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BY
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Devotion to the Holy Spirit

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“I have long thought that the secret but real cause of the so-called Reformation was that the office of the Holy Ghost had been much obscured in popular belief.”—*Cardinal Manning*.



SURELY we shall not exaggerate, if we declare that Pope Leo's Encyclical Letter on Devotion to the Holy Spirit,¹ is one of the most timely and significant of that long and splendid series of pronouncements which distinguished his reign. In the outspoken and emphatic language characteristic of Catholic authority, this document commended devotion to the Holy Spirit as most dear to the Pope's own heart, and as a salutary and efficient remedy for prevalent evils. A yearly novena was prescribed for the season of Pentecost, the frequent preaching of sermons and conferences on the Holy Spirit was suggested, and all intrusted with the direction of souls were charged that "it is their duty to impart to the people with more zeal and fullness the teachings relative to the Holy Ghost." For, said the Holy Father, "perhaps even

¹ *Encyclical Letter on the Holy Spirit*, Pope Leo XIII., May 9, 1897.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

today there are Christians who would answer as of old the Ephesians answered the Apostle Paul: 'We have not even heard if there be a Holy Spirit.' "

Now, the effect of this letter of the Supreme Pontiff was at once to awaken new love for the Holy Spirit throughout the length and breadth of the Catholic world. Nor has this beneficent influence yet ceased. Since, however, progress is ever possible, and since the directions of authority become fruitful in proportion as they succeed in arousing our personal zeal and diligent coöperation, we must ever be striving to lend new impetus to the movement. We know that authority aims at eliciting personal effort from us. Neither God nor Church will save us without ourselves, and we are never freed from the necessity of zestfully laboring as God and Church direct. Considering, then, the important part played by special devotions in the spiritual life, and the supreme wisdom of heartily obeying even the slightest suggestions of authority, we must feel it incumbent on us to make devotion to the Holy Spirit a predominant influence in every life that we can shape or sway. And because, in the words of Pope Leo, our "love of a good is proportioned to the fullness and clearness of our knowledge," we must often think, and read, and pray about this matter that, by gaining fuller knowledge, we may attain to deeper love.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

As the Holy Father has pointed out, a proper understanding of this devotion in question necessitates some knowledge of Catholic doctrine concerning the Most Blessed Trinity. In regard to that mystery, then, let us recall the teaching which bears most directly upon our subject.

THEOLOGICAL ASPECTS.

God, the Infinite Creator of all things, is in Personality threefold, but in Nature a simple Being, one and undivided. This Triple Personality, however, in no way militates against Divine Unity, for the distinction of Persons is confined to Their relationship with each other. Outside the Trinity, in operations which affect creatures, no One Person acts separately from the other Two. The Trinity is the efficient cause of the creation of men, as of their sanctification. Theologians, though, indulge in a form of speech called "appropriation," by which certain acts common to the whole Trinity are specially assigned to One or Other of the Persons, the reason being the peculiar harmony of these acts with the personal characteristic distinguishing that Person from the other Two.

Now, it is the teaching of faith that the human soul is constituted in the life of grace by the indwelling presence of God. The Creator is, of course, always and necessarily present in every

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

creature both by ubiquity and by omnipotence, but sanctifying grace implies that He is present in a new way, dwelling in the soul now by love, as previously He dwelt in virtue of His immensity. "God by His grace dwells in our souls as in a temple, intimately and specially. Hence arise these bonds of love whereby the soul is more closely united to God than a friend to his dearest friend, enjoying Him fully and sweetly. This wonderful union—Indwelling, as it is called—is produced in reality by the presence of the whole Trinity, and only on the part of the recipient differs from that which makes the saints in heaven blessed." ²

THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

This indwelling of God in the soul is by "appropriation" assigned to the Holy Ghost. The reason is that it seems to be peculiarly in accord with what we know of his Personal characteristic. For the note which distinguishes Him from Father and Son consists in this, that He is the flowing forth of Divine Love—*Amor Procedens*—and his proper name is said to be Donum (Gift).³ Hence we appropriate to him that indwelling by which God, the Blessed Trinity, is bestowed on man and made

² See the Pope's Encyclical.

