

THE SUNDAY SERMONS OF  
THE GREAT FATHERS

VOLUME THREE

*Semper redeundum ad divinae revelationis Fontes; quod depositum Divinus Redemptor  
concredidit authentice interpretandum soli Ecclesiae Magisterio.*

Pope Pius XII,

Encyclical *Humani Generis*,

12 August 1950

THE  
SUNDAY SERMONS  
OF THE GREAT  
FATHERS

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VOLUME THREE

*From Pentecost to the  
Tenth Sunday after Pentecost*

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TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY  
M. F. TOAL, D.D.

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## FOREWORD TO THE FIRST VOLUME

THE author of the present work has had as his purpose to put into the hands of his fellow priests material of incomparable value, in a form easy of access, with a view to aiding them in the sacred ministry of preaching. This apostolic ministry is the one on which all else depends in the mission of the Church for the salvation of souls.

A large portion of it will always consist in homilies on the Gospels of the Sundays and Principal Feasts. Father Toal, in this first volume, has in view this sector of the preacher's work. For the Gospel of each Sunday and Feast he has brought together from the most reliable sources, and translated, all that he thought to be best and most useful in the homilies and expositions of the Fathers and of the Angel of the Schools.

Nothing more suited to his noble purpose could be conceived. The word of God contained in Scripture, and especially in the Gospels, has been given to the Church for the instruction of men. Sacred Tradition guided by the Spirit of God has expounded it in the writings of the Holy Fathers and Doctors.

Father Toal has placed in the easiest possible reach of the busy priest this treasure house of sacred lore, this quintessence of the doctrine of Tradition on each Gospel. What he supplies may, of course, not be all that may be usefully known in relation to it, but it is, and by long odds, the most important thing. A sermon well prepared on the matter here supplied cannot fail to be learned, solid, simple and effective.

What more can be said in praise of the utility of Father Toal's contribution? We shall all be grateful to him, and *his reward will indeed be great* (Mt. v. 12).

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Vatican  
24 November 1954



## BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ABBREVIATIONS

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
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| Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum   | CSEL           |
| Catena Aurea Sancti Thomae<br>Editio Joannis Nicolae O.P. Lyons 1686<br>(A complete edition in English of the Catena Aurea is in<br>course of preparation.—Ed.)                                    | CA             |
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#### NOTE ON THE ARRANGEMENT OF THIS BOOK

For each Sunday or Feast Day in the book there is given the Gospel of the Day, and after that the parallel passages from other gospels where such passages exist. In every case these are followed by an exposition of the Gospel taken from the *Catena Aurea* of St Thomas Aquinas, which in turn is followed by a selection of sermons on the Gospel.



## LIST OF DOCTORS AND FATHERS IN THIS VOLUME

### THE FOUR GREAT DOCTORS OF THE EAST

1. St Basil the Great, Confessor, Doctor of the Church, Archbishop of Cappadocia, Asia Minor. Born *c.* 330; died 379.
2. St Gregory Nazianzen, Confessor, Doctor of the Church, Archbishop of Constantinople 379. Born 329; died 390.
3. St John Chrysostom, Confessor, Doctor of the Church, Archbishop of Constantinople 397. Born 354; died 407.
4. St Cyril of Alexandria, Confessor, Doctor of the Church, Archbishop of Alexandria 412. Died 444.

### THE FOUR GREAT DOCTORS OF THE WEST

1. St Ambrose, Confessor, Doctor of the Church, Archbishop of Milan 373. Born 339; died 397.
2. St Jerome, Confessor, Doctor of the Church, Priest. Born 347; died 420.
3. St Augustine, Confessor, Doctor of the Church, Bishop of Hippo 395. Born 354; baptized 387; died 28 August 430.
4. St Gregory the Great, Pope, Confessor, Doctor of the Church. Born 540; successor of St Peter 590; died 604.

