Spirit through the sacrament of confirmation is above all for the missionary work of the Church of Christ.

The whole second paragraph represents what is brought about through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit: “The promised strength of the Holy Spirit, which you are to receive, will make you more like Christ and help you to be witnesses to his suffering, death, and resurrection. It will strengthen you to be active members of the Church and to build up the Body of Christ in faith and love” (233). Four divine actions through the Third Person are mentioned here: 1) make the recipients of confirmation more like Christ; 2) help them to be witnesses to Christ’s suffering, death and resurrection; 3) strengthen them to be active members of the Church; 4) build up the Body of Christ in faith and love. The first action reminds us of a statement of Paul: “For those whom [God] foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren” (Rom 8:29),<sup>115</sup> while the second one is clearly based on Acts 1:8.<sup>116</sup> Likewise, the third and fourth actions are closely related to Pauline teachings on the Church as the Body of Christ.<sup>117</sup> Accordingly, it is understood here that those four divine actions based on the statements of the Scriptures really take place during the celebration of confirmation, and they occur through the “promised strength of the Holy Spirit.”

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<sup>114</sup> Paul Turner, *Confirmation: The Baby in Solomon’s Court* (Chicago, IL: Hillenbrand Books), 8.

<sup>115</sup> See also 1 Cor 15:47-49, 1 John 3:2.

<sup>116</sup> “you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Sama’ria and to the end of the earth.” See also Luke 24:45-48.

<sup>117</sup> Paul reminds disciples in communities in Rome and Corinth that they are members of the Body of Christ, which is the Church (Rom 12:4-5, 1 Cor 6:15, 12:12, 25). In the letter to the Ephesians, the author of the letter insists that the members of the Church build up the Body of Christ through the gifts from Christ to each member (Eph 4:12).

The third paragraph of the invitation not only repeats what was already referred to in the previous paragraphs, but also mentions another important action of the Third Person, that is, to anoint: “My dear friends, let us pray to God our Father, that he will pour out the Holy Spirit on these newly baptized to strengthen them with his gifts and anoint them to be more like Christ, the Son of God” (233, underlining added). The outpouring of the Spirit to strengthen the recipients of confirmation already appeared in the first two paragraphs, but, in the third paragraph, it is said that this strengthening action is taken with God’s gifts. The details about these gifts are not expressed here, but these gifts are probably of the Paraclete, which are discussed by Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians.<sup>118</sup> In fact, as Turner explains, those gifts have been regarded in the Church “as evidence of the primary gift of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>119</sup> On the other hand, the verb “anoint” appears for the first time in the celebration of confirmation. Since this anointing is carried out by outpouring of the Spirit, it reminds us of Jesus’ own baptism in the Jordan, which is understood as the anointing with the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:38). This understanding can be seen in a baptismal homily by Cyril of Jerusalem:

For Christ was not anointed by human hand with any tangible oil or myron. No, the Father chose him to be Saviour of the whole world, and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. As Peter says, ‘Jesus of Nazareth whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit’ (Acts 10:38)...in the matter of anointing, Christ was anointed with the spiritual oil of gladness, that is, with the Holy Spirit.<sup>120</sup>

Therefore, “anoint them to be more like Christ” here could be understood that the newly baptized will be more like Christ by going through the same experience of Christ, that is, by being

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<sup>118</sup> “The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God” (1 Cor 2:14); “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit” (1 Cor 12:4)

<sup>119</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 4.

<sup>120</sup> *Myst. Cat.* III. 2. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 82.

anointed with the Spirit through the liturgical ceremonies.<sup>121</sup> This takes place thanks to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit through the sacrament of confirmation. As the introduction to the Blessing of Oils and Chrism states, “by confirmation [Christians] receive the spiritual anointing of the Spirit who is given to them.”<sup>122</sup> Furthermore, the *Christian Initiation, General Introduction* (CIGI)<sup>123</sup> points out, “By signing us with the gift of the Spirit, confirmation makes us more completely the image of the Lord and fills us with the Holy Spirit.”<sup>124</sup> Accordingly, anointing mentioned here is the divine action, which makes the anointed more the image of Christ, taken with<sup>125</sup> the Third Person of the Trinity.

## 2-2. Laying on of Hands

According to the instruction to this rite, “The celebrant holds his hands outstretched over the entire group of those to be confirmed and says the following prayer” (234). Paul Turner describes the significance of this gesture of the celebrant: “The gesture is significant because in most prayers, the celebrant stands with his hands lifted up; here they are stretched out over the group. In the liturgy outstretched hands generally signify that the prayer asks for a blessing or for the coming of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>126</sup> This reminds us of the first epiclesis in the Eucharistic Prayer,

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<sup>121</sup> Cyril emphasizes this understating, saying “Now you were made Christs by receiving the mark of the Holy Spirit” (*Myst. Cat.* III. 1). This translation can be found in Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 365. According to another translation, “You have become anointed ones by receiving the sign of the Holy Spirit.” Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 81. We should remember here that “christ” means “anointed one.” See also Riely, *Christian Initiation*, 364.

<sup>122</sup> “Rite of Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism,” in *The Rites of the Catholic Church, volume two: The Roman Ritual and Pontifical Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and Published by Authority of Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), §2, 329.

<sup>123</sup> *Christian Initiation, General Introduction* can be found in Catholic Church, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: Approved for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1988), xiv-xviii.

<sup>124</sup> *Christian Initiation, General Introduction*, §2.

<sup>125</sup> Here, I choose the preposition “with” according to Acts 10:38 and Gerald Austin, *Anointing with the Spirit: The Rite of Confirmation: The Use of Oil and Chrism* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1985), xi. On the other hand, “by” can also be used here, since Turner insists that the Spirit is the “agent” of this rite. See Turner, *Confirmation*, 31.

<sup>126</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 14.

during which the celebrant is “holding [his hands] extended over the offering.”<sup>127</sup> Therefore, we can regard the prayer in the rite of laying on of hands as an epiclesis, which invokes the Spirit.

This prayer of confirmation consists of three small paragraphs. The first paragraph plays a role of anamnesis; it describes what God has done through the celebration of baptism: “All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and daughters from sin and gave them new life” (234). Here, it is confirmed that God freed the newly baptized from sin and gave them new life through baptism, that is, by water and the Spirit. Although these two divine actions were already mentioned in the prayer over the water (222A), this paragraph reminds us of the role of the Third Person of the Trinity during the baptismal rite. When the sacrament of confirmation is not celebrated just after baptism, those divine actions by water and the Spirit are still mentioned in the rite of anointing after baptism (228).

The second and third paragraphs are particularly important parts of the celebration of confirmation along with the anointing with the chrism, because these parts demonstrate the two primary purposes of this sacrament. Turner says, “The two goals of Confirmation can be seen in its two primary symbols, the prayer for the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and the anointing with chrism.”<sup>128</sup> The first aim is, according to Turner, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit,<sup>129</sup> and it is represented in the prayer: “Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their helper and guide. Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence” (234). The first sentence asks for the Comforter to become the helper and guide of those to be

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<sup>127</sup> “Order of Mass,” in *The Roman Missal for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011), §101, 646.

<sup>128</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 3.

<sup>129</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 3.

confirmed. Here, the Spirit is understood as the one who helps and guides people who go through the Christian initiation journey.

Following this invocation of the Holy Spirit, the prayer invokes the specific gifts which the Church traditionally has called the “seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.” They could be understood as the same gifts which had mentioned in the invitation to the celebration of confirmation (233).

According to Turner, those seven gifts are inspired by a prophecy of Isaiah.<sup>130</sup> Chapter eleven of the Book of Isaiah states, “There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,

the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD” (Isa 11:1-3). This

passage does not simply list the gifts granted through the sacrament of confirmation, but rather has the further significance on the prayer of the rite of laying on of the hands. Turner writes

about this as follows: “By quoting this text, the prayer of Confirmation implies that the royal prophecy has two additional dimensions: it foreshadows the coming of Christ, who would

perfectly fulfill the qualities of the expected ruler, and it alludes to the activity of the Holy Spirit in salvation.”<sup>131</sup> In other words, in Jesus this prophecy was fulfilled, so he received the gifts

which were brought forth through the activity of the Spirit. To more deeply understand this

prayer, another passage of Isaiah should be recollected:

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor (Isa 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19).

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<sup>130</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 4.

<sup>131</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 4.



These words remind us of the purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit through the confirmation rite: the participation in the mission of Jesus.

The prayer of confirmation also demonstrates that each one of the confirmed receives the same Spirit as the one Jesus received. Turner explains this significant dimension of the prayer, saying:

the prayer [of confirmation] personalizes the text [from Isaiah] by its liturgical usage: it asks that the Spirit that filled Christ will now fill those to be confirmed. So the prayer masterfully weaves the role of the Holy Spirit in universal salvation with the Spirit's role in the individual Christian life.<sup>132</sup>

Accordingly, the Third Person is working on the recipients of confirmation in the same way as in the life of Jesus foretold by Isaiah. Here, two particular events of Jesus in which the Third Person was involved in a special way should be remembered: the conception and baptism of Jesus. The latter had been discussed above.<sup>133</sup> Concerning the former, the archangel Gabriel said to Mary, “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” (Luke 1:35). In other words, the life of human Jesus was inaugurated by the Spirit. It could be right to say that during the confirmation celebration, the entire life of Jesus for the universal salvation is incarnated through the Holy Spirit in each one of the confirmed. There are two goals of the sacrament of confirmation for individuals: the gift of the Holy Spirit and becoming more like Christ.<sup>134</sup> The prayer of confirmation clearly describes the former, while it indirectly speaks of the latter by quoting the text from Isaiah. As Turner writes, “while the prayer addresses the first goal of the individual's confirmation, the gift of the Spirit, it implies the second goal, becoming more like

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<sup>132</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 4.

<sup>133</sup> See above pp. 41-42.

<sup>134</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 3. See also (233).

Christ.”<sup>135</sup> Thus, the prayer for the rite of laying on of hands shows us very well the role of the Spirit in the celebration of confirmation by reminding us how the Paraclete worked on Jesus in the salvation history.

### 2-3. Consecration of the Chrism

After the rite of the laying on of hands, the climactic part of the confirmation celebration, anointing with chrism (235), is carried out. In order to consider the meaning of using chrism here and to see how the Spirit works in it, I will look at the prayer for the consecration of the chrism. Although the chrism is used not only in the rite of confirmation but also in baptism<sup>136</sup> and ordination, I will focus only on and mention the relation of the consecrated oil to the celebration of confirmation. There are two options of the consecratory prayer. I will call the first one “option A” and the second one “option B.”

In option A,<sup>137</sup> the Third Person of the Trinity is explicitly mentioned three times. The first reference is included in the remembrance of the event of Jesus’ baptism by John: “After your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, asked John for baptism in the waters of Jordan, you sent the Spirit upon him in the form of a dove and by the witness of your own voice you declared him to be your only, well-beloved Son.”<sup>138</sup> Here, the Holy Spirit’s descending on Jesus is mainly connected with the Father’s proclamation that Jesus is the only-begotten and well-beloved Son of God. It reminds us of Paul’s understanding of the essential relationship between the Spirit and our adoption as children of God.<sup>139</sup> In fact, the RCIA also implies this connection by juxtaposing

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<sup>135</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 5.

<sup>136</sup> The chrism is used in the baptismal rite only when the confirmation celebration does not follow it immediately (228).

<sup>137</sup> Gerald Austin comments on this option, saying: “This prayer of consecration is an ideal source for development of a theology of chrismal anointing.” This statement is found in Austin, *Anointing with the Spirit*, 109.

<sup>138</sup> “Rite of Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism,” §25.

<sup>139</sup> “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom 8:14-16).

these two.<sup>140</sup> Since the chrism is used for the anointing during the celebration of confirmation, it is understandable that the descending of the Paraclete through the sacrament of confirmation on its recipients is deeply related to the adoption of them as children of God. In other words, the Spirit works for such adoption.

