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On the . . .

# Holy Ghost

(*Divinum Illud*)

*Encyclical of*  
HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIII

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Arranged for Study Clubs  
With Bibliography

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THE AMERICA PRESS

53 PARK PLACE

NEW YORK, N. Y.

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*Ready May 16th*

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THE AMERICA PRESS

53 Park Place

New York, N. Y.

*Imprimi Potest:*

*Nihil Obstat:*

*Imprimatur:*

*April 30, 1938.*

JOSEPH A. MURPHY, S.J.,  
*Provincial, Maryland-New York.*  
ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D.,  
*Censor Librorum.*

✠ PATRICK CARDINAL HAYES,  
*Archbishop of New York.*

First Printing, 1938, Eleventh Thousand.

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# On the Holy Ghost

His Holiness Pope Leo XIII



THE AMERICA PRESS  
New York, N. Y.

SPEC  
CAPAM

# Encyclical on the Holy Ghost

(*Divinum Illud Munus*)

POPE LEO XIII

*Reprinted from the Tablet (London)*

THAT Divine office which Jesus Christ received from His Father for the welfare of mankind, and most perfectly fulfilled, had for its final object to put men in possession of the eternal life of glory, and proximately during the course of ages to secure to them the life of divine grace, which is destined eventually to blossom into the life of heaven. Wherefore, our Saviour never ceases to invite, with infinite affection, all men, of every race and tongue, into the bosom of His Church: "Come ye all to Me," "I am the Life," "I am the Good Shepherd." Nevertheless, according to His inscrutable counsels, He did not will to entirely complete and finish this office Himself on earth, but as He had received it from the Father, so He transmitted it for its completion to the Holy Ghost. It is consoling to recall those assurances which Christ gave to the body of His disciples a little before He left the earth: "It is expedient to you that I go: for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you: but if I go, I will send Him to you" (1 *John* xvi, 7). In these words He gave as the chief reason of His departure and His return to the

Father, the advantage which would most certainly accrue to His followers from the coming of the Holy Ghost, and, at the same time, He made it clear that the Holy Ghost is equally sent by—and therefore proceeds from—Himself and the Father; that He would complete, in His office of Intercessor, Consoler, and Teacher, the work which Christ Himself had begun in His mortal life. For, in the redemption of the world, the completion of the work was by Divine Providence reserved to the manifold power of that Spirit, who, in the creation, “adorned the heavens” (*Job xxvi, 13*), and “filled the whole world” (*Wisdom i, 7*).

#### THE TWO PRINCIPAL AIMS OF OUR PONTIFICATE

Now We have earnestly striven, by the help of His grace, to follow the example of Christ, our Saviour, the Prince of Pastors, and the Bishop of our Souls, by diligently carrying on His office, entrusted by Him to the Apostles and chiefly to Peter, “whose dignity faileth, not, even in his unworthy successor” (St. Leo the Great, Sermon ii, On the Anniversary of his Election). In pursuance of this object We have endeavored to direct all that We have attempted and persistently carried out during a long pontificate towards two chief ends: in the first place, towards the restoration, both in rulers and peoples, of the principles of the Christian life in civil and domestic society, since there is no true life for men except from Christ; and, secondly, to promote the reunion of those who have fallen away from the Catholic Church either by heresy or by schism, since it is most undoubtedly the will of Christ that all should be united in one flock under one Shepherd. But now that We are looking forward to the approach of the closing days of Our life, Our soul is deeply moved to dedicate to the Holy Ghost who is the life-giving Love, all the work We have done during Our pontificate, that He may bring it to maturity and fruitfulness. In order the better and more fully to

carry out this Our intention, We have resolved to address you at the approaching sacred season of Pentecost concerning the indwelling and miraculous power of the Holy Ghost; and the extent and efficiency of His action, both in the whole body of the Church and in the individual souls of its members, through the glorious abundance of His Divine graces. We earnestly desire that, as a result, faith may be aroused in your minds concerning the mystery of the adorable Trinity, and especially that piety may increase and be inflamed towards the Holy Ghost, to whom especially all of us owe the grace of following the paths of truth and virtue; for, as St. Basil said, "Who denieth that the dispensations concerning man, which have been made by the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, according to the goodness of God, have been fulfilled through the grace of the spirit?" (*Of the Holy Ghost*, c. xvi, v. 39.)

#### THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF THE BLESSED TRINITY

Before We enter upon this subject, it will be both desirable and useful to say a few words about the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity. This dogma is called by the doctors of the Church "the substance of the New Testament," that is to say, the greatest of all mysteries, since it is the fountain and origin of them all. In order to know and contemplate this mystery, the angels were created in Heaven and men upon earth. In order to teach more fully this mystery, which was but foreshadowed in the Old Testament, God Himself came down from the angels unto men: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (*John* i, 18). Whosoever then writes or speaks of the Trinity must keep before His eyes the prudent warning of the Angelic Doctor: "When we speak of the Trinity, we must do so with caution and modesty, for, as St. Augustine saith, nowhere else are more dangerous errors made, or is research more difficult, or dis-