### FATHERS, DOCTORS, ECCLESIASTICAL WRITERS

1. St Clement, Pope, Martyr, early successor of St Peter. Fellow-labourer of St Paul (Phil. iv. 3).
2. St Justin Martyr. Born *c.* 100; martyred Rome 165.
3. St Irenaeus, Martyr, Father of the Church, Bishop of Lyons. Martyred *c.* 202.
4. Clement of Alexandria, learned and saintly Christian layman. Died 215.
5. Origen, Confessor, Priest. Born *c.* 185; died 253.
6. St Cyprian, Martyr, Father of the Church, Bishop of Carthage. Martyred 14 September 258.
7. St Hilary, Confessor, Doctor of the Church, Bishop of Poitiers from 350. Died 368.
8. St Ephraim, Confessor, Deacon, Doctor of the Church. Died 373.
9. St Gregory of Nyssa, Confessor, Doctor of the Church, Bishop of Nyssa 371. Died 394.
10. St Amphilocius of Iconium. Born 339; died *c.* 400.
11. St Gaudentius, Bishop of Brescia from 387. Died 410.

*List of Doctors and Fathers in this Volume*

12. St Asherius, Bishop of Amasenc, Metropolitan of Pontus. Died *c.* 410.
13. St Proclius, Archbishop of Constantinople 434. Died 446.
14. St Peter Chrysologus, Confessor, Doctor of the Church, Archbishop of Ravenna. Died 450.
15. St Leo the Great, Pope, Confessor, Doctor of the Church. Successor of St Peter A.D. 440. Died 461. The supreme witness and teacher of the Incarnation.
16. St Maximus, Bishop of Turin. Born 380; died 465.
17. The Venerable Bede, Priest, Confessor, Doctor of the Church, of Jarrow (Northumberland). Born 672; died 735.
18. Theophylactus, Patriarch of Bulgaria. Born 765; died 840.
19. Remigius, of Auxerre, ecclesiastical writer. Died 908.

## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
FOREWORD	v
BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ABBREVIATIONS	vi
LIST OF DOCTORS AND FATHERS IN THIS VOLUME	vii
PENTECOST SUNDAY	I
TRINITY SUNDAY	58
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST	84
CORPUS CHRISTI	105
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST	164
THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST	190
FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST	214
FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST	226
THE FEAST OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL	249
SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST	278
SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST	297
EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST	320
NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST	341
TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST	356
INDEX	373



## PENTECOST

- I. ST BASIL THE GREAT: ON THE HOLY SPIRIT
- II. ST AMBROSE: THE NAMES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
- III. ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST
- IV. ST AUGUSTINE: EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL
- V. ST AUGUSTINE: THE HOLY SPIRIT THE SOUL OF THE CHURCH
- VI. ST AUGUSTINE: THE HOLY SPIRIT THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH
- VII. ST AUGUSTINE: THE MEANING OF PENTECOST
- VIII. ST AUGUSTINE: WHAT IS PEACE?
- IX. ST AUGUSTINE: PEACE THE INHERITANCE OF CHRIST
- X. ST LEO THE GREAT: THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
- XI. ST LEO THE GREAT: THE REDEMPTION THE WORK OF THE TRINITY
- XII. ST GREGORY THE GREAT: EXPLANATION OF THE GOSPEL

### THE GOSPEL OF THE SUNDAY

JOHN xiv. 23-31

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: If any one love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my words. And the word which you have heard is not mine; but the Father's who sent me. These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid. You have heard that I said to you: I go away, and I come unto you. If you loved me, you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father: for the Father is greater than I.

And now I have told you before it come to pass: that when it shall come to pass, you may believe. I will not now speak many things with you, For the prince of this world cometh. and in me he hath not any thing.

But that the world may know, that I love the Father: and as the Father

hath given me commandment, so do I.

EXPOSITION FROM THE CATENA AUREA

V. 23. *Jesus said: If any one love me, he will keep my word . . .*

GREGORY, *Hom. 30 in Gospel*: The proof of love is to do good. The love of God is never idle; where you find it, it is doing great things. If it does nothing, love is not there.

AUGUSTINE, *Tr. 76 in John 2*: It is love divides the sanctified from the world, and makes men dwell in peace in one house, and in this house the Father and the Son take up their abode: They Who give this love to those to whom they will finally give the Divine Wisdom. There is a certain inward vision of God of which the wicked know nothing; there is no vision of the Father and the Holy Spirit for them. Of the Son there could be, in the flesh; but this is not the same as the other: it is only for a little while, not for ever; for judgement, not for joy; for punishment, not as a reward.