The second reference to the Third Person shows us the inseparable relationship between the Son and the Spirit and describes how they cooperate through the chrism. Here is the paragraph that includes the reference: “And so, Father, we ask you to bless + this oil you have created. Fill it with the power of your Holy Spirit through Christ your Son. It is from him that chrism takes its name and with chrism you have anointed for yourself priests and kings, prophets and martyrs.”<sup>141</sup> The second sentence asks the Father for the power of the Spirit, but it is understood that such power comes through Christ. Accordingly, the Paraclete is not simply sent by the Father, but is transmitted through the Son.<sup>142</sup> Furthermore, the last sentence demonstrates that the Son works with chrism which is filled with the power of the Holy Spirit: “It is...with chrism you have anointed for yourself priests and kings, prophets and martyrs.”<sup>143</sup> Paul Turner summarizes this close relationship between the Second and Third Persons of the Trinity represented in the chrism as follows:

Chrism symbolizes Christ and the Holy Spirit. The word “Christ,” meaning “Anointed One,” shares the same origins as the word “chrism.” Anointing with chrism, then, symbolizes a sharing in the role of Jesus Christ as priest, prophet, and king. However, since this oil has been consecrated by the presence of the Holy Spirit, it also symbolizes the gift of the Spirit on those confirmed.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> “[Through the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, the elect] are graced with adoption as children of God and are led by the Holy Spirit into the promised fullness of time begun in Christ” (206).

<sup>141</sup> “Rite of Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism,” 25.

<sup>142</sup> “But when the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me” (John 15:26).

<sup>143</sup> “Rite of Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism,” 25.

<sup>144</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 6.

Thus, using the chrism for the rite of confirmation signifies that Christ and the Spirit works together on those who are confirmed.

The paragraph including the last reference to the Holy Spirit in option A is this: “Through this sign of chrism grant them royal, priestly, and prophetic honor, and clothe them with incorruption. Let this be indeed the chrism of salvation for those who will be born again of water and the Holy Spirit.”<sup>145</sup> Obviously, “be born again of water and the Holy Spirit” indicates new life brought about through the celebration of baptism. Commenting on this prayer, Gerard Austin writes,

Through baptism Christians partake of this mystery, and they, too, receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit who is the gift...In the baptismal context, ‘being born again’ of John 3:5 is a question of a gift that both leads to a life of faith and comes from a life of faith. This life of faith is a life according to the Spirit.<sup>146</sup>

Accordingly, through the Third Person who is the gift, the newly baptized are led into a new life, a life of faith in accordance with the Paraclete.

On the other hand, this paragraph of the prayer for consecrating the chrism resonates with the prayer for the anointing after baptism employed only when the sacrament of confirmation is not celebrated in the same liturgy:

The God of power and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has freed you from sin and brought you to new life through water and the Holy Spirit. He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation, so that, united with his people, you may remain for ever a member of Christ who is Priest, Prophet, and King (228).

Both passages are related to the chrism and mention the experience of rebirth and the participation in the Christ’s mission and life as Priest, Prophet, and King. This participation is regarded as being caused through the chrism. It represents that through chrism, a symbol both of the Second and Third Persons, the Paraclete works to involve the recipients of the anointing in Christ’s mission and life.

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<sup>145</sup> *Rite of Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism*, 25.

<sup>146</sup> Austin, *Anointing with the Spirit*, 109-110.

Option B includes four explicit references to the Holy Spirit. However, since the last one is a part of the doxology for concluding the entire prayer, I will not discuss it. The paragraph including the first reference says, “By his suffering, dying, and rising to life [Jesus Christ] saved the human race. He sent your [, that is, the Father’s,] Spirit to fill the Church with every gift needed to complete your saving work.”<sup>147</sup> Here, two things related to the Third Person of the Trinity are described: 1) It is Jesus Christ who sends the Spirit; 2) Through the Spirit sent by Jesus the Church is filled with all the needed gifts to finalize God’s salvific plan. The first point demonstrates how the Second Person is deeply involved in the sending of the Third Person. Although it is mentioned in option A,<sup>148</sup> option B more strongly emphasizes the role of the Son in sending of the Spirit. It could also be regarded as the emphasis on the close relationship between the two Divine Persons. In other words, when we reflect on the actions of the Paraclete, we have to consider Christ who sends the Spirit.

The second point indicates that the purpose of sending the Spirit to the Church is to complete God’s salvific work. Since this is the prayer for consecrating the chrism, sending the Spirit to the Church mentioned here can be understood as the descending of the Third Person through the anointing with chrism during the confirmation celebration.<sup>149</sup> If it is true, the text shows us the purpose not only of the anointing with chrism but also the sacrament of confirmation itself: “to fill the Church with every gift needed to complete your saving work.” Thus, the gift of the Spirit granted through the confirmation is both ecclesial and mission-oriented. As Austin says, “Chrism functions here in the context of a church that is Spirit-filled.”<sup>150</sup> The recipients of the pneumatic

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<sup>147</sup> “Rite of Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism,” §25.

<sup>148</sup> “Fill it with the power of your Holy Spirit through Christ your Son” (“Rite of Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism,” §25).

<sup>149</sup> Actually, there are two anointings with chrism in the RCIA. The one during the celebration of confirmation (235) and the one when confirmation is not celebrated after baptism (228). Here, I will focus on the former.

<sup>150</sup> Austin, *Anointing with the Spirit*, 111.

gifts are encouraged to share them with the entire community of the Church and make use of them to participate in the God's salvific work.

The second reference to the Holy Spirit is also placed in the context of God's work with which Christ was entrusted, while it mentions how those to be anointed will become more like Christ.

Here is the paragraph including the reference:

From that time forward, through the sign of holy chrism, you dispense your life and love to men. By anointing them with the Spirit, you strengthen all who have been reborn in baptism. Through that anointing you transform them into the likeness of Christ your Son and give them a share in his royal, priestly, and prophetic work.<sup>151</sup>

Since the first sentence describes an effect through the sign of holy chrism, which symbolizes the Spirit, "anointing" in the second and third sentences can be regarded as the anointing with chrism. This supposition is demonstrated by the fact that this anointing takes place after baptism, according to the second sentence. That anointing is understood as anointing with the Spirit, who is symbolized by chrism, in the second sentence. Therefore, two divine actions mentioned in the third sentence: 1) to transform the anointed into the likeness of Christ; 2) to give them a share in Christ's royal, priestly, and prophetic work, are taken with and through the Third Person of the Trinity. The first action here is directly connected to the second goal of the individual's confirmation, according to Turner: becoming more like Christ.<sup>152</sup> In other words, it is clearly indicated that through anointing with chrism, that is, with the Spirit, the recipients are transformed into the likeness of Christ. The second action represents that the anointed get involved in Christ's work. Thus, through the chrism, which is filled with the power of the Paraclete, the recipients of confirmation "share in the one priesthood of Christ".<sup>153</sup>

The third reference to the Paraclete is in an epicletic part of the prayer:

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<sup>151</sup> "Rite of Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism," §25.

<sup>152</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 5.

<sup>153</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, §10.

And so, Father, by the power of your love, make this mixture of oil and perfume a sign and source + of your blessing. Pour out the gifts of your Holy Spirit on our brothers and sisters who will be anointed with it. Let the splendor of holiness shine on the world from every place and thing signed with this oil.<sup>154</sup>

“The gifts of your Holy Spirit” mentioned here must mean the gifts listed in the prayer during the rite of laying on of hands (234). These sentences describe the roles both of chrism and the Spirit for distribution of the gifts to those to be anointed; chrism is a sign and source of God’s blessing and a symbol of the outpouring of the Spirit, who comes to distribute the divine gifts through the rite of anointing with chrism.

Thus, both options of the prayer for the consecration of the chrism include a rich theology of the Holy Spirit. Although this prayer is not included in the celebration of confirmation, those who participate in the celebration should be aware of what the chrism signifies. Turner summarizes the significance of the symbolism of chrism in the confirmation celebration as follows: “chrism signifies both Jesus and the Spirit. Those being confirmed now share in the mission and life of Jesus Christ—priest, prophet, and king—and the Holy Spirit’s presence is marked by the consecrated oil.”<sup>155</sup> While taking into account this symbolism, I will proceed to further consideration on the meaning of the anointing with chrism in the RCIA.

#### 2-4. Anointing with Chrism—the Seal with the Gift of the Holy Spirit

While the celebrant “dips his right thumb in the chrism and makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed,” he says the following formula: “N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit” (235). Since I had already discussed the gift of the Holy Spirit, I will focus here on the significance of the “seal” in this section.

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<sup>154</sup> “Rite of Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism,” §25.

<sup>155</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 14.

First of all, this formula is elaborated by combining statements of two great apostles. As Gerald Austin writes, “This formula combines two New Testament passages: Ephesians 1:13, where Paul writes that in Christ ‘you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit’; and Acts 2:38, where Peter in his Pentecost sermon urges his hearers to be baptized, ‘and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”<sup>156</sup> Another important biblical foundation of the seal is 2 Cor 1:21-22: “it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has commissioned us; he has put his seal upon us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.” In these passages, the close relationship between the seal and the Spirit can be recognized. Before Pope Paul VI decided in 1971 to adopt this formula, which “probably had been in use in the East since the fifth century,”<sup>157</sup> the celebrants of confirmation in the Western Church had been saying a different formula: “I sign you with the sign of the cross and confirm you with the chrism of salvation. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>158</sup> When we compare these two formulas, it is obvious that the one in the current confirmation rite emphasizes the Spirit much more. The formula used in the Western Church before Paul VI also includes a reference to the Third Person of the Trinity, but it is juxtaposed with the mention of two other Divine Persons. This significant change may well suggest that the Catholic Church has rediscovered the importance of the role of the Holy Spirit in the celebration of confirmation. As Gabriel Winkler writes,

Thus there is great significance in the fact that the decree of Paul VI regarding the reform of confirmation forcefully reasserts the relation of this rite to the Pentecost event by explaining the nature of chrismation on the basis on Jesus’ baptism, so strongly pneumatic in character, and the outpouring of the Spirit on the disciples.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Austin, *Anointing with the Spirit*, 45.

<sup>157</sup> Austin, *Anointing with the Spirit*, 45.

<sup>158</sup> Paul VI, Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Confirmation, in *Rite of Confirmation: approved for use in the dioceses of the United States of America by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and confirmed by the Apostolic See*. Study ed. (Washington, D.C.: Bishops's Committee on the Liturgy, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1977), 8.

<sup>159</sup> Gabriele Winkler, “Confirmation or Chrismation?: A Study in Comparative Liturgy,” *Worship* 58, no. 1 (January 1984), 15.



Accordingly, the reform of confirmation implemented by Paul VI retrieves the pneumatic character of the confirmation rite.

In spite of such a notable change of the formula, the importance of “seal” in the confirmation celebration is still unshakable. According to Austin, the word “seal” is an English translation of the Greek word *sphragis*; in Latin, *sphragis* is translated as *signaculum*.<sup>160</sup> The word *signaculum* is found in the current Latin formula in the Catholic Church: “Accipe Signaculum Doni Spiritus Sancti.”<sup>161</sup> Even in the old formula used in the Western Church,<sup>162</sup> the word *signo* (a verbal form of *signaculum*), which can be translated into either “I sign” or “I seal” in English, appeared. Thus, the significance of “seal” in the sacrament of confirmation has been preserved in both Eastern and Western Churches.<sup>163</sup>

“Seal” in the context of the confirmation represents belonging to Christ. Paul Turner states, “The seal marks a sign of ownership. It protects one from violation. It guarantees the agreement. Giving this seal in the form of cross indicates that chrismation<sup>164</sup> ‘brands’ one as the property of Christ.”<sup>165</sup> Therefore, “seal” signifies to become Christ’s belonging. Likewise, Hugh Riley clarifies this notion of “seal,” while discussing the understandings of John Chrysostom and

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<sup>160</sup> Austin, *Anointing with the Spirit*, 9.

<sup>161</sup> Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Confirmation.

<sup>162</sup> “N., signo te signo Crucis...et confirmo te Chrismate salutis. In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti.” Found in Philip T. Weller, ed., *The Roman Ritual*, vol. 1 (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1964), 236.

<sup>163</sup> Nevertheless, the notion of *sphragis* had much broader meanings in the antiquity. In other words, it did not necessarily signify the particular rite alone, which is called “confirmation” these days. Rather it meant what takes place in Christian initiation as a whole. According to Hugh Riley, “In ancient terminology, that is, before the third century, the word ‘σφραγίς,’ ‘signum,’ ‘signaculum,’ is not so limited in its usage as to designate only what is known in current theological terminology as ‘confirmation,’ but is a more general word for Christian Initiation in a broader sense” (Riley, *Christain Initiation*, 358).