covery more fruitful" (*Summa. Th.* 1, p. xxxi, Art. 2). The danger that arises is lest the Divine Persons be confounded one with the other in faith or worship, or lest the one Nature in them be separated: for "This is the Catholic Faith, that we should adore one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity." Therefore Our predecessor Innocent XII absolutely refused the petition of those who desired a special festival in honor of God the Father. For, although the separate mysteries connected with the Incarnate Word are celebrated on certain fixed days, yet there is no special feast on which the Word is honored according to His Divine Nature alone. And even the Feast of Pentecost was instituted in the earlier times, not simply to honor the Holy Ghost in Himself, but to commemorate His coming, or His external mission. And all this has been wisely ordained, lest from distinguishing the Persons men should be led to distinguish the Divine Essence. Moreover the Church, in order to preserve in her children the purity of faith, instituted the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity, which John XXII afterwards extended to the Universal Church. He also permitted altars and churches to be dedicated to the Blessed Trinity, and, with the Divine approval, sanctioned the Order for the Ransom of Captives, which is specially devoted to the Blessed Trinity and bears Its name. Many facts confirm its truths.

The worship paid to the saints and angels, to the Mother of God, and to Christ Himself, finally redounds to the honor of the Blessed Trinity. In prayers addressed to one Person, there is also mention of the others; in the litanies after the individual Persons have been separately invoked, a common invocation of all is added: all psalms and hymns conclude with the doxology to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; blessings, sacred rites, and sacraments are either accompanied or concluded by the invocation of the Blessed Trinity. This was already foreshadowed by



the Apostle in those words: "For of Him, and by Him, and in Him, are all things: to Him be glory for ever" (*Rom. xi, 36*), thereby signifying both the Trinity of Persons and the Unity of Nature: for as this is one and the same in each of the Persons, so to each is equally owing supreme glory, as to one and the same God. St. Augustine commenting upon this testimony writes: "The words of the Apostle, *of Him, and by Him, and in Him*, are not to be taken indiscriminately; *of Him* refers to the Father, *by him* to the Son, *in Him* to the Holy Ghost" (*De Trin.* 1. vi, c. 10; 1. i, c. 6). The Church is accustomed most fittingly to attribute to the Father those works of the Divinity in which power excels, to the Son those in which wisdom excels, and those in which love excels to the Holy Ghost. Not that all perfections and external operations are not common to the Divine Persons; for "the operations of the Trinity are indivisible, even as the essence of the Trinity is indivisible" (St. Aug. *De Trin.*, 1. I, cc. 4-5); because as the three Divine Persons "are inseparable, so do they act inseparably" (St. Aug., *ib*). But by a certain comparison, and a kind of affinity between the operations and the properties of the Persons, these operations are attributed or, as it is said, "appropriated" to One Person rather than to the others. "Just as we make use of the traces of similarity or likeness which we find in creatures for the manifestation of the Divine Persons, so do we use Their essential attributes; and this manifestation of the Persons by Their essential attributes is called *appropriation*" (St. Th. I, q. 39, xxxix, a. 7). In this manner the Father, who is "the principle of the whole Godhead" (St. Aug. *De Trin.* 1, iv, c. 20) is also the efficient cause of all things, of the Incarnation of the Word, and the sanctification of souls; "of Him are all things": *of Him*, referring to the Father. But the Son, the Word, the image of God, is also the exemplar cause, whence all creatures borrow their form and beauty, their order and harmony.

He is for us the Way, the Truth, and the Life; the Reconciler of man with God. "By Him are all things": *by Him* referring to the Son. The Holy Ghost is the ultimate cause of all things, since, as the will and all other things finally rest in their end, so He, who is the Divine Goodness and the Mutual Love of the Father and Son, completes and perfects, by His strong yet gentle power, the secret work of man's eternal salvation. "In Him are all things": *in Him*, referring to the Holy Ghost.

### THE HOLY GHOST AND THE INCARNATION

Having thus paid the due tribute of faith and worship owing to the Blessed Trinity, and which ought to be more and more inculcated upon the Christian people, we now turn to the exposition of the power of the Holy Ghost. And, first of all, we must look to Christ, the Founder of the Church and the Redeemer of our race. Among the external operations of God, the highest of all is the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word, in which the splendor of the divine perfections shines forth so brightly that nothing more sublime can even be imagined, nothing else could have been more salutary to the human race. Now this work, although belonging to the whole trinity, is still appropriated especially to the Holy Ghost, so that the Gospels thus speak of the Blessed Virgin: "She was found with child of the Holy Ghost," and "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost" (*Matt.* i, 18, 20). And this is rightly attributed to Him who is the love of the Father and the Son, since this "great mystery of piety" (*1 Tim.* iii, 16) proceeds from the infinite love of God towards man, as St. John tells us: "God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son" (*John* iii, 16). Moreover, human nature was thereby elevated to a *personal* union with the Word; and this dignity is given, not on account of any merits, but entirely and absolutely through grace, and therefore, as it were,