³ St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I., qu. xxxvii. a.i. and qu. xxxviii. a.ii.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

present in the soul in this new and marvelous manner.

This union of God with the soul occurs whenever a human creature, being invested with sanctifying grace, becomes a participant in the divine nature. For by grace it shares in a life and power naturally proper to God alone, and thus transcends the rank of all created natures.⁴ This deification—as it has been called by the Fathers of the Church—is effected not by destroying human nature, not by nullifying its powers, but by elevating these to a new and higher order wherein they become of greater and divine worth. It is the indwelling Spirit of God Who, by uniting His Divine Substance with His beloved creature, through grace, thus raises man to the sublime dignity of Divine Sonship.

This fact that God actually and substantially dwells within the sanctified soul is, then, the explicit teaching of the Catholic Church.⁵ The life of grace means this: it means that there has been effected between the soul and God a union closer and more real than any other, the union of the two natures of Christ alone excepted. Since the human race began the Holy Spirit has been thus ac-

⁴ C. Mazzella, S.J., *De Gratia Christi*, prop. xxxlii.

⁵ St. Thomas, *C. Gentiles*, iv. 18; J. Franzelin, S.J., *De Deo Trino*, th. xliii.; C. Pesch, S.J., *De Deo Trino*, prop. lxxxix.; H. Hurter, S.J., *De Deo Trino*, th. cciv.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

tive among the souls of men, ever sanctifying by His Presence such as clung to God with firm and generous hearts.⁶ So it was with Adam when he became the son of God by grace, so it was with David, Elias, Zacharias, John the Baptist, Simeon and Anna. So it has been with every soul within or without the body of the church that has been raised to the supernatural life of grace. Each has been sanctified by the presence of the Holy Spirit. For, on Pentecost “the Holy Ghost did not come to commence His indwelling in the souls of His saints, but to penetrate more deeply into them, not beginning at that time to bestow His gifts, but pouring them out in greater abundance, performing no new work, but continuing what He had already begun.”⁷

DEGREES OF UNION.

But as in human friendship, so in this mysterious union of the soul with God, there are degrees and gradations. Sanctity varies in the individual; so also the intimacy of union with God. And since the Pentecostal advent of the Holy Spirit, this grace of union has been bestowed to an extent utterly inconceivable. “For this gift, this sending of the Holy Ghost, after the glorification of Christ,

⁶ Mazzella, prop. xxxvii.

⁷ Quoted from St. Leo the Great in Pope's Encyclical.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

was to be such as had never been before; not that it had never been given before, but that it had never been given to the same degree.”⁸ So abundant is this outpouring that the Christian soul can go on ever strengthening the divine life within, ever binding itself more intimately to God, gaining new titles to love, forging stronger chains of affection, winning closer embraces. As flame in the blazing fire, as a lover in the arms of his beloved, so is God in the soul. Personally, and literally by the actual presence of His Divine Substance, He rests in His creature as truly as He dwells in the Tabernacle containing the consecrated Host.

It is this privilege of the Christian which surpasses all others, as it is the one to which all others tend. The time of Sacramental Communion is a moment of ineffable sweetness indeed, and human nature can never mount beyond the height reached when Jesus Christ, God and Man, comes to rest in the arms of His devout lover. Still, the physical presence of the Body of Christ does not last for long. With the corruption of the elements, the physical and bodily union between the worshipper and his Lord comes to an end. But grace remains. The Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Jesus, abides in the soul; and with Him, both Jesus and the Father. This indwelling is invisible, as indeed the union of

⁸ See the Pope's Encyclical.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

the Second Person with the humanity of Christ was invisible. Like the transformation of bread into the body and soul and divinity of Jesus Christ, it produces no sensible result. But just as surely as Transubstantiation makes Christ's Body present where previously It was not, so surely does the sanctification of the soul by the entrance of the Holy Spirit bring God Himself into the human heart, there to abide as a King upon His own throne.