<sup>164</sup> Turner makes this statement in the context of “chrismation,” the name used in the Eastern rites, which indicates “confirmation” in the Roman rites. See Turner, *Confirmation*, 22. Nevertheless, I believe that this statement can be applied to the current confirmation rite in the Roman Catholic Church, because the fact that Paul VI adopted the formula used in the Eastern rites implies that the confirmation celebration in the Roman rites also adopted to some extent the understanding of the Eastern Church on chrismation (See Winkler, “Confirmation or Chrismation?,” 2). Therefore, I will refer to statements of Turner on chrismation, in order to interpret the celebration of confirmation in the RCIA.

<sup>165</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 30.

Theodore of Mopsuestia on the notion of *sphragis*: “Both Chrysostom and Theodore use as their point of departure in interpreting this ceremony the traditional Christian notion of the ‘sphragis,’ the ‘seal’ as denoting the mark of ownership and the implication of protection on the part of the owner for those who bore this seal.”<sup>166</sup> Thus, through the seal, the newly confirmed enters into the ownership of Christ.

This seal is exercised “with the Gift of the Holy Spirit” (235). Therefore, it is obvious that the Third Person of the Trinity is deeply involved in the rite of “being sealed,” that is, the anointing with chrism. Actually, the Paraclete is not only the gift with which the anointed are sealed, but also the agent of this rite. Turner comments on the role of the Spirit in chrismation, saying, “The Holy Spirit is not only the gift in chrismation, the Spirit is the agent of chrismation. All God’s work is accomplished through the Holy Spirit, and chrismation is no exception.”<sup>167</sup> This notion can be applied to the confirmation celebration in the RCIA. Accordingly, the Comforter is the agent of divine sealing during the anointing with chrism.

The Holy Spirit both completes baptism and prepares for Eucharist through this seal. In the context of chrismation, there are two primary roles of the Third Person. First, the Spirit completes baptism by sealing the newly baptized.<sup>168</sup> Here, chrismation is not a rite which is separated from baptism. Rather, it is understood as the completion of baptism through the seal of the Spirit. Second, the Paraclete “seals the newly baptized in Christ, preparing them for Eucharist and for the demands of the Christian life.”<sup>169</sup> Thus, the Spirit plays two significant roles through the sealing: completion of baptism and preparation for Eucharist. In other words, through

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<sup>166</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 112. This statement of Riley appears in the section where he discusses the concluding anointing in the rite of renunciation and profession, which was celebrated before baptism (water bath) at the time of Chrysostom and Theodore. Although this section is on the celebration of confirmation, whose principal part is post-baptismal anointing with chrism, I quoted that passage, in order to deeply understand the notion of *sphragis*.

<sup>167</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 31.

<sup>168</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 29-30.

<sup>169</sup> Turner, *Confirmation*, 31.

chrismation, the Third Person of the Trinity represents the unity of a series of rites of Christian initiation, especially baptism and the Eucharist.

Such understanding should be applied to the RCIA, because the RCIA emphasizes the essential connection between the “three sacraments,” which are baptism, confirmation, and the Eucharist, by calling them together “the sacraments of initiation” (6-3). This point is also clear because of the fact that the RCIA strongly recommends that these three are celebrated in one liturgy, the Easter Vigil (8). By understanding the significance of the sealing of the Spirit during the celebration of confirmation, we can also recognize the essentially close relationship between the “three sacraments.” In the perspective of the Roman Catholic Church, where the sacraments of Christian initiation had been considered and treated separately for a long time, the Holy Spirit could be understood as a “connector” of these three sacraments, considering the significance of the pneumatic sealing.

#### 2-5. Teachings of Fourth-Century Fathers on the Sealing in Christian Initiation Rite

In order to acquire further understanding of the seal (*sphragis*) in Christian initiation, I will refer to four Church Fathers, Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose of Milan, John Chrysostom, and Theodore of Mopsuestia, and consider their teachings on the significance of the sealing.<sup>170</sup>

##### a) Cyril of Jerusalem

Although he does not mention “seal” (*sphragis*) in his mystagogical catechesis on the post-baptismal anointing, Cyril discusses it in the catechesis on the Eucharist, saying, “With oil he anointed you on the forehead, imprinting there God’s seal which you carry, so that you may become the impression of the seal, the holiness of God.”<sup>171</sup> Although Cyril does not refer to the

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<sup>170</sup> In this part, I owe a lot Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 104-123, 349-412.

<sup>171</sup> Cyril, *Myst. Cat.* IV. 7. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 88. From this sentence, it is not clear when this anointing is employed. Nevertheless, Cyril does not mention “forehead” when he discusses the pre-

Holy Spirit here, he connects the post-baptismal anointing to God's seal. In a different homily, he also regards the post-baptismal anointing as the anointing with the Spirit.<sup>172</sup> Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that the Paraclete is involved in "God's seal" Cyril mentions.

On the other hand, for Cyril, this anointing is not only pneumatological but also deeply connected to Christ. Riley writes,

According to Cyril the anointing bespeaks a particular communication of the Holy Spirit, and by his typology of Christ's baptism in the Jordan he shows that this communication of the Holy Spirit transforms the Christian according to a particular modality of the life of Christ, namely the modality of Christ's Messianic mission.<sup>173</sup>

In other words, as Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit just after his baptism in the Jordan to carry out his mission, the anointed in the Christian initiation rite are incorporated into Christ's mission. This mission is proclaimed by Second Isaiah and repeated by Jesus himself (Isa 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19). As Cyril states:

...you are anointed in a manner corresponding with Christ's anointing. That anointing is the Holy Spirit, of whom the blessed Isaiah spoke when he prophesied in the person of the Lord: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good tidings to the poor' (Isa 61:1. Cf. Luke 4:18).<sup>174</sup>

Thus, Cyril emphasized the participation of the anointed in Christ's messianic mission through the anointing with the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that for Cyril, the primary purpose of the sealing through the post-baptismal anointing is to share in Christ's mission.

Cyril's teaching completely resonates with a statement of the invitation in the celebration of

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baptismal anointing (See *Myst. Cat.* II. 3), while he explicitly refers to it in the context of the post-baptismal anointing (See *Myst. Cat.* III. 4). Therefore, I regard this quotation as the comment on the post-baptismal anointing.

<sup>172</sup> "For Christ was not anointed by human hand with any tangible oil or myron. No, the Father chose him to be Saviour of the whole world, and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. As Peter says, 'Jesus of Nazareth whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit' (Acts 10:38)...in the matter of anointing, Christ was anointed with the spiritual oil of gladness, that is, with the Holy Spirit" (*Myst. Cat.* III. 2. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 82).

<sup>173</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 369.

<sup>174</sup> Cyril, *Myst. Cat.* III. 1. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 82.

confirmation in the RCIA.<sup>175</sup> Accordingly, the confirmation rite in the RCIA agrees with Cyril's understanding of the post-baptismal anointing and the sealing.

b) Ambrose of Milan

Ambrose discusses "the spiritual seal"<sup>176</sup> in the context of a rite called "consignation."<sup>177</sup> According to Riley, it is not clear if in the practice of Ambrose's church this rite took place as an anointing with oil.<sup>178</sup> Ambrose sees an essential connection between the Third Person of the Trinity and the spiritual seal in the consignation rite:

The spiritual sealing follows...For after the ceremonies of the font, it still remains to bring the whole to perfect fulfillment. This happens when the Holy Spirit is infused at the priest's invocation: 'the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and strength, the Spirit of knowledge and piety, the Spirit of holy fear.'<sup>179</sup> These might be called the seven 'virtues' of the Spirit.<sup>180</sup>

Ambrose believes that the spiritual seal is carried out through the infusion of the Holy Spirit during the rite of consignation. As Riley insists, "There is no doubt that this ceremony of the consignation is interpreted [by Ambrose] to be a particular outpouring of the Holy Spirit."<sup>181</sup>

Ambrose also mentions the sevenfold gift of the Paraclete by referring to the priest's invocation, which reminds us of the prayer of the laying on of hands in the RCIA.<sup>182</sup> Thus, for Ambrose, the spiritual seal is what brings forth the gift of the Holy Spirit.

However, Ambrose does not think that this sealing is exercised exclusively by the Third Person of the Trinity. Rather, he regards the seal as the action of all the Three Persons:

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<sup>175</sup> "The promised strength of the Holy Spirit, which you are to receive, will make you more like Christ and help you to be witnesses to his suffering, death, and resurrection. It will strengthen you to be active members of the Church and to build up the Body of Christ in faith and love" (233).

<sup>176</sup> Ambrose of Milan, *Sacr.* VI. 8. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 148.

<sup>177</sup> About the rite of consignation, see Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 392-396.

<sup>178</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 392.

<sup>179</sup> According to Yarnold, this quotation is from Isaiah 11:2-3 (LXX).

<sup>180</sup> Ambrose, *Sacr.* III. 8. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 124.

<sup>181</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 392.

<sup>182</sup> "Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence" (234).

In everything we have done the mystery of the Trinity has been preserved. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are present everywhere; they exercise a joint causality, a single sanctifying, although some aspects do seem to be peculiar to the individual Persons. How? God anointed you, the Lord put his sign on you and placed the Holy Spirit in your heart. So you received the Holy Spirit in your heart. But there is another point: just as the Holy Spirit is in your heart, so too Christ is in your heart. How can this be? You have it in the Song of Songs, where Christ says to the Church: ‘Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm’<sup>183</sup>.<sup>184</sup>

Here, Ambrose discusses that the one who seals is Christ, while maintaining that the primary fruit of the seal is to receive the Holy Spirit. He even insists, “just as the Holy Spirit is in your heart, so too Christ is in your heart.” As Riley explains, for Ambrose, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ.<sup>185</sup> In other words, the consignation has both pneumatological and Christological dimensions, and these two are not separated in a divine action (sealing) at the consignation ceremony.

This emphasis on the role of Christ in the sealing reflects the biblical images that Ambrose finds in the sealing. Unlike Cyril of Jerusalem, who connects the seal to the anointing of Jesus with the Holy Spirit at the Jordan,<sup>186</sup> Ambrose recollects Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection while discussing the consignation:

God anointed you, then, Christ put his sign on you. In what sense? You were given a sign in the form of his cross and his passion. You received the seal in his likeness to enable you to rise again in his form and live after the model of the one who was crucified to sin and lives to God.<sup>187</sup>

Here, the seal is understood as the action of Christ. Furthermore, he does not mention the Holy Spirit at all in this particular paragraph. Such understanding of baptism and the seal can be regarded as rather Christological than pneumatological. It is obvious that Ambrose emphasizes

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<sup>183</sup> According to Yarnold, this quotation is from Song 8:6. He also comments, “[Ambrose] puts OT words on Christ’s lips.”

<sup>184</sup> Ambrose, *Sacr.* VI. 5-6. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 147-148.

<sup>185</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 394.

<sup>186</sup> Cyril, *Myst. Cat.* III. 1. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 81-82.

<sup>187</sup> Ambrose, *Sacr.* VI. 7. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 148. See also Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 394.

the strong relationship between the sealing and Jesus' death and resurrection. However, it does not mean that Ambrose underestimates the role of the Paraclete in the sealing. Rather, he tries to describe the significance both of the Second and the Third Persons in the consignation rite and recounts how these two Persons are closely interrelated to each other. Riley summarizes such an intention of Ambrose as follows:

It is, then, Christ who "seals" the newly baptized, and the Spirit which is communicated is the Spirit, but seen as the fruit of the salvific work of Jesus on the cross, because the sign of this sealing is the sign of the cross. It is a sealing into the new life of the Spirit, revealed through the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, and now living in the baptized, who is thereby conformed to this new life of Christ Who lives for God.<sup>188</sup>

Thus, Christ and the Spirit are both deeply involved in the spiritual seal. Ultimately, for Ambrose, although each Divine Person has a proper role, "the whole mystery of the Trinity is interconnected."<sup>189</sup> As Ambrose himself states, "the Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ. You must believe that he is the Holy Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the Paraclete."<sup>190</sup> Accordingly, Ambrose's teaching on the spiritual seal not only explains a distinctive role of each Divine Person, but also emphasizes the interrelatedness of those roles.