through the special gift of the Holy Ghost. On this point St. Augustine writes: "This manner in which Christ was born of the Holy Ghost, indicates to us the grace of God, by which humanity, with no antecedent merits, at the first moment of its existence, was united with the Word of God, by so intimate a personal union, that He, who was the Son of Man, was also the Son of God, and He who was the Son of God, was also the Son of man" (*Enchir.*, c. xl; *St. Th.*, 3, q. xxxii, a. I). By the operation of the Holy Spirit, not only was the conception of Christ accomplished, but also the sanctification of His soul, which, in Holy Scripture, is called His "anointing" (*Acts* x, 38). Wherefore all His actions were "performed in the Holy Ghost" (St. Basil *de Sp. S.*, c. xvi), and especially the sacrifice of Himself: "Christ, through the Holy Ghost, offered Himself without spot to God" (*Heb.* ix, 14). Considering this, no one can be surprised that all the gifts of the Holy Ghost inundated the soul of Christ. In Him resided—the absolute fulness of grace, in the greatest and most efficacious manner possible; in Him were all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, graces *gratis datae*, virtues, and all other gifts foretold in the prophecies of Isaias (*Is.* iv, 1; xi, 23), and also signified in that miraculous dove which appeared at the Jordan, when Christ, by His baptism, consecrated its waters for a new sacrament. On this the words of St. Augustine may appropriately be quoted: "It would be absurd to say that Christ received the Holy Ghost when He was already thirty years of age, for He came to His baptism without sin, and therefore not without the Holy Ghost. At this time, then (this is, at His baptism), He was pleased to prefigure His Church, in which those especially who are baptized receive the Holy Ghost" (*De Trin.* 1, xv, c. 26). Therefore, by the conspicuous apparition of the Holy Ghost over Christ and by His invisible power in His soul, the twofold mission of the Spirit is foreshadowed, namely His outward and visi-

ble mission in the Church, and His secret indwelling in the souls of the just.

### THE HOLY GHOST AND THE CHURCH

The Church which, already conceived, came forth from the side of the second Adam in His sleep on the Cross, first showed herself before the eyes of men on the great day of Pentecost. On that day the Holy Ghost began to manifest His gifts in the Mystical Body of Christ, by that miraculous outpouring already foreseen by the prophet Joel (ii, 28, 29), for the Paraclete "sat upon the Apostles as though new spiritual crowns were placed upon their heads in tongues of fire" (St. Cyril Hier. *Catech.* 17). Then the Apostles "descended from the mountain," as St. John Chrysostom writes, "not bearing in their hands tables of stone like Moses, but carrying the Spirit in their mind, and pouring forth the treasure and the fountain of doctrines and graces" (*In Matt.* Hom. I, 2 *Cor.* iii, 3). Thus was fully accomplished that last promise of Christ to His Apostles of sending the Holy Ghost, who was to complete and, as it were, to seal the deposit of doctrine committed to them under His inspiration. "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now; but when He, the Spirit of Truth, shall come, He will teach you all truth" (*John* xvi, 12, 13). For He who is the Spirit of Truth, inasmuch as He proceedeth both from the Father, who is the eternally True, and from the Son, who is the substantial Truth, receiveth from each both His essence and the fulness of all truth. This truth He communicates to His Church, guarding her by His all powerful help from ever falling into error, and aiding her to foster daily more and more the germs of Divine doctrine and to make them fruitful for the welfare of the peoples. And since the welfare of the peoples, for which the Church was established, absolutely requires that this office should be continued for all time, the Holy Ghost

perpetually supplies life and strength to preserve and increase the Church. "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever, the Spirit of Truth" (*John* xiv, 16, 17).

By Him the Bishops are constituted, and by their ministry are multiplied not only the children, but also the fathers—that is to say, the priests—to rule and feed the Church by that Blood wherewith Christ has redeemed Her. "The Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to rule the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own Blood" (*Acts* xx, 28). And both bishops and priests, by the miraculous gift of the Spirit, have the power of absolving sins, according to those words of Christ to the Apostles: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose you retain they are retained" (*John* xx, 22, 23). That the Church is a divine institution is most clearly proved by the splendor and glory of those gifts and graces with which she is adorned, and whose Author and Giver is the Holy Ghost. Let it suffice to state that, as Christ is the Head of the Church, so is the Holy Ghost her soul. "What the soul is in our body, that is the Holy Ghost in Christ's body, the Church" (St. Aug., *Serm.* 187, *de Temp.*). This being so, no further and fuller "manifestation and revelation of the Divine Spirit" may be imagined or expected; for that which now takes place in the Church is the most perfect possible, and will last until that day when the Church herself, having passed through her militant career, shall be taken up into the joy of the saints triumphing in heaven.

#### THE HOLY GHOST IN THE SOULS OF THE JUST

The manner and extent of the action of the Holy Ghost in individual souls is no less wonderful, although somewhat more difficult to understand, inasmuch as it is entirely invisible. This outpouring of the Spirit is