*And we will come to him.* They come to us, when we go to Them. They come to us, helping us; we go to Them, by obedience. They come in light, we come in contemplation. They come filling us, we come receiving: so the vision given us is inward, not outward, and their abode in us is not fleeting but eternal. And so we have: *And will make our abode with them.*

GREGORY, *as above*: For He comes into certain hearts, but does not make His abode there; for though through compunction they do in fact feel a love for God, in time of temptation

they forget what moved them to repentance. He who truly loves God, into that heart God comes, and there makes His abode. For the love of God has so penetrated it, that in time of temptation it will not go back upon this love. For he truly loves whose soul is not conquered by consent to evil delight.

AUGUSTINE, *as above, 4*: Are we to suppose that the Holy Ghost is excluded from this mansion the Father and Son are making in the heart that loves Them? What then is the meaning of the words spoken earlier: *He shall abide with you, and shall be in you* (v. 17)? Unless there is anyone so foolish as to believe that when the Father and Son come the Holy Ghost departs; as giving place to superiors? Yet even to this carnal notion Holy Scripture has an answer, when it says: *That he may abide with you for ever* (v. 16). Therefore He shall be with Them for ever in this same mansion; for as He came not without Them, neither did They come without Him. For in the teaching of the Trinity certain acts are imputed to separately named Persons; yet by reason of the Substance (*nature*) of the same Trinity by this it is not to be understood that these are done separately from the Others.

GREGORY: The more a man delights in earthly things, the more he is shut off from heavenly love. Hence:

V. 24. *He that loveth me not, keepeth not my words.*

So life, soul and tongue proclaim our love of the Creator.

CHRYSOSTOM, *Hom. 74 in John*: Or: Judas thought that they were to see Him as we see the dead in sleep, and so he asks Him: *How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not to the world?* As though he were to say: Woe to us that you will die and appear to us as the dead appear. Lest they have this notion in mind He says: *I and the Father will come to him;* that is, as the Father reveals Himself, so shall I. *And will make our abode with him;* which is not the way of dreams. Then follows: *And the word you have heard is not mine; but the Father's who sent me;* that is, He who does not hear My words, not alone does he not love Me, but neither does he love the Father. He said this because He uttered nothing without the Father; or spoke that alone which was pleasing to Him.

AUGUSTINE, *as above*: And also, perhaps because of a certain distinction, where He speaks of His *words* He speaks of them in the plural; as when He says: *He that loveth me not, keepeth not my words.* But where He says the Word is not His, but the Father's, He means Himself. For He is not His own Word, but the Father's; as He is not His own image, but the Father's. Rightly then does He attribute what He does, as His Equal, to the Author from Whom comes the Attribute of being wholly His Equal.

V. 25. *These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you.*

CHRYSOSTOM: Since some of the things He said were clear and some they did not understand, that they

might not be troubled, He adds: *These things I have spoken etc.*

AUGUSTINE: The promised *abode* is not the same as this abiding He here speaks of. The first is spiritual, and made known inwardly to souls; this other is of the body and made known by eyes and ears.

CHRYSOSTOM: That they might the more cheerfully bear the departure of His bodily presence from among them, He prepares them for this by promising that His bodily going from them would be the source of great blessings. For while He dwelt among them in His body, and until the Spirit had come, they could not come to the knowledge of great things. Hence:

V. 26. *But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send . . .*

GREGORY: Paraclete means *Consoler* or *Advocate*. He is called Advocate when He intercedes with the Father for sinners; while those He fills He inspires to pray for themselves. The same Spirit is called Consoler (Comforter), because He uplifts with the hope of pardon those who grieve for the sins they have committed. CHRYSOSTOM: He constantly calls Him the *Paraclete* because of the afflictions that then surrounded them.

DIDYMUS, *On the Holy Spirit, Jerome II*: The Saviour declares that the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father in His, the Saviour's, Name: for the true name of the Saviour is Son; since by this word there is made known to us both community of Nature and, if I may say so, the distinction of Persons. Because of the relationship of Father to Son it is only the Son Who can come in the

Name of the Father. No one else comes in the Name of the Father, but only, for example, in the Name of God, or of the Lord, or of the Almighty. Just as servants who come in the name of a master, by the very fact of serving and obeying they proclaim their master (for servants mean a master); so the Son Who comes in the Name of the Father bears that Name for the reason that He is the acknowledged Only-Begotten Son of God.