### c) John Chrysostom

John Chrysostom discusses the seal (*sphragis*) in the context of pre-baptismal anointing.<sup>191</sup> This anointing takes place before baptism proper and concludes the rite of renunciation and commitment in Chrysostom's church.<sup>192</sup> What is unique for Chrysostom about the sealing among the four Church Fathers is that he "does not connect the 'seal' with the gift of the Holy Spirit."<sup>193</sup> Nevertheless, it is helpful for us to comprehend his teaching on the sealing, in order to grasp the

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<sup>188</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 395-396.

<sup>189</sup> Ambrose, *Sacr.* VI. 7. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 148.

<sup>190</sup> Ambrose, *Sacr.* VI. 7. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 149.

<sup>191</sup> According to Riley, "In the liturgy reflected in the *Baptismal Instructions* [by Chrysostom] no anointing is mentioned after the baptismal bath" (Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 352).

<sup>192</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 111.

<sup>193</sup> Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 160.

width and richness of the notion of the seal in Christian tradition. Chrysostom primarily understands this seal as “a mark of ownership”<sup>194</sup> of Christ.<sup>195</sup>

However, he does not believe that this ownership of Christ is brought about through the sealing. He states, “After these words, after the renunciation of the devil and the covenant with Christ, inasmuch as you have henceforth become His very own and have nothing in common with that evil one, He straightway bids you to be marked and places on your forehead the sign of the cross.”<sup>196</sup> In other words, according to Chrysostom, the catechumens become Christ’s belongings through their words of renunciation and commitment,<sup>197</sup> and the anointing with the sign of the cross, the sealing, is Christ’s response to them. Riley summarizes this point as follows:

The anointing with the sign of the cross, then, is interpreted as a sort of elucidation, ceremonial confirmation, and elaboration of the implications of the event that has just taken place through the candidate’s act of renunciation and commitment. It is not causative, but illustrative of the existential situation which has been brought about by the act of renunciation and commitment.<sup>198</sup>

Thus, Chrysostom understands that the seal put on the candidates through the pre-baptismal anointing is representation of what has really come about through the rite of renunciation and commitment, that is, becoming Christ’s very own.

Chrysostom suggests another purpose of the seal: to prepare those to be baptized for a struggle against the devil. He says:

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<sup>194</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 113. See also Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 112.

<sup>195</sup> Gabriele Winkler points out the problem of the use of the word “seal” brought about by mistranslation. According to her, “The oldest Syriac sources of the third and fourth century regularly call the prebaptismal anointing of the head “*rušmā*” (sign, mark), whereas the term “seal” (*hatmā*) is normally reserved for the post baptismal anointing that was introduced by the end of the fourth century” (Winkler, “The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing and its Implications,” 27). She also indicates that “*rušmā*” is often mistranslated as “seal” (Ibid.). Therefore, there is a possibility that Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia, both are from Syrian tradition, do not mean “seal” but “sign” or “mark” when they discuss the pre-baptismal anointing.

<sup>196</sup> John Chrysostom, *P.K. 3 (Baptismal Instruction 11). 7*. Found in Harkins, *Baptismal Instructions*, 169, no. 27.

<sup>197</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 113.

<sup>198</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 114.



[after the act of renunciation and commitment,] the bishop knows that the Enemy is enraged and is sharpening his teeth going around like a roaring lion (Cf. 1 Pet 5:8), seeing that the former victims of his tyranny have suddenly defected. Renouncing him, they have changed their allegiance and publicly enlisted with Christ. It is for this reason that the bishop anoints you on your forehead and marks you with the seal, to make the devil turn away his eyes. He does not dare to look at you directly because he sees the light blazing from your head and blinding his eyes. From that day onwards you will confront him in battle, and this is why the bishop anoints you as athletes of Christ before leading you into the spiritual arena.<sup>199</sup>

Here, Chrysostom warns catechumens that after the act of renunciation and commitment, the devil will more fiercely attack them. He also encourages them by saying that because of the anointing by the bishop on their forehead<sup>200</sup> and the marking with the seal, they are protected, since Satan becomes dazzled and cannot assault them freely. Accordingly, as Riley explains, “Chrysostom sees the seal as a sign of and equipment for the struggle against Satan in this world.”<sup>201</sup> For Chrysostom, who says, “for through the chrism the cross is stamped upon you,”<sup>202</sup> the seal marked with the chrism and the sign of the cross prepares well the candidates for a battle against Satan.

Thus, Chrysostom’s understanding on the seal is dominantly Christological. For him, this pre-baptismal anointing confers on the candidates not the gift of the Holy Spirit, but the power of the cross of Christ. As Riley summarizes, “the anointing is interpreted as a sign of the Christian athletic combat in mystical union with the struggle of Christ under the victorious and so protective power of His cross.”<sup>203</sup> When we apply this teaching to the sealing in the celebration

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<sup>199</sup> John Chrysostom, *Stav. 2 (Baptismal Instruction 2)*. 23. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 160.

<sup>200</sup> According to Gabriele Winkler, in the East, “the anointing of the head is intimately associated with the pouring of oil over David’s head when he was anointed, and that this anointing is related to the outpouring of the Spirit” (Winkler, “Confirmation or Chrismation?,” 5). If this insight is applied to the pre-baptismal anointing employed in Chrysostom’s church, it could be said that that anointing also had a pneumatological element in spite of Chrysostom’s on the Holy Spirit.

<sup>201</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 119.

<sup>202</sup> *P.K. 3.7*. Found in Harkins, *Baptismal Instructions*, 169, no. 27.

<sup>203</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 122.

of confirmation in the RCIA, we can find its Christological dimension. Although the formula of the current confirmation rite<sup>204</sup> is highly pneumatological, it is possible to understand that the gift of the Spirit brings to the recipients the power of the cross of Christ. It will broaden our understanding of the confirmation rite.

d) Theodore of Mopsuestia

Theodore of Mopsuestia mentions “seal” in both contexts of pre- and post-baptismal anointings, and the emphasis is different between these two milieus. When he discusses the pre-baptismal anointing, Theodore emphasizes the Christological dimension of the sealing. According to Riley, “For Theodore the *sphragis* anointing, sealing the act of renunciation and profession, is a sign of belonging to Christ.”<sup>205</sup> Here, we can find the similarity to Chrysostom’s understanding of the pre-baptismal anointing and the mark of seal: the sealing as the sign of ownership of Christ. Theodore states:

The seal that you receive at this point marks you out for ever as the sheep of Christ, the soldier of the King of Heaven. As soon as a sheep is bought, it is given a mark to identify its owner... And when a soldier is chosen for his height and build to serve the empire, he is at once given a tattoo on his hand to show the name of the emperor in whose service he has enlisted.<sup>206</sup>

Thus, by using metaphors of a sheep and a soldier, Theodore elucidates that through the seal, those who are to be baptized are to belong to Christ.

Another point in common between Theodore and Chrysostom about the understanding of the seal is that through the sealing, the candidates participate in the life and mission of Christ. While Chrysostom emphasizes the battle against the devil, Theodore’s focus is on the participation of those who are sealed in Christ’s cross. Riley states:

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<sup>204</sup> “N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit” (235).

<sup>205</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 386.

<sup>206</sup> Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Bapt. Hom.* II. 17. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 178.

[Theodore] sums up this aspect of union with the cross of Christ in the struggle by reference to the hymn in 2 *Tm* (Tim). 2:11-13: “If we have died with Him, then we shall live with Him. If we hold firm, then we shall reign with Him. If we disown Him, then He will disown us. We may be unfaithful, but He is always faithful, for He cannot disown His own self.”<sup>207</sup>

Accordingly, through the seal the candidates become involved in Christ’s own life. They are not only to belong to Christ, but also to be appointed “for a life task on earth.”<sup>208</sup> Theodore mentions:

We expect to reign with Him, if, as the blessed Paul said, through our suffering we show our love for Him; and we shall be with Him in heaven and partakers of that great glory. It is for this task that you have been signed and it is through this signing that you are known to have been chosen for the service of heaven.<sup>209</sup>

Thus, those to be baptized are invited through the seal to undergo suffering in their earthly life for the sake of love for Christ, so that they will eventually be able to share in Christ’s glory in heaven. This teaching of Theodore on the seal is based on his belief that through the act of renunciation and commitment, the candidates have already achieved the interior victory and begun a heavenly life.<sup>210</sup> Thanks to this triumph, which is represented by the sealing, they can engage in “the service of heaven.”

Theodore also discusses the sealing while he is explaining the post-baptismal anointing.<sup>211</sup> Here, his emphasis is different from the pre-baptismal anointing. The newly baptized receives

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<sup>207</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 123.

<sup>208</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 123.

<sup>209</sup> Theodore, *Bapt. Hom.* III. 1. Found in Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 123.

<sup>210</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 119-120.

<sup>211</sup> Edward Yarnold mentions arguments of G.W.H. Lampe and L.L. Mitchell on Theodore, *Bapt. Hom.* III. 27, which is considered as a text in which Theodore discusses the post-baptismal anointing, which was not employed in Syrian tradition in the antiquity (See Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 199, no. 65). By introducing W. de Fries’ opinion, Lampe insists that “Theodore does not ascribe the gift of the Spirit to a post-baptismal unction. His language about anointing is not to be taken literally but as a reference to the unction of the Spirit that is received in Baptism” (*The Seal of the Spirit* (London: S.P.C.K., 1967), 202, no. 4). On the other hand, Mitchell maintains that this section of Theodore’s homily is “a later addition made to bring this homily into line with subsequent liturgical practice” (Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 199, no. 65. See also L.L. Mitchell, *Baptismal Anointing* (London: S.P.C.K., 1966, 41). In spite of these opinions, I will discuss this part as Theodore’s own homily and as the one on the post-baptismal anointing.

the seal from the bishop: “When you have received grace by means of baptism, then and put on this shining white garment, *the bishop comes to you and puts a seal on your forehead, saying: ‘N. is sealed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit’*”<sup>212</sup> (underlining added). Although this seal is given in the name of the Three Persons of the Trinity, the role of the Third Person is especially important here. As Riley writes, “here in Theodore’s work this post-baptismal anointing is associated in a particular way with that step in Christian Initiation which has to do with a particular communication of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>213</sup> Unlike the sealing through the pre-baptismal anointing, which is overwhelmingly Christological, the central significance of the post-baptismal anointing is the descending of the Holy Spirit on the newly baptized.<sup>214</sup> This point is even obvious when we see that Theodore refers to the event of Jordan in which Jesus is anointed with the Spirit.<sup>215</sup> He believes that as the Paraclete descended on Jesus at the Jordan, the same Spirit comes upon the sealed through the post-baptismal anointing: “This sign shows you that, when the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit were named, the Holy Spirit came upon you. You are anointed by him and received him by God’s grace. He is yours and remains within you.”<sup>216</sup> Thus, for Theodore, this post-baptismal anointing, through which the newly baptized are sealed, is the anointing with the Holy Spirit.

While Cyril, who also mentions the Jordan event in the context of post-baptismal anointing, primarily regards the seal as the sign of participation in Christ’s mission on earth, Theodore

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<sup>212</sup> Theodore, *Bapt. Hom.* III. 27. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 198.

<sup>213</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 381.

<sup>214</sup> Unlike Riley, Edward Yarnold regards this post-baptismal anointing Theodore discusses here as indication of the fact that the Holy Spirit has already descended rather than the conferring of the Spirit itself. He understands that Theodore connects “the gift of the Spirit with the imposition of the bishop’s hand at the moment of baptism” (*The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 199, no 65).

<sup>215</sup> “When Jesus came up out of the water, he received the grace of the Holy Spirit, which came and remained on him in the form of a dove. This is why he too is said to have been anointed by the Holy Spirit” (*Bapt. Hom.* III. 27. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 198).