so abundant, that Christ Himself, from whose gift it proceeds, compares it to an overflowing river, according to those words of St. John: "He that believeth in Me, as the Scripture saith, out of his midst shall flow rivers of living water"; to which testimony the Evangelist adds the explanation: "Now this He said of the Spirit which they should receive who believed in Him" (*John* vii, 38, 39). It is indeed true that in those of the just who lived before Christ, the Holy Ghost resided by grace, as we read in the Scriptures concerning the prophets, Zachary, John the Baptist, Simeon, and Anna; so that on Pentecost the Holy Ghost did not communicate Himself in such a way "as then for the first time to begin to dwell in the saints, but by pouring Himself forth more abundantly; crowning, not beginning His gifts; not commencing a new work, but giving more abundantly" (St. Leo the Great, Hom. iii, *de Pentec.*). But if they also were numbered among the children of God, they were in a state like that of servants, for "as long as the heir is a child he differeth nothing from a servant, but is under tutors and governors" (*Gal.* iv, 1, 2). Moreover, not only was their justice derived from the merits of Christ who was to come, but the communication of the Holy Ghost after Christ was much more abundant, just as the price surpasses in value the earnest and the reality excels the image. Wherefore St. John declares: "As yet the Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (*John* vii, 39). So soon, therefore, as Christ, "ascending on high," entered into possession of the glory of His Kingdom which He had won with so much labor, He munificently opened out the treasures of the Holy Ghost: "He gave gifts to men" (*Eph.* iv, 8). For "that giving or sending forth of the Holy Ghost after Christ's glorification was to be such as had never been before; not that there had been none before, but it had not been of the same kind" (St. Aug., *De Trin.* 1, iv, c. 20).

Human nature is by necessity the servant of God: "The creature is a servant; we are the servants of God by nature" (St. Cyr. Alex., *Thesaur.* 1, v, c. 5). On account, however, of Original Sin, our whole nature had become enemies to God. "We were by nature the children of wrath" (Eph. ii, 3). There was no power which could raise us and deliver us from this ruin and eternal destruction. But God, the Creator of mankind and infinitely merciful, did this through His only begotten Son, by whose benefit it was brought about that man was restored to that rank and dignity whence he had fallen, and was adorned with still more abundant graces. No one can express the greatness of this work of divine grace in the souls of men. Wherefore, both in Holy Scripture and in the writings of the Fathers, men are styled regenerated, new creatures, partakers of the Divine Nature, children of God, godlike, and similar epithets. Now these great blessings are justly attributed as especially belonging to the Holy Ghost. He is "the Spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba, Father." He fills our hearts with the sweetness of paternal love: "The Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God" (*Rom.* viii, 15, 16). This truth accords with the similitude observed by the Angelic Doctor between both operations of the Holy Ghost; for through Him "Christ was conceived in holiness to be by nature the Son of God," and "others are sanctified to be the sons of God by adoption" (St. Th. 3a, q. xxxii, a. 1). This spiritual generation proceeds from love in a much more noble manner than in the natural: namely, from the uncreated Love.

The beginnings of this regeneration and renovation of man are by Baptism. In this sacrament when the unclean spirit has been expelled from the soul, the Holy Ghost enters in and makes it like to Himself. "That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit" (*John* iii, 6). The same Spirit gives Himself more abundantly in Confirmation, strengthening and confirming Christian

life; from which proceeded the victory of the martyrs and the triumph of the virgins over temptations and corruptions. We have said that the Holy Ghost gives Himself: "The charity of God is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given to us" (*Rom.* v, 5). For He not only brings to us His Divine gifts, but is the Author of them and is Himself the supreme Gift, who, proceeding from the mutual love of the Father and the Son, is justly believed to be and is called "Gift of God most High." To show the nature and efficacy of this gift it is well to recall the explanation given by the Doctors of the Church of the words of Holy Scripture. They say that God is present and exists in all things, "by His power, in so far as all things are subject to His power; by His presence, inasmuch as all things are uncovered and open to His eyes; by His essence, inasmuch as He is present to all as the cause of their being" (St. Th. 1a, p. viii, a. 3). But God is in man, not only as in inanimate things, but because he is more fully known and loved by him, since even by nature we spontaneously love, desire and seek after the good. Moreover God by grace resides in the just soul as in a temple, in a most intimate and peculiar manner. From this proceeds that union of affection by which the soul adheres most closely to God, more so than the friend is united to his most loving and beloved friend, and enjoys God in all fulness and sweetness. Now this wonderful union, which is properly called "indwelling," differing only in degree or state from that with which God beatifies the saints in Heaven, although it is most certainly produced by the presence of the whole Blessed Trinity—"We will come to Him and make our abode with Him" (*John* xiv, 23) nevertheless is attributed in a peculiar manner to the Holy Ghost. For, whilst traces of Divine power and wisdom appear even in the wicked man, charity, which, as it were, is the special mark of the Holy Ghost, is shared in only by the just. In harmony with this, the



same Spirit is called Holy, for He, the first and supreme Love, moves souls and leads them to sanctity, which ultimately consists in the love of God. Wherefore the apostle when calling the Just the temple of God, does not expressly mention the Father or the Son, or the Holy Ghost: "Know ye not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom you have from God?" (1 *Cor.* vi, 19).