SENSE OF DOCTRINAL PROPORTIONS.

Such, then, is the doctrine at the basis of devotion to the Holy Ghost. That devotion takes its rise in the consciousness that through the indwelling of the Holy Ghost the Christian soul has become the temple of God, that it has been consecrated by the Divine Presence as truly as if it were a tabernacle marked by the lighted lamp as the abiding place of Jesus Christ. For this consciousness naturally impels the soul to direct special thought and nourish special affection towards that Person of the Most Blessed Trinity through Whom this grace is bestowed.

What rank this devotion holds in the spiritual life we learn from the Holy Father's emphatic eulogy. Deaf to his teaching and blind to all spiritual perspective would we be if we ignored this

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

great truth, while exerting ourselves to gain vogue for the pretty little specialties begotten of pious imaginations. It is true that in every household use can be found for small things as well as for great, and the wondrous number and variety of Catholic devotions may well justify pride and admiration. Nevertheless, the sense of doctrinal proportion must be respected, and it were most unseemly if those ardent in carrying on the propaganda of minor devotions should remain “wrapped in error and ignorance as to the benefits and graces that have always flowed and still flow from this Divine source—error and ignorance, indeed, unfitting the children of light.”⁹

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DIVINE COMFORTER.

Individually, at least, each one of us can do something toward dissipating that ignorance by enlightening our own souls; and though the subject seems to be fathomless, that does not excuse us from the endeavor to learn something concerning it. It is true, even the personal characteristic of the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity seems to be shrouded in peculiarly deep mystery. The names of Father and Son in nowise adequately or exhaustively describe the proper personality of

⁹ See the Pope's Encyclical.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Those so named, but we imagine, at least, that we understand Their relationship to the Divine Nature far better than we do that of the Third Person. Of His characteristic we gain but the merest hint in such unsatisfying statements as theology ventures to advance. Nevertheless the symbols assigned to Him, and the works appropriated to Him, do afford some aid. First of all, we notice how they seem to throw about Him the kindly light of tenderness and love. The gentle air, the brooding dove, the soft, clinging cloud-shadow, the dawning light, the parted tongues of fire—these symbols intimate to us how sweetly lovable must be this Best Gift of the Father and the Son. And then the offices appropriated to Him as most in harmony with His personal character—to sanctify the human soul, to inspire the patriarchs with longing for the Messiah's coming, to pour sweet strains of heavenly music into psalmist-souls, and illumine the prophets with the gleam of a light never seen upon earth—these, and the espousing of Mary, and the forming of the body of Jesus, and His baptism, and the consecrating of the Apostles, all indicate how greatly our love and worship would increase did we but know the Third Person of the Godhead better. For all the precious graces that come in the Sacraments are His Gift, and all the sweetness and strength and comfort infused in prayer, and every good deed of

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

all the millions of priests He has anointed with His holy unction since the Church began—all these are His work, too.

So out from the obscurity breaks a glimmering of the loveliness of that Divine Comforter Whose advent it was expedient we should purchase even at the cost of Christ's departure. Surely devotion to Him will bring some new nobility into our sordidly selfish lives.

WHAT IS IMPLIED BY THE DEVOTION.

And now what is implied by devotion to the Holy Spirit? First of all, an endeavor constantly to attend to His Presence in our souls. If we were to do that well and lovingly, we should need no other form of recollection. To gaze affectionately on the face of God unveiled is the life of the blessed in heaven. To remain close to Him each moment while here upon earth, to acquire the habit of ever directing the will lovingly toward Him, to contemplate Him hidden in the soul's depths under the veil of faith, that is a life of the best and highest prayer, a life that has transformed thousands of men and women into saints. Like Adam in the garden, we walk daily in the company of God. Like the Virgin after the angelic salutation, we bear within us the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of the Most High. And as the Sacred Heart of our Divine

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Saviour was thrilled with the ineffable and measureless graces poured into It by the Holy Spirit, we, too, are quickened and sanctified and made more than human by His loving touch.