That the Holy Spirit is sent in the Son's Name by the Father, shows He is joined in Oneness with the Son. For this He is called the Spirit of the Son; and through adoption by Him He makes sons of those who wish to receive Him. This Holy Spirit then, sent by the Father, comes in the Name of the Son, and will teach all things to those who have been confirmed in the faith of Christ: all spiritual things, all that can be understood of divine truth, and the secrets of holy wisdom. And He will teach, not as those who by industry and study have acquired a little knowledge, and a little wisdom, but, as though He were Himself Knowledge and Doctrine and Wisdom, the Spirit of Truth will make known, invisibly, to our mind the knowledge of divine things.

GREGORY: Unless the same Spirit is in the heart of the hearer the words of the teacher are in vain. Let no one then attribute to the man who is teaching that which he understands from the lips of his teacher; for, unless there is One within Who teaches, the tongue of the teacher without labours in vain. The Creator Himself does not speak for man's enlightenment, unless the

Spirit, by His unction, also speaks to the man (I John ii. 27).

AUGUSTINE, *Tr.* 77, 2: Is it that the Son speaks, and the Holy Spirit teaches, so that when the Son speaks we hear the words, and when the Holy Spirit teaches we understand them? It is the whole Trinity that both speaks and teaches. But unless this mystery (of the Trinity) is placed before us, Person by Person, in no way could human infirmity grasp it.

GREGORY: Let us ask ourselves why is it said of the Spirit: *He will bring all things to your mind*; since to prompt is the office of an inferior? But as we use the word prompt sometimes to convey the meaning of secretly helping, the Spirit is here said to prompt us invisibly, not because He adds to our knowledge in a lowly manner, but in a secret manner.

AUGUSTINE: Or, that He adds, *He will bring all things to your mind* (that is, He will remind you) we should understand to mean what we are bidden not to forget, that His most salutary reminders refer to the grace by which the Spirit reminds us.<sup>1</sup>

THEOPHYLACTUS: The Holy Spirit then has both taught us and reminded us. He has taught whatever it was Christ did not teach His Disciples, because they were not able to bear it; He reminded them of whatever the Lord had said to them, but which they could not remember, either because of its obscurity, or because they were slow of mind.

V. 27. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.*



CHRYSOSTOM: Because they were troubled at hearing of the hatred and strife they would meet when He was gone, He again comforts them by saying: *Peace I leave you etc.*

AUGUSTINE: He has left us peace in this world, abiding in which we shall overcome the enemy, and that also here below we may love one another. His own peace He will give us in the world to come: when we shall reign without an enemy, and where there can be no discord. But He is Himself our peace: both when we believe He is, and when we shall see Him as He is.

What does He mean when He says, *Peace I leave with you*, but does not add, *my*; but where He says, *I give unto you*, He there says *my*? Are we to understand that *my* is implied even where it is not said; or is there perhaps something hidden here? His peace, He wishes us to understand, is that which He has Himself. That peace which He has left us in this world, must be called ours rather than his: since He has nothing within Himself to combat, being wholly without sin, while we now possess but that peace in which we yet must say: *Forgive us our trespasses*. In like manner have we peace amongst ourselves; for we trust each other that we do love one another. But neither is this a perfect peace: for we do not see into the thoughts of each other's heart. I am aware just the same that these words of the Lord can be taken as a simple repetition of the same sentence.

That the Lord adds: *Not as the world giveth, do I give unto you*, what else does He imply but, not as men give who love the world? They give themselves peace: that they may

enjoy the world untroubled. And even when they leave the just in peace, by not persecuting them, even this cannot be called true peace: for there is no true harmony, because their hearts are divided.

CHRYSOSTOM: Outward peace can also be an evil, and of no profit to those who enjoy it. AUGUSTINE, *Serm. 59*: Peace is serenity of mind, tranquillity of soul, simplicity of heart, the bond of love, the company of charity. No man can enter into the inheritance of the Lord who refuses to observe the covenant of peace; and neither can he live in peace with Christ who of his own will lives in conflict with a Christian. Then follows: *Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.*

CHRYSOSTOM: As He had said, *Peace I leave you*, the speech of one who is departing, and as this could cause them sorrow, He then says: *Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid*; since they suffered one emotion through loving Him, the other because of fear.