The fulness of divine gifts is in many ways a consequence of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the souls of the just. For, as St. Thomas teaches, "when the Holy Ghost proceedeth as love, He proceedeth in the character of the first gift; whence Augustine saith that, through the gift which is the Holy Ghost, many other special gifts are distributed among the members of Christ" (*Summ. Th.*, 1a. p. xxxviii, a. 2. St. Aug. *de Trin.*, xv, c. 19). Among these gifts are those secret warnings and invitations, which from time to time are excited in our minds and hearts by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Without these there is no beginning of a good life, no progress, no arriving at eternal salvation. And since these words and admonitions are uttered in the soul in an exceedingly secret manner, they are sometimes aptly compared in Holy Writ to the breathing of a coming breeze, and the Angelic Doctor likens them to the movements of the heart which are wholly hidden in the living body. "Thy heart has a certain hidden power, and therefore the Holy Ghost, who invisibly vivifies and unites the Church, is compared to the heart" (*Summ. Th.* 3a, q. vii, a. 1, ad 3). More than this, the just man, that is to say he who lives the life of Divine grace, and acts by the fitting virtues as by means of faculties, has need of those seven *gifts* which are properly attributed to the Holy Ghost. By means of them the soul is furnished and strengthened so as to be able to obey more easily and promptly His voice and impulse. Wherefore these gifts are of such efficacy that they lead the just man to the highest de-

gree of sanctity; and of such excellence that they continue to exist even in Heaven, though in a more perfect way. By means of these gifts the soul is excited and encouraged to seek after and attain the evangelical beatitudes, which, like the flowers that come forth in the springtime, are the signs and harbingers of eternal beatitude. Lastly, there are those blessed fruits, enumerated by the Apostle (*Gal. v, 22*), which the Spirit, even in this mortal life, produces and shows forth in the just; fruits filled with all sweetness and joy, inasmuch as they proceed from the Spirit, "who is in the Trinity the sweetness of both Father and Son, filling all creatures with infinite fulness and profusion" (St. Aug. *de Trin.* 1, vi, c. 9). The Divine Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Word in the eternal light of sanctity, Himself both Love and Gift, after having manifested Himself through the veils of figures in the Old Testament, poured forth all his fulness upon Christ and upon His Mystical Body, the Church; and called back by his presence and grace men who were going away in wickedness and corruption with such salutary effect that, being no longer of the earth earthy, they relished and desired quite other things, becoming of Heaven heavenly.

#### ON DEVOTION TO THE HOLY GHOST

These sublime truths, which so clearly show forth the infinite goodness of the Holy Ghost towards us, certainly demand that we should direct towards Him the highest homage of our love and devotion. Christians may do this most effectually if they will daily strive to know Him, to love Him, and to implore Him more earnestly; for which reason may this Our exhortation, flowing spontaneously from a paternal heart, reach their ears. Perchance there are still to be found among them, even nowadays, some, who if asked, as were those of old by St. Paul the Apostle, whether they have received the Holy Ghost, might answer in

like manner: "We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost" (*Acts* xix, 2). At least there are certainly many who are very deficient in their knowledge of Him. They frequently use His name in their religious practices, but their faith is involved in much darkness. Wherefore all preachers and those having care of souls should remember that it is their duty to instruct their people more diligently and more fully about the Holy Ghost—avoiding, however, difficult and subtle controversies, and eschewing the dangerous folly of those who rashly endeavor to pry into divine mysteries. What should be chiefly dwelt upon and clearly explained is the multitude and greatness of the benefits which have been bestowed, and are constantly bestowed, upon us by this Divine Giver, so that errors and ignorance concerning matters of such moment may be entirely dispelled, as unworthy of "the children of light." We urge this, not only because it affects a mystery by which we are directly guided to eternal life, and which must therefore be firmly believed; but also because the more clearly and fully the good is known the more earnestly it is loved.

Now We owe to the Holy Ghost, as We mentioned in the second place, love, because He is God: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength" (*Deut.* vi, 5). He is also to be loved because He is the substantial, eternal, primal Love, and nothing is more lovable than love. And this all the more because He has overwhelmed us with the greatest benefits, which both testify to the benevolence of the Giver and claim the gratitude of the receiver. This love has a twofold and most conspicuous utility. In the first place it will excite us to acquire daily a clearer knowledge about the Holy Ghost; for, as the Angelic Doctor says, "the lover is not content with the superficial knowledge of the beloved, but striveth to inquire intimately into all that appertains to the beloved, and thus to penetrate into

the interior; as is said of the Holy Ghost, who is the Love of God, that He searcheth even the profound things of God" (1 *Cor.* ii, 10; *Summ. Theol.*, 1a. 2ae., q. 28, a. 2). In the second place it will obtain for us a still more abundant supply of heavenly gifts; for whilst a narrow heart contracts the hand of the giver, a grateful and mindful heart causes it to expand. Yet we must strive that this love should be of such a nature as not to consist merely in dry speculations or external observances, but rather to run forward towards action, and especially to fly from sin, which is in a more special manner offensive to the Holy Spirit. For whatever we are, that we are by the divine goodness; and this goodness is specially attributed to the Holy Ghost. The sinner offends this his Benefactor, abusing His gifts; and taking advantage of His goodness becomes more hardened in sin day by day. Again, since He is the Spirit of Truth, whosoever faileth by weakness on ignorance may perhaps have some excuse before Almighty God; but he who resists the truth through malice and turns away from it, sins most grievously against the Holy Ghost. In our days this sin has become so frequent that those dark times seem to have come which were foretold by St. Paul, in which men, blinded by the just judgment of God, should take falsehood for truth, and should believe in "the prince of this world," who is a liar and the father thereof, as a teacher of truth: "God shall send them the operation of error, to believe lying (2 *Thess.* ii, 10). In the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of error and the doctrines of devils" (1 *Tim.* iv, 1). But since the Holy Ghost, as We have said, dwells in us as in His temple, We must repeat the warning of the Apostle: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed" (*Eph.* iv, 30). Nor is it enough to fly from sin; every Christian ought to shine with the splendor of virtue so as to be pleasing to so great and so beneficent a guest; and first of all

with chastity and holiness, for chaste and holy things befit the temple. Hence the words of the Apostle: "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, which you are" (1 *Cor.* iii, 16, 17): a terrible, indeed, but a just warning.