The flame-illumined crystal, shot through and through with splendor, but typifies our souls when by the indwelling Spirit we are made partakers of Divinity. God's spirit in the innermost depths of our being is soothing, healing, livening, strengthening, uplifting, comforting, purifying us, hour by hour. He is ever gently stirring our souls as the summer air that breathes so softly amid the forest leaves. Truly God is with us. Truly we are His temples, bearing Him in our bodies—a precious treasure in earthen vessels.

When first this truth is presented to our minds, we draw back in astonishment and doubt. Then, as conviction slowly dawns, we feel stunned and bewildered. We have been walking among crowded sand-hills that shut away the view on every side, and suddenly we come out upon a great shoreless sea stretching away into infinite space. The mist is gathered thick above the water. Nothing can be seen except brooding mist, and nothing heard but the thunder of the hidden surf. We are humbled, awed, terrified. The great God dwelling in us! What can it mean?

And then the story of Bishop Cheverus come

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

back to us, perhaps; how the sainted priest confessed his humiliation when someone said to him: "What! you believe that Jesus Christ, the Incarnate God, descends from heaven each morning to enter your bosom? Why, you would be rapt into the ecstasy of a saint!" "At these words," said the good old prelate, "I blushed with shame, for so it should be."

THE EVER-LIVING PRESENCE WITHIN US.

Thus we find it beyond belief that we are still so worldly and selfish and sinful, with the Spirit of God really dwelling in us. But it is a fact that cannot be gainsaid. The privilege is not optional. Whether we will it or not, we have been "born again" into the life of grace, the supernatural order, and have come into the company of the saints; for our great glory should we persevere, for our inevitable and well-deserved shame and ruin were we now to become castaway. Far better the mollusk on the seashore, or the toad imprisoned in a rock, than a soul turned away from God. But though the issue is in our own hands, the choice of evading responsibility has not been given us. We are equipped for the struggle, but its necessity is upon us; we must face it, whether for better or for worse. "Your members are the members of Christ." "Your body is God's temple." "Be ye,

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

therefore, perfect even as your Heavenly Father is perfect.”

It is true that the first deep realization of this truth may be fearful and oppressive; the initial step in devotion to the Holy Ghost is apt to be made in dread and trembling. “This indeed is an awful place: for God was in this spot and I knew it not,” we say at our first long look into the depths of our souls. It is as if, while imagining yourself to be alone at night, you were to turn about and suddenly see a face in the dark, with great eyes that seemed to pierce you through and through. But, as you recover from the momentary terror, you find that the face is as sweet and loving as that of the mother who used to bend over your childhood crib, and that the eyes resting on you are soft and winning, and deep with an infinite tenderness beyond all ever seen before. And then your heart leaps up in an answering love, as if now at last its quest were ended and it had found an object worthy of all its loving worship.

THE SOUL ENSHRINING THE DEITY.

And so it really is. There is a hunger in the human soul unsatisfied by all the joys that creatures can bestow. There is a love best appreciated when the eyes are closed, and mentioned only with bated breath, as something too sacred to be conversed

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

about in common tones. It is the love of God, surpassing the love of woman, and its joys transcend the bliss of the mother and her smiling babe, of the bridegroom and his bride, of the faithful pair that have seen their golden jubilee of wedded life. Searching for this love we ever tend to make gods of our fellow-creatures. But no creature can remain our God for long, and left without a God we become again unhappy and restless.

“We seek Him down the nights and down the days;
We seek Him down the arches of the years.”