V. 28. *You have heard that I said to you: I go away, and I come unto you.*

AUGUSTINE, *Tr. 78 in Johm*: Their hearts could be troubled and afraid because He was going from them, though He was to come to them again, for fear that in the absence of the Shepherd the wolf might then attack the flock. So there follows: *You have heard etc.*

He was going from them as man, and remaining with them as God. Why then should their hearts be troubled or afraid when He was going only from before their eyes,

but not from their heart? To make them understand that it was as man that He said, *I go away, and I come unto you*, He goes on to say: *If you loved me you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father; for the Father is greater than I.*

In that therefore wherein the Son is not equal to the Father, through this it is He goes to the Father: from Whom He will come again, to judge the living and the dead. In that wherein He is equal to the Father, at no time does He leave the Father, but is everywhere wholly One with Him in the Undivided Trinity, which no place confines. He then, the Son of God, equal to the Father in the Form of God (because He emptied Himself, not losing the Form of God, but taking the form of a servant), is greater even than Himself; for greater is the Form of God, which was not forfeited, than the form of a servant, which was assumed by Him. It is in this form of a servant, therefore, that the Son of God is less than the Holy Spirit, as well as less than the Father. In this form the Child Jesus was less even than His parents, when as a Child *He was subject to them*, as it is written.

Let us then acknowledge the two-fold substance (*nature*) of Christ: the divine, namely, in which He is equal to the Father, and the human, than which the Father is greater. But both together are not two, but one Christ: lest God be believed to be a quaternity, not a Trinity. And so He says: *If you loved me, you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father.* For human nature should rejoice at being taken up to heaven, by the Only-Begotten, and made immortal there: that what was of

earth should become sublime, and that perishable dust should sit at the right hand of God. Who that loves Christ should not rejoice at this, seeing his own nature now immortal, and that he too has the hope of becoming the same, in Christ?

HILARY, *On the Trinity*, 9: Or, if the Father is greater than Me by virtue of giving, is the Son lesser through confessing the gift? Greater is the one giving, but He is not lesser to Whom is given Oneness with the Giver. CHRYSOSTOM: The Apostles did not yet know what this resurrection was which He had foretold, when He said: *I go away, and I come unto you*, nor what they were to think of it. The Father, they knew, was mighty. So He says to them: *Although you fear for Me, that I cannot defend Myself, and you are not certain that I shall see you again after My Crucifixion, yet, at hearing that I go to the Father you ought to rejoice, since I am going to One Who is greater than Me, and able to scatter all such tribulations.* All this He said because of the timidity of the Disciples; so He continues:

V. 29. *And now I have told you before it come to pass . . .*

AUGUSTINE, *Tr.* 79: Why does He say this? For if a thing is to be believed, it should be believed before it happens. Is it not the glory of faith that it believes what is not seen? For the one to whom it was said: *Because thou hast seen thou hast believed*, saw one thing, and believed another. He saw man, but believed Him God. But though belief is used of things seen, as when a man says he believes his own eyes, this is not the

faith in which we are formed; but from what we see we are prepared to believe that which we do not see.

The words of our Lord then: *That when it shall come to pass*, that they shall see Him living, after His death, and ascending to the Father, mean, that when they see Him they will believe He is Christ the Son of God, able to do this, and to foretell He would do it. And they would believe this, not by a new faith, but by an increased one; or by a faith grown faint when He died, but renewed at His Resurrection.

V. 30. *I will not now speak many things with you. For the prince of . . .*

HILARY: He goes on then to speak of the re-assumption of His glory: *I will not now speak*. BEDE: He says this because the time was drawing near for His capture, and delivering up to death. *For the prince of this world cometh*. AUGUSTINE: Who is this but the devil? The devil is not a prince of creatures, but of sinners; as the Apostle explains when he says our warfare was *against the rulers of the world* (Eph. vi. 12); he further explains what *world* means when he adds: *of this darkness*: the world, that is, of evil doers. *And in me he hath not anything*. For God had come without stain of sin, nor had the Virgin brought forth His Body from a root of sin. And as though asked, why then do You die if you are without sin, of which death is the punishment, He goes on:

V. 31. *But that the world may know, that I love the Father . . .*

He had been sitting at table with them while He spoke. *Let us go*, He said: to that place from which He was to be delivered up to death, Who had not deserved death. But He had a commandment from the Father that He should die.