Lastly, we ought to pray to and invoke the Holy Spirit, for each one of us greatly needs His protection and His help. The more a man is deficient in wisdom, weak in strength, borne down with trouble, prone to sin, so ought he the more to fly to Him who is the never-ceasing fount of light, strength, consolation, and holiness. And chiefly that first requisite of man, the forgiveness of sins, must be sought for from Him: "It is the special character of the Holy Ghost that He is the Gift of the Father and the Son. Now the remission of sins is given by the Holy Ghost as by the Gift of God" (*Summ. Th.* 3a, q. iii, a. 8, ad 3m). Concerning this Spirit the words of the Liturgy are very explicit: "For He is the remission of all sins" (*Roman Missal*, Tuesday after Pentecost). How He should be invoked is clearly taught by the Church, who addresses Him in humble supplication, calling upon Him by the sweetest of names: "Come, Thou Father of the poor! Come, Thou Giver of gifts! Come, Light of our hearts! O, best of Consolers, sweet Guest of the soul, our refreshment!" (Hymn, *Veni Sancte Spiritus*). She earnestly implores Him to wash, heal, water our minds and hearts, and to give to us who trust in Him "the merit of virtue, the acquirement of salvation, and joy everlasting." Nor can it be in any way doubted that He will listen to such prayer, since we read the words written by His own inspiration: "The Spirit Himself asketh for us with unspeakable groanings" (*Rom.* viii, 26). Lastly, we ought confidently and continually to beg of Him to illuminate us daily more and more with His light and inflame us with His charity: for, thus

inspired with faith and love, we may press onward earnestly towards our eternal reward, since He "is the pledge of our inheritance" (*Eph. i, 14*).

Such, Venerable Brethren, are the teachings and exhortations which We have seen good to utter, in order to stimulate devotion to the Holy Ghost. We have no doubt that, chiefly by means of your zeal and earnestness, they will bear abundant fruit among Christian peoples. We Ourselves shall never in the future fail to labor towards so important an end; and it is even Our intention, in whatever ways may appear suitable, to further cultivate and extend his admirable work of piety. Meanwhile, as two years ago, in Our Letter *Provida Matris*, We recommended to Catholics special prayers at the Feast of Pentecost for the Reunion of Christendom, so now We desire to make certain further decrees on the same subject.

#### AN ANNUAL NOVENA DECREED

Wherefore, We decree and command that throughout the whole Catholic Church, this year and in every subsequent year, a Novena shall take place before Whit Sunday, in all parish churches, and also, if the local Ordinaries think fit, in other churches and oratories. To all who take part in this Novena and duly pray for Our intention, We grant for each day an Indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines; moreover, a Plenary Indulgence on any one of the days of the Novena, or on Whit Sunday itself, or on any day during the Octave; provided they shall have received the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, and devoutly prayed for Our intention. We will that those who are legitimately prevented from attending the Novena, or who are in places where the devotions cannot, in the judgment of the Ordinary, be conveniently carried out in church, shall equally enjoy the same benefits, provided they make the Novena privately and observe the other conditions. Moreover,

We are pleased to grant, in perpetuity, from the Treasury of the Church, that whosoever, daily during the Octave of Pentecost up to Trinity Sunday inclusive, offer again publicly or privately any prayers, according to their devotion, to the Holy Ghost, and satisfy the above conditions, shall a second time gain each of the same Indulgences. All these Indulgences We also permit to be applied to the suffrage of the souls in Purgatory.

And now Our mind and heart turn back to those hopes with which We began, and for the accomplishment of which We earnestly pray, and will continue to pray, to the Holy Ghost. Unite, then, Venerable Brethren, your prayers with Ours, and at your exhortation let all Christian peoples add their prayers also, invoking the powerful and ever-acceptable intercession of the Blessed Virgin. You know well the intimate and wonderful relations existing between her and the Holy Ghost, so that she is justly called His Spouse. The intercession of the Blessed Virgin was of great avail both in the mystery of the Incarnation and in the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles. May she continue to strengthen our prayers with her suffrage, that, in the midst of all the stress and trouble of the nations, those divine prodigies may be happily revived by the Holy Ghost, which were foretold in the words of David: "Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created, and Thou shall renew the face of the earth" (*Ps. ciii, 30*).

As a pledge of Divine favor and a testimony of Our affection, Venerable Brethren, to you, to your Clergy and people, We gladly impart in the Lord the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at St. Peter's in Rome, on the 9th day of May, 1897, in the 20th year of Our Pontificate.