And at last, Augustine-like, we find Him within—God, the Holy Ghost; and, as Catherine of Siena, building a little chapel in the soul we worship Him there with fervor for evermore. Now is our God always with us, embracing, caressing us in the sacred privacy of love’s communion: “I to my Beloved, and His turning is toward me.”

The old charm of selfishness is gone now. From morn till night we are under the eyes of the God Who loves us. The most trifling infidelity is now become an unpardonable crime, as if grieving the Holy Spirit were the same with neglecting the slightest wish of the dear invalid whose sensitive, restless eyes ever follow the nurse moving about the sick-room. A venial sin seems like a sacrilege now, as if we were close to the Tabernacle, or at

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

the altar-rail. Dreadfully wearing all this! someone says. Ah! but the reward. Who can describe the joys of the saint? On the edge of the sun-scorched desert is the cool wood with its heavy leaves, and its damp moss, and its running stream. And here, far from the worry of creatures and the taint of sin, the soul finds rest and peace and a Divine Comforter. And that dear solitude is loved as no other spot on earth. In the shadow, unseen of men, here within my heart, God dwells with me and I with Him. No pulse of mine can beat, no breath be drawn, but He knows it. I live, now not I, but He lives within me. And sooner than lose that sweet consciousness of His Presence, that sense of His watchful eye, I would suffer the bitterest pain. For with Him pain is paradise, and without Him life is a dreary torment.

OBEDIENCE TO INSPIRATIONS.

But mere loving attention to the fact of God's indwelling is not the last of our relationship with Him. The will must enter actively into our intimacy, our contemplation must be that of faithful servants, whose eyes are bent upon their master's hands, and who await only the signal to obey with alacrity and exactness. If, then, our devotion to the Holy Spirit be real, it will imply ready and perfect obedience to His inspirations. And as atten-

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

tion to Him is the perfection of the life of prayer, so obedience to His inspirations is the perfection of the active life. For what are the gifts of the Holy Spirit if not habits of soul disposing us to do God's will promptly and perfectly.¹⁰

Consideration of this simple truth may help us to realize the true ideal of spiritual direction, namely, that God is the supreme director of souls, and that all human consultation is of use in proportion as it leads to the recognition and fulfillment of the Divine Will. We need to be instructed and perhaps encouraged by others, but we must also make large use of our own enlightened common sense, and the impulses of grace in our souls. The frequent advice of others may be perfectly indispensable to our success, and consequently is to be sought; but we should not neglect opportunities of useful work, merely because no one has suggested our embracing them. Nor can we always have a director within call, unless indeed it be the indwelling Spirit. And therefore the best direction is that which trains men in prompt and spontaneous fidelity to the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, as the normal spiritual life is that wherein the soul, instead of merely shaping itself on the

¹⁰ "The gifts of the Holy Spirit are habits which perfect man in prompt obedience to the Holy Spirit."—St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I., 2æ., qu.lxviii. a.iii.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

minute details of a model provided by an adviser, uses its own intelligence to recognize, and its own will to execute, God's particular designs in its regard. How simple in sublimity the rule of life which has for its supreme principle the conscience, instructed by authoritative teaching, and energized by the promptings of the Holy Spirit!

SAFETY IN EXTERNAL STANDARDS.

But does this not render the individual lawless and his conduct arbitrary? In the spiritual life, thus conceived, there must be danger of pride, fanaticism, vagrant fancies, illusions, and the worst possible self-deception. That is true; and ruin would be imminent were there no balance, no corrective, no external standard of guidance. Here, as always, the beautiful symmetry of Catholic doctrine is manifested, and its unity made evident. The inner promptings of the voice of God are to be tested by their harmony with the external direction of authority. God will not contradict Himself; the less obvious and certain direction is to be corrected by the clearer. Hence, in case of conflict, the supposed inspiration must always give way to the explicit direction of lawfully constituted authority. This rule has been well illustrated in the lives of saints like Teresa, who professed that they would obey the command of a law-