AUGUSTINE, *Contra serm. Arianorum*, 11: That the Son is obedient to the will and to the commandment of the Father does not, no more than among men, show a difference and an inequality of nature as between Father commanding and the Son obeying. And to this is to be added that Christ is not alone God, and in this Equal in Nature with the Father, but also man, in which He is by nature less than the Father.

CHRYSOSTOM: *Arise let us go hence*. This is the beginning of another discourse. The time and place had made the Disciples fearful; for they were now in the depth of night, and in the midst of the city, and so probably not paying full attention to what He was saying to them, but turning their eyes this way and that, imagining an attack at any moment, especially when they heard Him say: *Yet a little while I am with you*, and then, *the prince of this world cometh*. Frightened as they were at these and like words, He brings them to another place, where, thinking themselves safe, they would listen with attention. For now they were to hear great and sublime truths.

## I. ST BASIL THE GREAT, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

*On the Holy Spirit*<sup>2</sup>

Let us here consider what are common expressions for the Holy Spirit, both those we have gathered from Sacred Scripture concerning Him, and those we have received from the unwritten tradition of the Fathers. First we ask, who is not uplifted in his soul, raising his mind to that Nature on high, when he hears the titles of the Holy Spirit? For He is called *The Spirit of God*, and *The Spirit of Truth, Who proceeds from the Father* (Jn. xv. 26), the *Spirit of virtue*, a *Commanding Spirit* (Ps. I. 12, 14). His true and proper name however is *The Holy Spirit*; a name which above all others declares that He is wholly incorporeal, free of matter, indivisible. For this reason the Lord, teaching the woman who believed God must be adored in a given place, that the mind cannot know the incorporeal, said, *God is a spirit* (Jn. iv. 24).

When we hear of the Spirit the mind may not imagine to itself an image of some limited circumscribed nature, liable to change, or alteration, or at all like a created thing, but must go on in its conception to the very highest notions, and form to itself an idea of an intelligent Being, infinite in power, of greatness without measure, bounded neither by time nor by ages, bountiful of its own goodness, to whom all turn who need sanctification, to whom all aspire who live in holiness, as though watered and assisted by Its breath to arrive at their due perfection. A Being who perfects others, Itself needing nothing; existing as not needing to be renewed, yet giving

life abundantly; enlarging through no addition, but at once complete; at rest within itself, yet in all places; the source of holiness, the light of the mind, and providing light from Itself to every faculty of the soul that searches for truth; by nature inaccessible, yet yielding to goodness; filling every need by Its power, but given only to those who are worthy of It, to whom It is not given in the same measure, but in the measure of each man's faith (Rom. xii. 6).

Simple in nature, manifold in powers, wholly present in each single one, and whole and entire in all places. Impassively divided, yet wholly bestowed, like the rays of the sun whose favour each enjoys as though it shone for him alone; yet it shines on land and sea and fills the air. So the Spirit, to each one who receives It, as though given to him alone, pours forth sufficient and perfect grace to each one, is enjoyed by each one, not in the measure of Its power, but of their capacity.

Now the Spirit is not united to the soul by drawing near to it in place (for how may what is corporeal draw near to what is incorporeal?), but through the withdrawal of the passions; which, drawing close to the soul, through its affection for the flesh, have drawn it away from its friendship with God. When a man becomes clean of the stain he received through sin, and has returned to his natural beauty, restoring to its former resemblance the royal image within him, only then may he draw near to the Paraclete. And He, like the sun, will shew thee,

thy eye now made pure, the Image of the Invisible in Himself. And in the blessed contemplation of this Image thou shalt see the unspeakable beauty of the Archetype.

Through His aid hearts are lifted up, the weak led by the hand, those going forward are perfected. Shining upon those who have been purified of every stain, He makes them spiritual in heart, through union with Himself. For just as when the sunlight falls on clear transparent bodies, they too become resplendent, and begin to shine from another light within themselves, so the souls that contain the Spirit within them, become themselves spiritual, and their brightness shines forth on others.