<sup>216</sup> Theodore, *Bapt. Hom.* III. 27. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 198.

argues that through the sealing the newly baptized come to foretaste of the grace which will eventually be granted:

You enjoy the first-fruits of [the Holy Spirit] in this life, for you receive now in symbol the possession of the blessings to come. Then you will receive the grace in its fullness, and it will free you from death, corruption, pain and change; your body too will last for ever and will be free from decay, and your soul will not be liable to any further movement towards evil.<sup>217</sup>

Here, it is helpful for us to remember that Theodore emphasizes in the context of the pre-baptismal anointing that those who have been sealed through the pre-baptismal anointing have already begun a heavenly life.<sup>218</sup> In other words, he regards the seal (either through the pre- or post-baptismal anointing) as a sign of the beginning of what shall be completed. For Theodore, it is essentially important to be aware that those who have experienced Christian initiation will eventually participate in the glory of Christ in its fullness. With this hope, the sealed can undertake their earthly tasks. Therefore, the role of the Holy Spirit in the post-baptismal anointing can be understood as to evoke such eschatological hope through sealing them.

It is significant to understand the fact that Theodore mentions “seal” in two different contexts. It would be easy to regard the sealing through the pre-baptismal as a Christological seal and the one by the post-baptismal anointing as a pneumatological seal. However, such a perspective could be too analytical to understand the dynamics of unity of the entire Christian initiation rite. It is more reasonable to believe that Theodore mentions the sealing twice to describe the richness of the divine seal.<sup>219</sup> In other words, there is only one decisive divine sealing through the entire

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<sup>217</sup> Theodore, *Bapt. Hom.* III. 27. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 198-199.

<sup>218</sup> See above, p. 63.

<sup>219</sup> It is noteworthy that both formulas, of the pre-baptismal anointing and of the postbaptismal anointing, are trinitarian. “N. is signed in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit” (pre-baptismal anointing, Theodore, *Bapt. Hom.* II. 17. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 178); “N. is sealed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (post-baptismal anointing, Theodore, *Bapt. Hom.* III. 27. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 198). Therefore, ultimately, this sealing should be attributed to the Trinity.

initiation rite, but one anointing is not enough to represent all the grace brought about through this sealing. Therefore, Theodore discusses “seal” in two distinctive contexts with different emphases, Christological and pneumatological, in order to express extremely rich theology of the divine sealing. Such understanding is helpful to deeply understand the current formula of the confirmation, “N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit” (235). It looks simply pneumatological, but the sealing mentioned here also contains Christological aspects such as ownership of Christ and participation in Christ’s life, as we can see in Theodore’s homilies.<sup>220</sup>

The teachings of these four Church Fathers clearly demonstrate that the meaning of the seal in the Christian initiation rite is extremely diverse and deep. Each Father emphasizes a different aspect of the sealing, while there is some overlap between them. It would not be a right approach to argue which Father’s understanding is “correct” or “more appropriate” when we try to apply it to the confirmation celebration in the RCIA. Actually, we should not ignore any of them, either. Rather, we need to take into account each Father’s teaching, in order to be able to perceive various dimensions of the divine sealing. Among those Fathers’ teachings, it should be especially noted that the seal cannot be limited within the role of the Third Person. The Son, Christ, also works there in a significant way. Without recognizing the Christological dimension of the seal, we cannot fully understand the role of the Holy Spirit there.

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<sup>220</sup> As I had mentioned above (See above p. 60, no. 195), there is a possibility that Chrysostom and Theodore, both are from Syrian tradition, do not mean “seal” but “sign” or “mark” when they discuss the pre-baptismal anointing. It is also not certain if the architects of the RCIA recognized this distinction. In this chapter, I did not go deeper into this issue. Rather, I have discussed “seal” with presupposition that the word “seal” in the RCIA could even include the meaning which Chrysostom and Theodore found in the pre-baptismal anointing rite.

### ***3. Baptism, Confirmation, and the Spirit: Unity of the “Two Sacraments”***

In the previous sections, I discussed the role of the Holy Spirit in the both celebrations of baptism and confirmation respectively. However, it does not mean that these two celebrations are either independent or separated from each other. Rather, it is essential to recognize the unity of these “two sacraments,” in order to understand the dynamic role of the Third Person of the Trinity in the Christian initiation journey. Nevertheless, the Catholic Church had been emphasizing their distinction through celebrating them separately rather than their essential unity. On the contrary, while continuing to respect the distinction (not separation!) between the two, the RCIA tries to recover their unity, so that the Christian initiation rite retrieves its original transforming power generated by the Triune God.

In this section, I will discuss the significance of celebrating baptism and confirmation together as well as what the negative consequences are when these two are separated. I will also demonstrate that paying a close attention to the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian initiation rite helps us to understand the importance of the unity. In order to demonstrate those points, I will refer to the RCIA text, the ancient liturgical practices, and contemporary theologians.

Considering this particular topic, the unity of baptism and confirmation, the most important paragraph in the RCIA is no. 215:

In accord with the ancient practice followed in the Roman liturgy, adults are not to be baptized without receiving confirmation immediately afterward, unless some serious reason stands in the way. The conjunction of the two celebrations signifies the unity of the paschal mystery, the close link between the mission of the Son and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the connection between the two sacraments through which the Son and the Holy Spirit come with the Father to those who are baptized.

Here, it is strongly encouraged that the catechumens are confirmed just after being baptized, in order to well represent the unity of the paschal mystery, of the missions of the Second and Third Persons, and of the two sacraments. This statement is a clear response to a call of the Second

Vatican Council for restoring the rite of confirmation: “The rite of confirmation is to be revised also so that the intimate connection of this sacrament with the whole of Christian initiation may be shown more clearly.”<sup>221</sup> As Aidan Kavanagh writes, “[t]he conciliar reform is a restoration meant to reintegrate the various parts of Christian initiation which...had over the centuries become separated from each other and had thus lost intelligibility.”<sup>222</sup> Accordingly, demonstrating the unity of baptism and confirmation in liturgy goes along with the spirit of the Vatican II.

In order to understand the paragraph of the RCIA more deeply, insights of Yves Congar are helpful. While regarding the initiation rite as the representation of the one reality, the paschal mystery, Congar comprehends that baptism and confirmation respectively emphasizes Christ in his Pasch and Pentecost.<sup>223</sup> In *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, he states:

...the fundamental structure (of the Christian initiation rite) which is indicated thereby is a combination of the Christological and the pneumatological aspects of the same mystery...Baptism absorbs us into the death and resurrection of Jesus (Rom 6:3-11), and confirmation means life through the fruit of the Pasch, which is the sending of the Spirit by the Lord. This relationship of the two aspects of the same mystery has undoubtedly inspired the Church's liturgy.<sup>224</sup>

This understanding of the relationship between the two sacraments clearly resonates with the perspective of the paragraph 215 of the RCIA. Comparatively, baptism represents a Christological aspect of the paschal mystery demonstrated by the initiation rite, while confirmation shows us a pneumatological aspect of the same mystery. Although this point of view might lead to misunderstanding that the work of the Spirit is limited within the sacrament

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<sup>221</sup> *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, §71

<sup>222</sup> Aidan Kavanagh, *Confirmation: Origins and Reform* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1988), 81.

<sup>223</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 219.

<sup>224</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 219.



of confirmation,<sup>225</sup> Congar's explanation masterfully describes the unity of the initiation rite and the relationship of the two sacraments with it.

The reason why both the Vatican II and Congar emphasize the unity of the two sacraments is, I believe, that celebrating them separately is not only contradicts the ancient traditions of Christian initiation, but also harms the profound meaning of the initiation rite and dynamism of the work of Holy Spirit with the other two Persons of the Trinity. I will discuss these two points.

In his article, while summarizing the argument of J. D. C. Fisher,<sup>226</sup> Nathan Mitchell discusses the dissolution of the Christian initiation rite in Rome. Such disintegration eventually led the Western Church to celebrating baptism and confirmation separately. However, such separation did not take place in antiquity, even to some point in the medieval period. According to Mitchell, "There is reason to believe that in Rome itself the primitive unity of Christian initiation was by and large substantially preserved until at least the twelfth century."<sup>227</sup> He also says that an initiation rite is unified in earlier liturgical texts such as the *Apostolic Tradition*.<sup>228</sup> Thus, in the ancient practice of Roman liturgy, what we call now baptism and confirmation were celebrated in one rite. Nevertheless, the rite of Christian initiation was eventually divided in the Western Church. Mitchell writes:

...by the early ninth century we are already well on the road to "confirmation," to a split in the ensemble of initiation rites, and to a style of theology that will legitimate them both. As a result, to write the story of the dissolution of Christian initiation is to write about the emergence of episcopal confirmation as a rite separated from baptism.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> It goes without saying that such misunderstanding is not what Congar means. I will discuss this issue later.

<sup>226</sup> Mitchell summarizes Fisher's conclusions in John Douglas Close Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West* (London : S.P.C.K., 1965).

<sup>227</sup> Nathan D. Mitchell, "Dissolution of the Rite of Christian Initiation," in Murphy Center for Liturgical Research, *Made, Not Born: New Perspectives on Christian Initiation and the Catechumenate* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976), 54.

<sup>228</sup> Mitchell, "Dissolution of the Rite of Christian Initiation," 52.

<sup>229</sup> Mitchell, "Dissolution of the Rite of Christian Initiation," 56.

This dissolution became decisive through the distinction made by Thomas Aquinas. Mitchell encapsulates Thomas's argument as follows: "Aquinas distinguishes confirmation from baptism by using the notion of spiritual adulthood to define, analogically, what happens in the sacramental character of confirmation: the Christian, justified in baptism, is given the 'fullness of grace' in confirmation."<sup>230</sup> Consequently, in the Western Church, baptism and confirmation had come to be regarded as different steps of the way to maturity and to be celebrated separately.

Gabriele Winkler also discusses the origin of such a dissolution of Christian initiation by analyzing liturgical documents in the Gallican tradition. The third council of Arles, which took place in the middle of the fifth century, addressed that the bishop confirmed the neophytes.<sup>231</sup>

Winkler comments on this, saying:

The data seem to indicate that the postbaptismal anointing, previously a part of the baptismal rite, had either been separated from baptism or that it had been duplicated: the presbyters either omitted the anointing in anticipation of the bishop's visit or they anointed the baptized and then presented them to the bishop on the occasion of his visit.<sup>232</sup>

Thus, the separation of the postbaptismal anointing from the baptismal rite had already germinated in the fifth century, as the authority to confirm the newly baptized through liturgical actions had been limited to bishops. Winkler writes, "In general this evidence from the mid-fifth century seems to indicate that *confirmatio* developed in the context of juridical issues concerning the postbaptismal rite and the office of bishop."<sup>233</sup> She also mentions an anonymous homily which was supposed to be given on Pentecost around the middle of the fifth century. According to Winkler, this homily is "[t]he only document that can be cited in support of the existence of the laying on of hands as a separate Gallican rite of initiation" and that "does indeed refer to a

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<sup>230</sup> Mitchell, "Dissolution of the Rite of Christian Initiation," 69.

<sup>231</sup> Winkler, "Confirmation or Chrismation?," 9.

<sup>232</sup> Winkler, "Confirmation or Chrismation?," 9.

<sup>233</sup> Winkler, "Confirmation or Chrismation?," 12.

separate laying on of the hand and repeatedly employs the term *confirmare*.<sup>234</sup> Unfortunately, this homily was “duly canonized, [and] found a place in the Sentences of Peter Lombard, a basic source for scholastic theologians! Thus it acquired great influence on the Western understanding of ‘confirmation.’”<sup>235</sup> Accordingly, celebrating the confirmation rite separately from baptism was validated by scholastic theology, something that I had already mentioned above. The RCIA, one of primary fruits of the liturgical reformation after the Vatican II, tries to retrieve the unity of the entire initiation rite, particularly the intrinsic connection between baptism and confirmation (215).

It is worthwhile to be aware of negative consequences of the dissolution of the Christian initiation rite, especially the separation between baptism and confirmation. First of all, it should always be noted that the confirmation rite and the baptismal rite were not separated in the antiquity. At that time, there was the Christian initiation rite which included the elements both of what we currently call “baptism” and “confirmation” as distinct rites. For example, *The Apostolic Tradition*, which is regarded as describing the liturgical practices of the Roman church in the third century,<sup>236</sup> demonstrates that just after the renunciation of Satan and the profession of faith in God the Father Almighty, catechumens are baptized. Immediately after they come up from the water, the newly baptized are anointed with the sacred oil by the presbyter with the prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, the imposition hand by the bishop with the invocation of the Holy Spirit, and another anointing by the bishop with the Trinitarian formula.<sup>237</sup> Accordingly, at

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<sup>234</sup> Winkler, “Confirmation or Chrismation?,” 13.