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

ful superior more readily than they would follow any interior suggestion, though it seemed clearly to proceed from the Holy Spirit. Thus it is that fidelity to the integral Catholic ideal has ever enabled men to steer safely between the fatal alternatives of fanaticism and indolent passivity. The plumb-line of the mason, the rudder of a ship, the beacon on a lee-shore, external authority constantly guides and directs the human activity initiated perhaps by an internal prompting, but liable to end in disaster if it neglects the corrective of direction from without. For the demon may whisper within us in the guise of an angel of light. Obeying legitimate superiors, however, we cannot go astray. The wall will be true to a hair's breadth, the ship will safely weather the foam-bathed rocks; and it is the certainty of being thus guarded against danger which enables the loyal Catholic to work out God's plan with untroubled serenity.

FIDELITY TO INSPIRATIONS.

All this is certain; but we must not forget that God's plan is a harmony, that in the perfect observance of inner and outer lies the fulfilling of the law. To work lawlessly were crime. To work only when expressly commanded by external authority were indolence. The danger-signals and the limits

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

of progress are marked from without; the impulse to act is often from within. The careful watch of lawfully constituted guardians, like the swaddling-clothes of infancy, protects against fatal chill; but the Christian, like the babe, lives not in virtue of swaddling-clothes alone. Faithful and energetic correspondence to the Will of God, manifested externally by superiors or by circumstances, and hearty coöperation with the suggestions of the indwelling Spirit—both are necessary elements in the building up of God's household. The Gentile missions of Paul, the reformed foundations of Teresa, the new institute of Ignatius, were deeds inspired by secret whispers that the Divine Master communicated to these saints in the privacy of their own souls. External authority did not give birth to these movements. What it did, and did thoroughly, was to provide against all possibility of disaster.

Many a one, no doubt, is ready to say: "But I never have any such inspirations. I never hear the voice of God within my soul." Cleanse away sin, shut out the world, purify self-love, and then listen. Why, to the worst of men God whispers His admonitions through the voice of conscience, and it must be that He will speak more often and more explicitly to souls sanctified by grace. If we are attentive we shall certainly not fail to receive sug

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

gestions from Him. If we are faithful to the light given, it will go on always increasing.¹¹ Evening and morning, at our going out and at our coming in, now amid the bustle of daily duties and now in the retirement of a church, the good impulse may be felt. Sometimes an inclination to prayer and again a summons to action, first a call to mortification and then to kindness, this time the suggestion of a pleasant duty and later on one that is bitterly repugnant—so the motions of the Spirit vary as he listeth. But they gather about our pathway, ever and always—at one time as a soothing dew and again as a scorching fire, now as soft, low music, and now as the trumpet-call to battle—for all ways are His. He is ever beside us, ever within us, and His inspirations fall athwart our souls as constantly as the long shadows on the quiet surface of a mountain lake. So Jesus with the disciples trained them for their work. So, instructed by the guiding Spirit, the Apostolic twelve revolutionized the world. Ever contemplating and ever obeying God, we, too, will be transformed into some greater likeness to Him, as friends dwelling together for years grow to resemble one another.

¹¹ *The Spiritual Doctrine of Father Louis Lallemant, S.J.*, p. 168.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

SPIRITUAL PERFECTION THE RESULT.

The result of this devotion is, in one word, Perfection. Its examples are the saints who in every age and land, with an infinite variety of dispositions and faculties, have learned to become perfect instruments of the God abiding in their souls. They have exhibited in fullness those gifts and graces which are the proper fruits of devotion to the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, piety, fortitude, fear, charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity—gifts and graces in which every good Christian shares to some extent, but which are capable of indefinite and lasting increase. Thus will our lives be rounded out and perfected if we, too, learn to love the Spirit of God and faithfully follow His guidance. For are not all other things for the sake of this, the visible on account of the invisible? Surely it is so. And the ultimate end of human existence is but the perfecting of the relationship begun by the Holy Spirit's entrance into the soul.