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# Veni Sancte Spiritus

## THOUGHTS FOR PENTECOST

*Reprinted from Orate Fratres*

EASTER has always been the feast of feasts. Hence, as St. Augustine remarked more than once in his sermons for Pentecost, it was but fitting that the celebration of Christ's resurrection be not commemorated by a mere octave, but that instead of seven, it be solemnized for seven times seven days, so that Pentecost is in reality the "octave" day of Easter. Tertullian at the beginning of the third century had already stated: "*A die Paschae in Pentecosten usque gaudemus*—From Easter until Pentecost do we rejoice" (*De corona*, 3). The very name *Pentecost* (fifty) indicates the feast's inner relation to the preceding festivity. It is not surprising therefore, to learn that the earliest sacramentary, the Leonine, did not know of an octave for Pentecost, and that such an octave—in itself an anomaly—became general only in the ninth century. For Pentecost is not primarily a feast in its own right, not a second great climax of the Paschal cycle, but rather a natural development of the Easter mystery and its ultimate flowering.<sup>1</sup>

To put it very briefly: Christ came on earth to redeem mankind, that we might become His brothers and therefore sons of the Father. He came to restore man's participation in the Divine Nature. This purpose He achieved through His entire life of sacrifice, and, in particular, through His passion and death, through His glorious resurrection. The Paschal mys-

<sup>1</sup> How far some have departed from this earlier viewpoint is evidenced by the fact that they speak of a special "Pentecost cycle" of the Church year. We might also add that the practice of having a novena before Pentecost, in memory of the so-called "retreat" of the disciples in the cenacle, in expectation of the coming of the Holy Spirit, tends to perpetuate the separation of the two feasts in the minds of the faithful.

tery, therefore, was the mystery of Christ's transition (*Pascha-transitus*) from death to the fulness of life, and of the consequent transition of mankind from condemnation to sanctification—for Christ died and arose as the head of the human race. As a pledge of this sanctification Christ sent mankind His own Spirit. This Holy Spirit was to abide permanently with Christ's body on earth, so that in virtue of this permanent presence of the Spirit, the redemption accomplished by Christ became effective and was applied to succeeding generations. Thus the mystery of Pentecost is the final perfection of the Paschal mystery. The Leonine Sacramentary, mentioned previously, words this truth as follows in one of the orations for Pentecost: "Almighty eternal God, who didst by the plentitude of today's mystery perfect the entire Paschal celebration. . . ." And an oration in the Gallican Sacramentary simliarily describes the meaning of Pentecost succinctly: "The fiftieth day doth shine forth, in which the Paschal mystery was fulfilled (*in quo Pascha adimpleta est*). . . ."

In view of what has been said, it will be seen how the economy of man's salvation is a reflection, or rather an extension in time and space, of the intra-Trinitarian economy. In the Trinity the Divine Nature proceeds from the Father, through the Son, and finds its perfect terminus in the Holy Ghost. Man is given the grace to participate in this Divine Nature: he receives the Divine life of the Father, *through* the Son, *in* the possession of the Holy Ghost. Receiving the Spirit of Christ, we become brothers of Christ, and sons of the Father: "We have received the Spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: *Abba, Father*" (*Rom. 8, 15*).

The story of Pentecost (epistle of the feast) will however teach us how the sanctification of the New Law differs from that of the Old. Essentially they are of course the same. After the fall, man is justified through the merits of Christ—whether future, or his-

torically past—and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament this indwelling was always of a “private” nature: the individual was justified as an individual. In the New Dispensation, the Holy Ghost’s coming has a public and official character. He comes as a mighty wind, as visible tongues of flame; and the evidences of His presence are there for all men to see and recognize. The charisms are manifest realities. Furthermore, and this is most important, He descended upon the hundred and twenty disciples, not as upon individuals, but in as far as they represented the Church. His indwelling had a communal, official character. As St. Augustine says in his first sermon for the feast of Pentecost: “The *Church* was there gathered in one house and received the Holy Ghost.” The Holy Spirit, as the pledge of man’s sanctification effected by Christ, was sent to the Church, and individuals receive this sanctifying Spirit through membership in the Church.<sup>2</sup> Such is the New Dispensation.

The effects of this manifest indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, and immediately, in the individual members of that body, are enumerated in the Mass-liturgy of Pentecost, and especially in the sequence.<sup>3</sup> They may be summed up briefly thus: As a gentle wind (*spiritus*), the Holy Ghost breathes over the soil of man’s soul, hardened by sin, warms it, softens it, and makes it receptive for the seed of the Divine life (prevenient grace). “By the sprinkling of His heavenly dew” (postcommunion), He fructifies the soil, and by the fire of His love and the light of His grace, He contributes increase to the new life and ripens the spiritual fruit produced.<sup>4</sup> A

<sup>2</sup> In this sense we may rightly consider Pentecost as the birthday of the Church.

<sup>3</sup> It is of more than casual interest that Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical *Divinum illud munus* (May 9, 1897) recommends this sequence as a prayer admirably suited also for private devotion to the Holy Spirit.

<sup>4</sup> St. Augustine expresses a similar thought in one of his Pentecost sermons: “*Flatus enim ille non inflavit, set vegetavit; ignis ille non cremavit, sed excitavit.*”

new wave of life surges over the Church and her members through the liturgical celebration of this feast—it is as it were an annual renewal of her Pentecostal youth and freshness and fertility. And like the disciples in Jerusalem, “we joyfully drink of this sober drunkenness of the Spirit” (hymn for Tuesday *Lauds* in monastic breviary) which the day offers us, and are considered demented by the world at large. For “the sensual man perceiveth not these things that are of the Spirit, for it is foolishness to him, and he cannot understand” (1 *Cor.* ii, 14).