<sup>235</sup> Winkler, “Confirmation or Chrismation?,” 13.

<sup>236</sup> Hippolytus, *On the Apostolic Tradition*, trans. Alistair Stewart-Sykes (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Press, 2001), 11. A different perspective on the date when the *Apostolic Tradition* was composed can be found in Paul F. Bradshaw, Maxwell E. Johnson, and L. Edward Philips, *The Apostolic Tradition: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press 2002), 1-17.

<sup>237</sup> *Apostolic Tradition* 21:8-22. Found in Alistair Stewart-Sykes, *On the Apostolic Tradition*, 111-112.

the third century Rome, the water bath rite, two post-baptismal anointings, and the imposition of bishop's hand were celebrated in sequence in the initiation rite.

This unity can also be seen in other ancient practices. In fourth century Jerusalem, according to Cyril of Jerusalem, the pneumatic anointing was celebrated immediately after the water bath rite: "...when you emerged from the pool of sacred waters you were anointed in a manner corresponding with Christ's anointing. That anointing is the Holy Spirit."<sup>238</sup> Likewise, in fourth century Milan, Ambrose sealed the newly baptized in the sequence of the initiation rite: after the water bath rite followed by anointing with chrism, which was not regarded as particularly pneumatic, and the washing of the feet, the spiritual sealing as the representation of the gift of the Holy Spirit was celebrated.<sup>239</sup> Thus, in the ancient traditions, what we call baptism and confirmation were celebrated together. Celebrating these two separately is against the ancient practices of Christian initiation.

Another problem which comes from separating confirmation from baptism is related to how we understand the work of the Holy Spirit in the initiation rite. As I had mentioned above, Yves Congar indicates that the baptismal rite represents the death and resurrection of Christ, while confirmation signifies the sending of the Spirit by Christ.<sup>240</sup> This explanation works very well when we try to grasp the meaning of the current initiation rite in the RCIA, in which baptism and confirmation are already regarded as distinct celebrations. However, Congar's elucidation could lead to misunderstanding that baptism is exclusively Christological whereas confirmation is exclusively pneumatological.

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<sup>238</sup> Cyril, *Myst. Cat.* III. 1. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 82.

<sup>239</sup> Ambrose of Milan, *Sacr.* II. 20-III. 10. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 118-125. See also Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 392.

<sup>240</sup> Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 219.

As an explanation, it is simpler and more compact to say, “baptism is about Christ, while confirmation is about the Holy Spirit,” but it is contrary to what liturgical texts suggest. As it had been discussed in the section on the prayer over the water in the RCIA, the baptismal font is sanctified by the power of the Third Person of the Trinity (222).<sup>241</sup> Furthermore, it always has to be noted that the baptism rite is performed “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (226). Likewise, a Christological dimension can be found in the rite of confirmation, when we take account the ancient traditions. Cyril of Jerusalem teaches that the anointing the newly baptized have received just after their own baptism corresponds with Christ’s anointing with the Spirit in the Jordan.<sup>242</sup> Accordingly, through the post-baptismal anointing, those who are anointed experience what Christ himself underwent. Moreover, Ambrose points out another Christological perspective in the spiritual sealing after baptism, by saying that Christ is the one who seals the newly baptized.<sup>243</sup> He also understands the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ.<sup>244</sup> For Ambrose, the spiritual sealing has both Christological and pneumatological dimensions. If we apply these teachings from antiquity to the current initiation rite, it is reasonable to say that the Holy Spirit really works with Christ in and through the both rites of baptism and confirmation.

It is also an issue to explain the difference between the roles of the Paraclete in the confirmation rite and baptismal rite, if they are celebrated separately. It is a big question as to what extent the Spirit is given through the baptismal rite, especially when we understand that the gift of the Spirit is granted in its fullness in the confirmation rite. The problem of such a

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<sup>241</sup> See above p. 34.

<sup>242</sup> Cyril, *Myst. Cat.* III. 1-2. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 82.

<sup>243</sup> Ambrose, *Sacr.* VI. 7. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 148. See also Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 394.

<sup>244</sup> Ambrose, *Sacr.* VI. 9. Found in Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 149. See also Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 394.

viewpoint is trying to grasp the dynamic actions of the Third Person of the Trinity analytically and statically. Actually, it is impossible to strictly distinguish the roles of the Spirit in baptism and confirmation. Rather, it is much more appropriate to explain that through the entire Christian initiation rite, the Holy Spirit is fully granted. John Chrysostom's understanding of the role of the Paraclete in the initiation rite also sheds light on this issue. While there was no post-baptismal rite for the imparting of the Spirit in his church,<sup>245</sup> "Chrysostom himself says that the Holy Spirit is communicated in the baptismal act itself: 'through the words and hands of the priest (bishop) the Holy Spirit descends upon you.'<sup>246</sup>"<sup>247</sup> This comprehension clearly demonstrates that the imparting of the Spirit is not restricted in the post-baptismal anointing or the confirmation rite.

Certainly, we can understand baptism and confirmation as distinct sacraments and find the difference of the role of the Third Person of the Trinity in the two sacraments. While Mary's conception of Jesus by the life-giving Spirit can be regarded as the origins of baptism, Jesus' messianic anointing with the Spirit right after his baptism in the Jordan can be understood as the roots of confirmation, as Yves Congar insists. However, this distinction cannot be used for justification of separate celebrations of the two sacraments. We should not be unaware of the essential unity of the entire initiation rite and inseparable character of the Holy Spirit's dynamic actions. As Riley mentions, "the communication of the Holy Spirit is seen in the totality of Christian Initiation."<sup>248</sup> Such understanding can comprise the variety and the dynamism of the Spirit's work in the initiation rite. In order to keep this apprehension, baptism and confirmation have to be celebrated in the sequence. On the contrary, if we celebrate baptism and confirmation

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<sup>245</sup> Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 37.

<sup>246</sup> John Chrysostom, *Stav. 2 (Baptismal Instruction 2)*. 25. Found in Harkins, *Baptismal Instructions*, 52.

<sup>247</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 404.

<sup>248</sup> Riley, *Christian Initiation*, 399. Riley says this while elucidating the understanding of Cyril of Jerusalem on the role of the Spirit in Christian initiation.

separately, we could fail to grasp the dynamic actions of the Third Person of the Trinity in Christian initiation.

### **Chapter 3 Spirit in the Entire Journey to Christian Initiation**

In this short chapter, I will demonstrate that the Holy Spirit, who plays a significant role in the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, is working and present in the entire process of Christian initiation journey.<sup>249</sup> Compared with the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, the number of explicit references to the Holy Spirit is smaller in the other parts of the RCIA. However, it does not mean that the Paraclete is not active in those parts. In this section, I will examine important references to the Spirit in the parts of the RCIA before and after the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, in order to investigate the role of the Spirit in the whole journey to Christian initiation.

#### **1. References to the Spirit in the RCIA before the Election or Enrollment of Names**

The RCIA understands itself a journey accompanied by the Holy Spirit. According to the introduction of the RCIA,

The initiation of catechumens is a gradual process that takes place within the community of the faithful. By joining the catechumens in reflecting on the value of the paschal mystery and by renewing their own conversion, the faithful provides an example that will help the catechumens to obey the Holy Spirit more generously (4).

This paragraph states that during the process of Christian initiation, the catechumens are expected to obey the Third Person of the Trinity. Although what “obey the Holy Spirit” here really means is not clear enough, it is very likely to mean that catechumens become more aware of the guidance of the Paraclete through interacting with and celebrating liturgical rites the Church community, because the role of the community of the faithful is strongly emphasized in this paragraph. Since the following paragraph describe this process as “a spiritual journey” (5), it is reasonable to understand that the process of Christian initiation is a journey guided by the Spirit.

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<sup>249</sup> The RCIA understands Christian initiation as a “gradual process” (4) and a “spiritual journey” (5).



This journey begins with the period of evangelization and precatechumenate. Although this period is not regarded as a part of the rite of initiation proper, the RCIA understands its considerable significance (36). There is no designed rite for this period, but there is an important mention of the Third Person of the Trinity in the instructions: “[T]hose who are not yet Christians, their hearts opened by the Holy Spirit, may believe and be freely converted to the Lord and commit themselves sincerely to him” (36). This statement demonstrates that it is the Spirit who inaugurates the Christian initiation journey by opening the hearts of those whom God calls. Through the work of the Paraclete, the candidates can enter into a relationship with Jesus. The very first paragraph of the RCIA also refers to this role of the Spirit.<sup>250</sup>

Surprisingly, there is no explicit reference to the Third Person of the Trinity in the rite of acceptance into the order of catechumens except in the trinitarian formula in an optional part of this rite (56). However, it is easy to assume that the Paraclete is working actively in this rite because of the presence of the Church community. As Gerald Austin says, “[T]he Spirit is operating in and through the mediation of the Christian community.”<sup>251</sup> Nevertheless, it could be much better if there are more explicit references to the Holy Spirit, in order to make the participants in this rite aware of the persistent guidance of the Spirit in the initiation journey.

In the rites belonging to the period of the catechumenate, there are two significant references to the Holy Spirit. First, in option B of the prayers of exorcism, the celebrant says, “In the name of your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, we ask you to remove from these your servants all unbelief and hesitation in faith...the love of money and lawless passions, enmity and quarreling, and every manner of evil” (94B). This prayer represents

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<sup>250</sup> “The rite of Christian initiation presented here is designed for adults who, after hearing the mystery of Christ proclaimed, consciously and freely seek the living God and enter the way of faith and conversion as the Holy Spirit opens their hearts” (1).

<sup>251</sup> Austin, *Anointing with the Spirit*, 141.

that the Third Person works with the other two Persons, in order to deliver the catechumens from various kinds of vice. While analyzing the liturgical texts of the *Ordo Initiationis Christianae Adultorum*, James Leachman comments on the reference to the Spirit in that prayer, saying, “This is the most direct reference to the gift of the Spirit that we find in the texts of the catechumenate.”<sup>252</sup> He also connects this reference with Gal 5:22 (“the fruit of the Spirit”).<sup>253</sup> Thus, at the rite of minor exorcism, the Spirit is certainly at work.

The other important mention of the Third Person of the Trinity can be found in the rite of anointing the catechumens: “Let them submit themselves to the Spirit of grace, so that, with hope in their calling, they may join the priestly people and share in the abundant joy of the new Jerusalem, where you live and reign for ever and ever” (102A).<sup>254</sup> Here, it is understood that catechumens need to submit themselves to the Spirit, in order to complete their initiation journey. It strongly implies that the Paraclete’s actions are really important for the journey for the period of catechumenate.

In spite of the significance of the period of catechumenate, there are few textual references to the Holy Spirit. For example, the rite of the blessings of the catechumens does not have any mention of the Third Person of the Trinity. It is surely true that “[t]he activity of the Holy Spirit in the period of the catechumenate is presumed, even though it is hardly mentioned,”<sup>255</sup> because, as I had discussed before, the journey to Christian initiation is guided by the Third Person of the Trinity, the Spirit is at work through the presence of a Church community. After all, “the Holy Spirit is operative in the lives of the catechumens.”<sup>256</sup> Nevertheless, it is unfortunate that the

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<sup>252</sup> James Leachman, “The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Catechumenal Preparation for Baptism in *Ordo Initiationis Christianae Adultorum*,” in *Spiritus spiritualia nobis dona potenter infundit: a proposito di tematiche liturgico-pneumatologiche*, Studia Anselmiana 139 (Roma: Centro studi S. Anselmo, 2005), 284.

<sup>253</sup> Leachman, “The Role,” 284.

<sup>254</sup> This is the same prayer as the one in the rite of minor exorcisms (94H).

<sup>255</sup> Leachman, “The Role,” 288.

<sup>256</sup> Austin, *Anointing with the Spirit*, 141.

actions of the Paraclete are not acknowledged explicitly in the liturgical texts during the period of catechumenate.