Many times the pursuit of this ideal will conflict with prevalent notions and cherished traditions perhaps, but it must be pursued faithfully none the less. The world will move, be the denials of that fact ever so numerous and loud. And as it moves,

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

God inclines men first in this direction and then in another. Human wills must be free and ready to follow the divine. *Ad majorem Dei gloriam* must be our ultimate principle of action, and it must stand supreme. "God first" was the interpretation given to this maxim by the saint who has made it a household word among modern Catholics, and the Exercises he invented were framed to train the soul so that, purged of attachment to minor goods and means, it might ever aim at whole-hearted loyalty to the Supreme Good, the end of its existence, and always elect to follow him.

THE DEVOTION ESPECIALLY SUITED TO OUR DAY.

There is more than one reason why it seems as though devotion to the Holy Spirit were especially suited for our age, and above all for the people of this country—earnest, intelligent, active and liberty-loving. Mindful of the significance of those acts of the Holy Father which officially bear upon the whole Christian world, we may well consider his directions to be a heaven-sent indication of the spiritual ideals that will best avail for the perfecting of the existing social order. In consecrating the whole human race to "the Sacred Heart, the symbol and sensible image of the infinite love of Jesus Christ,"¹² he has directed attention toward

¹² See the Pope's Encyclical, *Annum Sacrum*, May 25, 1899.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

that devotion which attaches men most firmly to the person of Him Who is their Way, their Truth and their Life. In renewing devotion to the Holy Spirit, he has influenced men to turn their thoughts inward and learn the ineffable dignity of the life of grace, and he has encouraged that love of internal personal religion, that loyalty to the inner promptings of grace, that cultivation of the highest form of prayer, and that sense of individual freedom and individual responsibility so well fostered by this devotion, and in default of which vital spirituality is so likely to decay.

A GUARD AGAINST SPIRITUAL DANGERS.

“I have long thought,” said Cardinal Manning, “that the secret but real cause of the so-called Reformation was that the office of the Holy Ghost had been much obscured in popular belief.” But the new religionists brought about a far worse state of affairs. Making no headway themselves, they still obstructed the path of others. For wild fanaticism such as they displayed was the one thing most likely to discourage authority from reposing confidence in the personal fidelity of the subject. Catholics were forced to concentrate all resources on the defence of points attacked. External authority was of necessity emphasized most strongly and became all dominant, while individual initiative in

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

action and individual freedom in methods were suspected to be, and often developed into, the false and fanatical vagaries of heresy.

But today the siege is nigh over. Protestantism has all but completed its process of self-disintegration, and now the evil most to be feared is indifferentism and infidelity. To this our century tends, as is evident, and the national genius of our own country is such that naturalism, as the Holy Father has warned us, is the point of danger.¹³ And how thoroughly is this danger counteracted by the two great devotions which the Pontiff has seen fit to commend so specially—devotion to the sacred symbol of the God-Man's love for us, and devotion to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit! We tend to humanism, therefore our natural bent is caught and directed upward to the transfixed Heart of the Saviour of Mankind. Again, we tend to exaggerate liberty, our sacred birthright—that liberty of which the Pontiff wrote, "it is the greatest of man's natural gifts"¹⁴—and therefore devotion to the Holy Spirit is commended, that human liberty may be bound in the chains of divine love, and made over to God in the free and spontaneous consecration of our wills to the will of the Divinity reigning within us. Thus has the highest authority in the Church

¹³ See the Pope's Letter, *Testem Benevolentiæ*, Jan. 22, 1899.

¹⁴ See the Pope's Encyclical, *Libertas*, June 20, 1888.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

stamped his supreme approval on a devotion which already had been marked as specially fitted for our day by the decree of the Baltimore Council, by the action of the American College at Rome, by the books and pamphlets and burning speeches of cardinals, archbishops, bishops and saintly priests throughout the English-speaking world. What indeed can be better adapted to bring about that desire so dear to the venerable Pontiff's heart and so repeatedly mentioned in his letters—the renewal of Christian life in human society and the reconciliation to the faith of all those outside the Church? Surely the finger of God points out this devotion as one which, earnestly cultivated, will lead all dissenters into the Catholic fold and inspire all Catholics to lives of sanctity.