In conclusion, we will quote one more passage from St. Augustine’s Pentecost sermons, which aptly sums up the significance of the feast for our spiritual lives: “The Paschal solemnities are now terminated, the *alleluia* is again silenced. But there is no room for sadness, for we have received the precious earnest of the Holy Spirit, and through Him we have the joyful possibility of daily living with Jesus Christ, and through Jesus Christ, to prepare ourselves for the celebration of the heavenly Paschal feast.”

\* \* \*

The Ideas of priesthood and mediator go together. The Latin word for priest is *pontifex* and in ancient Rome, for reasons unknown, the *pontifices* were bridge-builders. Whatever may be the origin of this usage, the idea of the priesthood as a bridge between man and God is singularly appropriate, especially in the case of Jesus Christ. Christ is the bridge between God and man. He is the revelation of God in time and in Him the hypostatic union represents the taking up of humanity to God. At one and the same time God and man, Christ is mediator between the distant God and low humanity. “No man cometh to the Father but by Me,” Christ Himself declared to His apostles. “By Him we have access,” writes St. Paul, “in one spirit to the Father” (*Orate Fratres*).

# The Holy Ghost and the Mystical Body

W. J. MCGARRY, S.J.

*Reprinted from the article The Mystical Body of Christ in the issue of Thought for March, 1937*

THE Holy Ghost is one and identical in every activity in the body of the Church. This Person is an ultimate principle of all supernatural action, for beyond the uncaused God we cannot go. Finally, He is an adequate principle, accounting for all created gifts in the supernatural order, be they sanctifying grace (through or outside the Sacraments), faith, hope, charity and all the moral virtues, or charismatic gifts and powers. All these are living effects of His presence (How St. Paul emphasizes the place of the Spirit in speaking of the charismatic gifts is seen in 1 *Cor.* xii); they are all *powers* or *living faculties* as it were of the soul of the Church, but the soul itself is the Holy Spirit. Thus we distinguish two effects of the Holy Spirit on and in the Church. First, His presence affects the Church as a whole, constituting it one living supernatural entity. Secondly, His presence affects the members, enabling them to participate in the life of the Church through sanctifying grace and the other gifts. In a word, through the Spirit the Church is and her members *are alive and active* in the supernatural order.

To complete this explanation we add that whenever the name of the Third Person is mentioned, it stands

for the Triune God. As creation is *appropriated* to the Father, though it is equally the act of the Three Divine Persons, so here the unitive effect on the Church is appropriately said to belong to the Spirit. Most authors who hold that the Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church explain the theory by appropriation. But we may recall that as the indwelling of the Spirit in the individual soul is generally understood in this way, while a few theologians of merit still consider it as belonging personally to the Spirit, so in this analogous question we may have an open mind, at least on this secondary feature of the main theory.

Now without doubt the theory outlined above does seem to satisfy as a solution. Its defenders go on to show that their reasoning is but the crowning and formulation of what is contained in Scripture and Catholic tradition concerning the Mystical Body. The writings of SS. John and Paul are so replete with the Church as vivified by the Holy Ghost that our theory seems the only one which comes up to their vigorous expressions. Again, the pithy expression of St. Augustine sums up the understanding of his deep and penetrating theological mind: "What the soul is to man's body, this the Holy Spirit is to the body of Christ, which is the Church. The Holy Spirit does in the Church what the soul does in all the members of one body." St. Thomas' expression goes farther and covers the topic of the unity between Christ and the Church: "The Holy Ghost is the ultimate and principal perfection of the whole Mystical Body as is the soul in the natural body."<sup>1</sup>

Why, then, is not this second opinion certain? We may mention one difficulty and one obscurity, not to argue them, but to show that all is not clear. The difficulty is this: we are seeking a formal element; is

<sup>1</sup>St. Augustine, Serm. 267 (Rouet de Journal, *Enchiridion Patristicum*, No. 1523); St. Thomas, Third Book of Comm. on the Sentences, 13th Distinction, 2nd Question.

not ours rather an efficient cause rather than a formal cause? If we answer that it is both, then, are we not making the Infinite and Increate the formal element of that which is finite and created? Moreover, we seem to be conscious of obscurity here, for when we say that the Holy Ghost is the soul or form of the Church, we really mean the quasi-soul or quasi-form.

We do. The infinite God cannot be the true form (in the univocal sense of that term) of a created thing. But our *quasi* only indicates that we understand the term in the analogous sense. We add that the full understanding of this sense is not within the reach of our minds; it is a mystery. Confronted with a mystery we search the sources of Revelation; we find that everything points to the conclusion that the Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church. We know that it cannot be the soul except in some analogous sense of the word. We point out clearly that here is the fact and there is the mystery. Such a position is entirely legitimate in the field of theological reasoning; in fact it is the only logical position to take when one approaches the borderline of the mysteries of God. We are content to strive to prove that our theory is contained in SS. John and Paul and in the writings of the Doctors of the Church; further search in these sources will clarify it.



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