## **2. Role of the Spirit during the Period of Purification and Enlightenment**

The period of purification and enlightenment is inaugurated by the rite of election (138). In the rite of election, the Spirit is mentioned only three times (134A, 135B, 136C). Among the three, there is only one reference which implicitly describes the work of the Paraclete in this period: “That their families, far from placing any obstacles in the way of these catechumens, may help them to follow the promptings of the Spirit” (134A). This statement implies that the Spirit prompts the catechumens during the purification period. Other two references are not representing any actions of the Paraclete during this period of purification and enlightenment.

The role of the Holy Spirit in the period of purification is better demonstrated in the scrutinies. In the first scrutiny, four references to the Third Person can be found besides the one in the dismissal of the elect. The first two are in the intercessions for the elect: “That the Holy Spirit, who searches every heart, may help them to overcome their weakness through his power” (153A); “That the same Holy Spirit may teach them to know the things of God and how to please him” (153A).” In these statements, the actions of the Paraclete are clearly described: helping and teaching the catechumens during the period of purification.

The other two references can be found in the rite of exorcism. The third one states, “Lord Jesus...[s]how your elect the way of salvation in the Holy Spirit, that they may come to worship the Father in truth” (154A). Although it is not clear what “the way of salvation in the Holy Spirit” really means here, it could be interpreted as implication of the presence and influence of the Paraclete. The fourth one represents the collaboration of the Second and Third Persons of the Trinity: “Lord Jesus...[t]ouch their hearts with the power of the Holy Spirit, that they may come

to know the Father in true faith, which expresses itself in love, for you live and reign for ever and ever” (154B). This statement represents that the Spirit will work with Jesus to guide the catechumens to the knowledge of the Father by touching their hearts.

The second scrutiny also contains references to the Spirit’s actions. Particularly, the intercessions for the elect have three statements which clearly mention the role of the Third Person: 1) “That, freed by the power of the Spirit, they may put all fear behind them and press forward with confidence” (167A); 2) “That, transformed in the Spirit, they may seek those things that are holy and just” (167A); 3) “That, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, they may never fail to profess the Good News of salvation and share it with others” (167B). Three actions of the Spirit mentioned here. The Paraclete is the one who frees, transforms, and enlightens the elect to prepare for the completion of their initiation.

In the rite of the exorcism, there are two references to the Spirit apart from the dismissal of the elect (169C). The first one says, “Lord Jesus...[t]hrough your Spirit of truth free those who are enslaved by the father of lies” (168A). Here, it is said that the Second Person of the Trinity frees the catechumens from the state of slavery through the Third Person. It can be understood as another example of cooperation of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. In other words, they work together to free the elect. The second reference is as follows: “Lord Jesus, at your own baptism the heavens were opened and you received the Holy Spirit...Pour out the same Holy Spirit on these elect, who long for your sacraments” (168B). This invocation could indicate the gift of the Spirit that is fully given through the celebration of the sacraments of initiation rather than the role of the Third Person during the period of purification.

Compared with the previous scrutinies, there are very few references to the Holy Spirit in the third scrutiny. Besides the dismissal of the elect (176C), only two statements that refer to the

Spirit explicitly (174B, 175A) can be found. Both of them mentions the life-giving role of the Paraclete, but it is not particularly understood as the action of the Third Person during the period of purification: “That they may be filled with the hope of the life-giving Spirit and prepare themselves thoroughly for their birth to new life” (174B, underline added). The second reference represents another task of the Spirit: “Lord Jesus...through your Spirit, who gives life, fill them with faith, hope, and charity, that they may live with you always in the glory of your resurrection” (175B). Accordingly, the Third Person acts with the Second Person to fill the elect with the theological virtues.

Thus, the scrutinies during the period of purification and enlightenment include several significant references to the Holy Spirit, which clearly demonstrate the actions of the Third Person during the period. It would be right to regard, as James Leachman suggests, the Third Person of the Trinity as “transforming power in the lives of the elect during the Lenten period.”<sup>257</sup> On the other hand, as especially seen in the rite of the election, the representation of the role of the Spirit in the liturgical texts is not represented clearly enough in some rites during this period, in order to make the catechumens and Church community well aware of the guidance of the Paraclete then.

### **3. Spirit in the Period of Postbaptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy**

There is no properly designed rite for this period. However, there is a reference to the Spirit in the instructions:

The neophytes are, as the term ‘mystagogy’ suggests, introduced into a fuller and more effective understanding of mysteries through the Gospel message they have learned and above all through their experience of the sacraments they have received. For they have truly been renewed in mind, tasted more deeply the sweetness of God’s word, received the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, and grown to know the goodness of the Lord (245).

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<sup>257</sup> James G. Leachman, “The Transforming Power of the Holy Spirit in the Period of Purification and Enlightenment in *Ordo Initiationis Christianae Adultorum*,” *Studia liturgica* 36, no. 2 (2006), 199.

This statement implies that because of the fellowship of the Third Person of the Trinity, who is given as the gift through the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, the neophytes are able to get into deeper understanding of mysteries, especially the paschal mystery of Christ, represented by those sacraments. In other words, the Holy Spirit continues guiding those who have completed the Christian initiation journey, as Jesus says in the Gospel of John: “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (John 16:13).

Thus, although they do not occur as much as in the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, there are explicit references to the Holy Spirit in the other parts of the RCIA. When these references are examined carefully, it is justified to assert that the Third Person of the Trinity guides candidates throughout the Christian initiation journey. As Austin insists, “the initiation process makes it clear that the Holy Spirit has been operative throughout.”<sup>258</sup> Nevertheless, the role of the Paraclete would be more clearer and easily understandable, if it is mentioned more, especially in the rites where there are really few remarks about it such as the rite of acceptance into the order of catechumens and the rite of election.

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<sup>258</sup> Austin, *Anointing with the Spirit*, 140.

## **Conclusion**

In this final part of this thesis, I will discuss three things. First, I will make a brief review on and summary of the contents of the previous chapters, in order to reaffirm the purpose and meaning of each chapter. Second, I will try to make a brief evaluation of the RCIA. In the end, I will explore how those whole arguments on the Holy Spirit and the RCIA can be helpful for those who make a Christian initiation journey.

### **1. Summary of the Chapters**

In Chapter 1, I demonstrated the two most significant relationships of the Holy Spirit, the relationship with Christ and the relationship with the Church, and ten important divine actions of the Third Person of the Trinity. I also discussed that the three Divine Persons always work together and enumerated where the Paraclete is present and works. Through the first chapter, which is a working summary of Yves Congar's pneumatology, I laid foundations for exploring the role of the Third Person in the Christian initiation journey by clarifying the essential points and features of the Spirit. The chapter shows how various and abundant the ways of the presence and actions of the Holy Spirit are.

The second and third chapters are the analysis of the texts of the RCIA that include references to the Spirit. In Chapter 2, I investigated the role the Paraclete plays through the celebrations of baptism and confirmation in the RCIA. For this purpose, I reflected not only on the liturgical texts of the RCIA, but also on the prayer for the consecration of the chrism and on the baptismal catecheses of four Church Fathers. The second chapter demonstrates that the Paraclete performs a significant role in both of the two celebrations, and that Christ and the Spirit really work

together in the sacraments of initiation. I also illustrated that it is best to celebrate baptism and confirmation in the same liturgy, in order to represent the dynamic actions of the Spirit.

In Chapter 3, through reflecting on explicit references to the Holy Spirit in other parts of the RCIA than the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, I showed that the Third Person is present and at work throughout the Christian initiation journey. The third chapter also demonstrates that the influence of the Spirit extends to the whole process of initiation by carefully reading the RCIA texts. Compared with the celebrations of baptism and confirmation, the number of references to the Paraclete in those parts is too few.

Through these arguments, I demonstrated that the Holy Spirit plays vital and various roles throughout the Christian initiation journey, and therefore, it is also obvious that the RCIA contains very rich and sound pneumatology. In other words, the more we are aware of the presence and the action of the Third Person of the Trinity in the initiation journey, the more we can understand the significance of the RCIA as the representation of the whole process of Christian initiation. Likewise, the more carefully we read and study the texts and the background of the RCIA, the deeper we understand the Spirit.

## **2. Evaluation of the RCIA**

### **1-1. Merits**

There are four merits of the RCIA: 1) it understands Christian initiation as a journey; 2) it provides instructions and rites for each period and step of the journey; 3) it emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit during the Christian initiation journey; 4) it stresses the unity of the three sacraments of initiation.



### 1) Understanding Christian Initiation as a Journey

As I mentioned in the third chapter, the RCIA understands Christian initiation as “a gradual process that takes place within the community of the faithful” (4) and “a spiritual journey of adults” (5). Such a comprehension resonates with a practice of the ancient tradition and an intention of the Vatican II. According to Aidan Kavanagh, “[Apostolic Tradition] speaks only generically about the details of the catechumenate. Its length is normally three years, but this is flexible depending on the earnestness and perseverance of the catechumen.”<sup>259</sup> This fact clearly represents that Christian initiation is not a one-time event but requires a certain period of time for preparation. Likewise, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy states, “[t]he catechumenate for adults, divided into several distinct steps, is to be restored...By this means, the time of catechumenate, which is destined for the requisite formation, may be sanctified by sacred rites to be celebrated at successive stages.”<sup>260</sup> In other words, the preparation for the sacraments of initiation is regarded as an essential part of Christian initiation. The term “journey” really fits with these understandings, because a journey includes not only a goal but also a process. Thus, by retrieving the significance of the catechumenate for Christian initiation, the RCIA represents initiation as a journey. Because of this comprehension, the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian initiation is not limited within the sacraments, but extended to its whole process.

### 2) Including the Comprehensive Process of Christian Initiation

This merit is closely connected to the previous one. The RCIA not only regards Christian initiation as a journey, but also provides instructions and rites for each period and step of the journey. Actually, according to the RCIA, the entire journey consists of three steps and four

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<sup>259</sup> Aidan Kavanagh, *The Shape of Baptism: The Rite of Christian Initiation* (Collegeville, MN: A Pueblo Book, 1978), 56.

<sup>260</sup> *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, §64.

periods (6-7). These instructions and rites give a structure to the initiation process and help both catechists and catechumens to be aware of how the Spirit and other Divine Persons work and accompany their journey. Furthermore, catechumens may understand how important each step and period is for the entire process. These fruits of the RCIA are also a satisfactory response to the call of the Vatican II mentioned in the previous paragraph.

### 3) Emphasis on the Holy Spirit

The RCIA stresses the role of the Holy Spirit in the initiation journey. As I mentioned in the second and third chapters, the RCIA texts of each period of the initiation process, even the instructions of the periods of pre-catechumenate and postbaptismal catechesis, include the explicit references to the Third Person of the Trinity. These references well demonstrate that the role of the Spirit is really important, and that the Paraclete as a guide of the initiation journey is at work throughout the entire process. The most significant emphasis on the Third Person is the one in the formula for the celebration of confirmation: “N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit” (235). As Kavanagh argues, “the original consignation formula, which was trinitarian in [the *Apostolic Tradition*] and christic in [the *Gelasian Sacramentary*], is now exclusively pneumatic in the manner of Byzantine postbaptismal chrismation.”<sup>261</sup> This change emphasizes the role of Holy Spirit through the confirmation celebration.

### 4) Great Stress on the Unity of the Three Sacraments of Initiation

According to the *Christian Initiation, General Introduction*, “the three sacraments of Christian initiation closely combine to bring us, the faithful of Christ, to his full stature and to enable us to carry out the mission of the entire people of God in the Church and in the world.”<sup>262</sup> This statement emphasizes the unity of three sacraments of initiation. Responding to the

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<sup>261</sup> Kavanagh, *Confirmation*, 94.

<sup>262</sup> *Christian Initiation, General Introduction*, §2.

intention of the general introduction, the RCIA requires catechumens to receive those three sacraments sequentially in the Easter Vigil: “[t]he third step in the Christian initiation of adults is the celebration of the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and eucharist” (206); “[t]he usual time for the celebration of the sacraments of initiation is the Easter Vigil” (207). Thus, the RCIA tries to represent the unity of the three sacraments by celebrating them together.