From this comes knowledge of the future, the understanding of mysteries, the seeing of things hidden, the apportioning of gifts, heavenly association with the angelic choirs, joy without end, abiding with God, being made like to God, and, highest of all, that you are made God (*partaker of the divine nature*, II Pet. i. 4). These then are some of the notions we possess regarding the Holy Spirit, to speak of but a few; and which we have been taught concerning His greatness, His dignity, and His operations, from the very words of the Spirit Himself. Now we must reply to those who deny them; refute the objections brought forward in the name of so-called science.<sup>3</sup>

It is not right, they say, to make the Holy Spirit one with the Father and the Son, because He is of a different nature, and lesser in dignity. It is fitting that we answer this in the words of the Apostles: *We ought to obey God, rather than men* (Acts v. 29). For if the Lord in

bequeathing to us the baptism of salvation, clearly laid it upon His Disciples, that they were to baptize all nations, *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* (Mt. xxviii. 19), not declining fellowship with Him, while these, on the contrary, assert that the Holy Spirit must not be associated with the Father and the Son, how can they be other than in open conflict with God's command? And if they say that association of this kind does not imply Communion, or Oneness of any kind, let them say why we must hold this belief, and to what kind of intimate union do they pretend?<sup>4</sup> And if the Lord did not unite the Holy Spirit with Himself and with the Father in baptism, let them not blame us for the conjunction:<sup>5</sup> for we neither put forward nor believe anything different. If He is there joined to the Father and there is no one so impudent as to say anything else, let no one blame us for following the Scriptures.

But all the sources of war are prepared against us, every kind of belief is imputed to us; and the tongues of blasphemers hit us more violently than the stones that once were flung at Stephen by the killers of Christ. And do not allow them to hide the fact that attacking us is but a ruse of war; for their real aim is higher up. They pretend that it is against us they prepare their artifices and their snares, and urge each other on, that each one may try his strength or skill against us. But it is against the Faith they make war. The common aim of all our adversaries, and of all *who are contrary to sound doctrine* (I Tim. i. 10), is to overthrow the foundations of the Faith of Christ, by levelling the

Apostolic traditions to the earth, and wholly destroying them. So like debtors, good debtors of course, they demand proof, written proof, from the Sacred Writings, and dismiss, as wholly unworthy of belief, the unwritten witness of the Fathers.

But we shall not falter in our defence of the truth; nor forsake its defence through cowardice. For the Lord has left us as a necessary and saving truth the conjunction of the Holy Spirit with the Father. For them it shall not be so; and they seek to separate and humiliate the Holy Spirit, and lower Him to the degree of one who serves. Is it not then true to say, that with them their own blasphemy has more authority than the Law laid down by our Lord? Let us put aside all contention and see what we have in hand.

Whence is it that we are Christians? Through faith, all will answer. How are we saved? By being born again in the grace of baptism. For how else could we be? Then, knowing that this salvation is confirmed by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, shall we cast aside this *form of doctrine* (Rom. vi. 17) handed down to us? Would this not be the cause of the greatest grief if we now found we were further off from salvation than when we first believed (Rom. xiii. 11); that we must now deny what before we believed? For it is the same loss for anyone to depart this

life unbaptized, as to receive that baptism from which one thing of what has been handed down has been omitted. And whoever does not observe the profession we made on our first *entering in*, when, delivered *from idols*, we approached the living God, and does not hold fast to it throughout his life as his surest protection, makes himself a *stranger* from the *promises* of God (I Thess. i. 9); dishonouring the pledge (*hand-writing*) he himself gave at his profession of faith.

For if for me my baptism was the beginning of my life, and that day of my rebirth the first of all days, then, plainly, the word I spoke on the day of my adoption is the one most of all to be honoured. Can I then, misled by the deceptions of such teachers as these, deny that tradition which brought me to the Light, guided me to the knowledge of my God, and made me a son of God who before was His enemy through sin? For myself I pray that I may depart to the Lord holding fast to this profession; and I exhort them also, to preserve the faith inviolate till the Day of Christ, to maintain the Spirit undivided from the Father, and from the Son, and observe the faith of their baptism, both in their profession of faith, and in giving praise to God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to Whom be praise and glory, world without end.

Amen.