Each of us, then, may feel specially called to cherish it. How greatly it helps to simplify our lives! Neither badge, medal nor affiliation is necessary to its practice; the sole equipment is a lovingly attentive heart, and this all Christians may lay claim to, if they will, in any place, at any time, and under any circumstances. Love and obey the Spirit, His outer and inner voice, and it is enough. As a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire, He will lead you on and into the land of promise. The glad spring sunshine, the grateful perfume of the pine woods, the murmurs of splashing fountains—none

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

of these is delightful compared to the gracious caress and the sweet whisper of the indwelling Spirit, the Spouse of our souls. It was once a custom in Catholic countries to symbolize the advent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost by letting fragrant blossoms and lighted fleece fall from the ceiling of the church. Well did those symbols recall the love and light bestowed on those who become His disciples.

Among the splendid old hymns that have thrilled the church for centuries there is one, the "Veni, Creator Spiritus," unique in its wonderful history. To the echo of its music kings have been anointed and emperors crowned. While its cry went up from the kneeling thousands, bishops have knelt beneath the consecrating oil, priests have been ordained, and temples erected to God. Under its inspiration spotless souls have consecrated their chastity to Christ, preachers have stirred sinners to lifelong penitence, and showers of Pentecostal grace have flowed down on men. May it find new echo within each Catholic soul today! *Veni, Creator Spiritus!* May His advent each Pentecost awaken us to the joyous consciousness that He is come indeed, and is abiding within us, never more to depart until in Heaven our eyes open to gaze eternally upon His uncovered Face!

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

NOTE.—Those who cherish devotion to the Holy Spirit will find much to attract and enlighten them in the following volumes, obtainable from any Catholic publisher:

- Lallemant, S.J.: Spiritual Doctrine.
Manning: Internal Mission of the Holy Ghost.
Baker: Holy Wisdom (Sancta Sophia).
Caussade, S.J.: Abandonment; Workings of the Divine Will.
Scupoli: Spiritual Combat.
Hilton: Ladder of Perfection (Scala Perfectionis).
De Sales: Love of God, and other works.
À Kempis: Imitation of Christ, and other works.
Grou, S.J.: Hidden Life, and other works.
Surin, S.J.: Foundations, Letters, Catéchisme Spirituel (French).
Bona: Easy Way to God.
Bowden: Spiritual Works by Louis of Blois.
Fénelon: Letters.
Frogét, O.P.: The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit (English translation, Raemers).
Hedley: Retreat Conferences.
Hahn-Hahn: Fathers of the Desert (preface by Dalgairns).
Cassian: Conferences.
Lights in Prayer of Venerable Fathers De la Puente, De la Columbière and Segneri, S.J.
Rigoleus, S.J.: Walking With God.
Bellècius, S.J.: Solid Virtue.
Bridgett: Suppliant of the Holy Ghost.
Preston: The Divine Paraclete.
Zardetti: Devotion to the Holy Ghost.
Rawes: Little Books of the Holy Ghost.
Nieremberg, S.J.: Adoration in Spirit and in Truth.
Faber: Notes on Doctrinal Subjects, ii. 2.
Scheeben: Glories of Divine Grace.
Collins: Divine Cloud.
Tauler: Following of Christ.
Mother Juliana: Revelations of Divine Love.
Blessed Angela of Foligno: Visions and Instructions.
St. Teresa: Autobiography, and other works.
St. John of the Cross: Ascent of Mount Carmel, and other works.
St. Catherine of Genoa: Life and Doctrine.
St. Bernard: Love of God, and other works.
Joly: Psychology of the Saints.