As I discussed in Chapter 2, the RCIA particularly stresses the close connection between baptism and confirmation (215). On the other hand, the Eucharist is regarded as the “culminating point in their Christian initiation” (217). Kavanagh summarizes the relationship between these three sacraments, saying, “the eucharist [is] attained through baptism and confirmation.”<sup>263</sup> Thus, both baptism and confirmation are indispensable parts of the process to the culmination of Christian initiation, that is, the Eucharist. In order to represent and be aware of this understanding, catechumens should receive these three sacraments together as the climax of their initiation journey.

In the Eucharistic celebration, the Holy Spirit plays an essential role. This role is explicitly mentioned in the epicleses in the Roman Missal: “Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall, so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ”<sup>264</sup>; “Humbly we pray that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.”<sup>265</sup> The Spirit mentioned here is, of course, the same Spirit who played the vital role in baptism and confirmation. Therefore, if we

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<sup>263</sup> Kavanagh, *Confirmation*, 113.

<sup>264</sup> “Order of Mass,” §101, found in *The Roman Missal for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011), 646.

<sup>265</sup> “Order of Mass,” §105, found in *The Roman Missal for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011), 648.

celebrate the three sacraments of initiation together, the continuity, dynamism, and the variety of the action by the Third Person of the Trinity can be fully represented.

### 1-2. Shortcoming and Suggestions

Although there are great advantages of the RCIA, it also contains some defects. I will suggest three drawbacks here: 1) on occasion, the language of the RCIA is not clear enough; 2) the celebration of the sacraments of initiation lacks messianic anointing; 3) the role of the Spirit is not acknowledged enough in the liturgical texts of some rites.

#### 1) Lack of Clearness of Language

As the Church's traditional phrase "lex orandi, lex credendi (the law of praying is the law of believing)" implies, Christian liturgy is supposed to plainly represent what Christians really believe. For this purpose, the language of liturgical texts should be also clear enough for the participants to understand theological and spiritual meaning of the rites, while preserving the solemnity of biblical and traditional expressions. Unfortunately, the RCIA fails to intelligibly express its theology in some liturgical texts. Here, I will suggest three examples from the celebration of the sacraments of initiation.

In the anointing after baptism, it is said, "He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation, so that, united with his people, you may remain for ever a member of Christ who is Priest, Prophet, and King" (228). Here, it is not clear enough what is "a member of Christ." It could be more understandable, if it states, "a member of the Church." I assume that those who prepared this text also meant "a member of the Church," since the Church is the Body of Christ. I would suggest saying, "a member of the Body of Christ, who is..." since it sounds much clearer and can remind the participants in the liturgy that they are members of the Body of Christ.

The second and third examples are from the second paragraph of the invitation in the celebration of confirmation: “The promised strength of the Holy Spirit, which you are to receive, will make you more like Christ and help you to be witnesses to his suffering, death and resurrection” (233). Here I will consider two phrases: “make you more like Christ”; “to be witness of [Christ’s] suffering, death and resurrection.”

The meaning of “more like Christ” is really obscure. There could be two possible meanings. First, as I mentioned in Chapter 2, those who complete the initiation process fully participate in the life and mission of Christ. Therefore, “make you more like Christ” could signify “make you participate in Christ’s life and mission.” Another possibility can be drawn from words of Paul in his letter to the Romans:

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ (Rom 8:14-17).

Here, Paul states that human beings are made children of God and fellow heirs with Christ. From this perspective, “make you more like Christ” could also mean “make you children and fellow heirs with Christ.” Probably, the architects of the RCIA tried to put both meanings into the phrase “make you more like Christ,” although it does not work well.

The saying “to be witness of [Christ’s] suffering, death and resurrection” could lead to a misunderstanding that those who receive the sacrament of confirmation only witness Christ’s paschal mystery. They will not only witness the mystery but also participate in it through the entire celebration of the sacraments of initiation. Although participation in the paschal mystery is already mentioned in the prayer over the water during the celebration of baptism,<sup>266</sup> it is more

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<sup>266</sup> “May all who are buried with Christ in death of baptism rise also with him to newness of life” (222A). See also Rom 6:3-4.

appropriate to refocus on the participation in the celebration of confirmation. Participating in Christ's mystery is a crucial purpose of the Christian initiation, and "to be witness" of the paschal mystery is possible only for those who have really participated in the mystery.

Thus, it is important to clarify language in the liturgical texts of the RCIA, in order to represent the deep meaning of Christian initiation. It could be also helpful for exploring the role of the Holy Spirit through the initiation rite, because the clearer what takes place during the initiation journey such as participation in the Christ's entire life and mission, adoption as children of God, and incorporation into the Body of Christ, the more evident what an important role the Third Person plays through Christian initiation.

## 2) Lack of Messianic Anointing

In the RCIA, two kinds of post-baptismal anointing are included: anointing after baptism (228) and anointing with chrism (235). However, as long as we follow the instructions, these two anointings will never be celebrated together in the same liturgy. The anointing after baptism is celebrated only when the celebration of confirmation, which includes the anointing with chrism, is not performed (228).

Although both of these two anointings are performed with chrism, the meanings are different from each other. Aidan Kavanagh writes:

[T]he prayer to be said at the postbaptismal chrismation speaks of the meaning of the act in terms of the neophyte's being anointed "As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet, and King," so that he or she may always live as a member of his Body, the Church. The prayer said for the chrismation at confirmation speaks, instead, of the neophyte's being given the Holy Spirit and his sevenfold gifts.<sup>267</sup>

In other word, the former anointing is rather Christological or messianic, while the latter is pneumatological. As Kavanagh states, "Thus when confirmation is celebrated *apart from*

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<sup>267</sup> Kavanagh, *The Shape of Baptism*, 140.

baptism, the chrismation after baptism is christic and messianic in character: when it is celebrated *with* baptism, the chrismation is pneumatic and charismatic.”<sup>268</sup> It is especially regrettable that the newly baptized does not receive the messianic anointing when they are given the sacrament of confirmation just after being baptized. I will give three reasons why this messianic anointing is so significant.

First of all, the messianic anointing was an essential and indispensable part of the Christian initiation rite in antiquity. For example, *The Apostolic Tradition* demonstrates that they exercised both the Christological and pneumatological anointings in the initiation rite.<sup>269</sup> Furthermore, in the ancient Syrian tradition, where postbaptismal anointing was not performed, prebaptismal anointing carried the both messianic and pneumatological meanings.<sup>270</sup> Therefore, in order to preserve the continuity from the ancient practices, the Christological anointing is highly desirable.

The second reason for the significance of the messianic anointing is that it represents the connection between the Old and New Testaments. Winkler mentions “[t]he continuity between the priest-king of the Old Testament, the fulfillment of kingship at the baptism of the Messiah in the Jordan”<sup>271</sup> as well as the parallel relationship between the anointing of kings in the OT by Samuel, baptism of Jesus as the Messiah in the Jordan, and the prebaptismal anointing.<sup>272</sup> In other words, we can find the origin of the messianic anointing in the OT. Therefore, if we exercise the messianic anointing in the initiation rite, the anointed are given an opportunity to be

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<sup>268</sup> Kavanagh, *The Shape of Baptism*, 140.

<sup>269</sup> *Apostolic Tradition* 21:19, 22. Found in Bradshaw, Johnson, and Philips, *The Apostolic Tradition*, 118.

<sup>270</sup> Winkler, “The Original Meaning,” 31-33.

<sup>271</sup> Winkler, “The Original Meaning,” 32.

<sup>272</sup> Winkler, “The Original Meaning,” 33-34.

aware that they participate in a tradition traced even to those who were anointed in the Old Testament era.

Another reason of the importance of the Christological anointing is that having both Christological and pneumatological anointings enables the initiation rite to well represent the Son and the Spirit are working together through the climax of the initiation journey. As I already mentioned, the actions of the Second and Third Persons of the Trinity cannot be separated. In order to demonstrate both Christological and pneumatological aspects of Christian initiation, the messianic anointing should be performed together with the pneumatological anointing.

Kavanagh well summarizes this point, saying:

[I]t is regrettable that the messianic chrismation after baptism has been omitted. This traditionally provided a cornerstone upon which to base a perception of the Anointed One who gives the Spirit so that we may know him as the Christ of God. The weakness of a vigorous theology and piety of the Holy Spirit in the Western churches, so often lamented, might have been strengthened by a renewed perception of this relationship between Messiah-Christ and Holy Spirit.<sup>273</sup>

For these reasons, efforts should be made in order to make it possible to exercise the messianic anointing even when the confirmation is celebrated just after that.

### 3) Shortage of the References to the Spirit

As I mentioned in Chapter 3, although the RCIA emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit throughout the Christian initiation journey, it is difficult to acknowledge the divine action of the Paraclete from the liturgical texts of some parts of the RCIA. While many explicit references to the Third Person of the Trinity in the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, fewer textual references can be found in some rites of the earlier stage such as the rite of acceptance into the order of catechumens, the rites belonging to the period of the catechumenate, the rite of election, and the third scrutiny. If the presence and actions of the Third Person are acknowledged

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<sup>273</sup> Kavanagh, *Confirmation*, 109.



explicitly more often in these rites, it would be much easier for the catechumens and the Church community to be aware of the guidance of the Spirit. Such awareness should be very helpful for the catechumens to complete the initiation journey.

Although there are some shortcomings, the RCIA is still one of the primary fruits of the liturgical reform after Vatican II and well represents what the Christian initiation journey really is. While taking into account those defects, we should continue exploring how we can more fully and appropriately celebrate Christian initiation demonstrated in the RCIA.

### **3. Pastoral Application**

As I repeatedly mentioned, the RCIA is one of the chief products of the liturgical reform after the Second Vatican Council. The primary and ultimate purpose of this paper is nothing but to help whoever involves in the Christian initiation journey to be able to discover and understand what the RCIA really means and aims, so that catechumens may well prepare and successfully complete their initiation journey. For this goal, I particularly focused on the role of the Holy Spirit through the entire initiation process, because being more aware of the action and presence of the Third Person of the Trinity leads to deeper comprehension of the RCIA.

I demonstrated that the RCIA understands Christian initiation of adults as a spiritual journey and regards the Holy Spirit is a guide of the journey, that is, the one who is always present and at work to help the catechumens during the entire initiation process. Those who participate in this journey either as catechumen or as members of the Church community should recognize this truth, in order to avoid misunderstanding that Christian initiation is what can be earned achieved by human efforts and preparation. Certainly, these are important but not essential. The initiation

journey is primarily started, guided, and completed with God's grace through the Spirit, and so human efforts and preparation are only a response to and cooperation with the divine action. The life of a Christian is a life of surrendering oneself to divine guidance and providence. Therefore, it is the priority for catechumens to practice such a way of living. For this purpose, they have to be aware that Christian initiation is a journey guided by the Spirit. If they lack this awareness, the essential aspect of the initiation process, divine initiative, will be easily lost.

In order to cultivate realization of the divine actions during the initiation process, the RCIA needs to be not only celebrated appropriately but also read and studied carefully. Actually, it is the best guidebook for the initiation journey. Therefore, it is necessary to design how to prepare catechumens for Christian initiation based on the RCIA, since there are no other resources which better demonstrate the whole picture of the Christian initiation journey. It is also true that it will be a huge loss if the RCIA is used only as a "manual" for rites during the initiation process. The abundance of the theology of the RCIA cannot be grasped by reading or listening to only a few times. The catechesis on the RCIA, including its rites, instructions, and backgrounds, should be provided to both catechumens and those who help their initiation journey. Especially, it is vital for catechumens to clearly understand the meaning of the liturgical celebrations during the initiation process, in order to take a full, conscious active part in these rites,<sup>274</sup> which are designed for them.

In this paper, I showed the role of the Holy Spirit throughout the Christian initiation journey demonstrated in the RCIA by analyzing its texts, referring to teachings on Christian initiation of the Church Fathers, and quoting fruits of modern scholarship on the Third Person of the Trinity and the initiation rite. I sincerely hope that this work can contribute to deeper understanding on

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<sup>274</sup> *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, §14.

the RCIA and acuter awareness of the action and presence of the Holy Spirit during the initiation process, so that all those who make this journey may be more fully and adequately prepared both by the Spirit and the Church community to be a full member of the Church, the Body of Christ.

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