## II. ST AMBROSE, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

### *The Names of the Holy Spirit*<sup>6</sup>

*Ambrose proves from Sacred Scripture that one is the name of the Three Divine Persons; and in the first place the unity of name of the Son and Holy Ghost, since they are both called Paraclete and Truth*

1. Who will venture to deny Their unity of name when he sees Their

unity in work? But why do I seek to establish Their unity of name,

since it is evident from the witness of the Divine Voice, that one is the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? For it is written: *Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* In the name, He said; not in the names. Therefore, there is not one name for the Father, one for the Son, and another for the Holy Ghost. As God is One He has not many names; for there are not two gods, or three gods. *There is no God but one* (I Cor. viii. 4).

And that He might show One is the Divinity, One His power, since one is the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Son does not come in any other name, nor the Holy Ghost in any other name, as the Lord Himself says: *I am come in the name of my Father, and you receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive* (Jn. v. 43).

Scripture tells us that what the Father's name is this also is the Son's; for in the book of Exodus the Lord Himself says: *I shall call on thee in my name, O Lord; I shall invoke the name of the Lord before thee* (xxxiii. 19 Sept.). The Lord therefore has said that He will call upon the Lord in His own name. Lord is therefore the name of both the Father and the Son.

Since one is the name of the Father and of the Son, receive then that the same is also the name of the Holy Ghost, since the Holy Ghost likewise comes in the name of the Son, as it is written: *The Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things.* He Who comes in the name of the Son, truly comes in the name of the Father and the Son: for one is the name of the Father and the Son.

And so it is that one is the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. For there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved (Acts iv. 12).

It further teaches us that we are to believe the unity, not the dissimilarity, of the divine name; since Christ comes in oneness of name. Antichrist will come in his own name, as it is written: *I am come in the name of my Father, and you receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive.* By this we are taught that between the Father and the Son and the Holy Paraclete there is no contradiction in name; likewise that what is the Son's name is also the name of the Holy Spirit: since the Son like the Holy Spirit is called Paraclete. And accordingly the Lord Jesus says in the Gospel: *I will ask my Father, and he will give you another Paraclete, the spirit of truth that he may abide with you forever* (Jn. xiv. 16). And for this reason He says, *another*; lest you understand that the Spirit is the Son: for the oneness is not of the Son and Holy Spirit—a Sabellian confusion—but of the name.

And so the Son is a Paraclete, the Holy Spirit another Paraclete; for John says the Son is a Paraclete, in the words: *But if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Just* (I Jn. ii. 1). So just as there is oneness of name, there is also oneness of power: for where the Spirit Paraclete is, there also is the Son. For as here (Jn. xiv. 16) the Lord says that the Spirit shall be with the faithful for ever, so in another place He shows that He will be with His Apostles for ever: *Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world* (Mt. xxviii. 20).

One therefore are the Son and the Holy Spirit; one the name of the Trinity; and One its indivisible Presence.

But as we have shown the Son is also called Paraclete, so also have we shown that the Spirit is called Truth. Christ is Truth; that the Spirit is Truth, you may read in John's Epistle: *Since the Spirit is truth.*<sup>7</sup> He is then called not alone the Spirit of Truth, but Truth Itself; just as the Son is called Truth; He Who says: *I am the way, the truth, and the life* (Jn. xiv. 6).

*That it is shown from the Sacred Books that the Persons of the Trinity are light.*

2. Why do I seek to establish that as the Father is light, so also is the Son light, and the Holy Ghost light? Because this beyond doubt relates to the divine majesty; as John has told us: *God is light, and in him there is no darkness* (I Jn. i. 5). And the Son is light; for *the life was the light of men* (Jn. i. 4). And the Evangelist, that he might show that he was speaking of the Son of God, also says of John the Baptist: *He was not the light, but was to give testimony of the light. That was the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world* (vv. 8, 9). Therefore because God is light, the Son of God is *the true light*; for without doubt the Son of God is True God.

You may also read elsewhere that the Son is light: *The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light* (Is. ix. 2). What is more to the point are these words which say: *For with thee is the fountain of life; and in thy light we shall see light* (Ps. xxxv. 10); that is, with Thee, God the Father Almighty, Who is

the Fount of life, in Thy Son, Thy Light, we shall see the Light of the Holy Spirit. As the Lord Himself elsewhere says: *Receive ye the Holy Ghost* (Jn. xx. 22); and elsewhere: *Virtue went out from him* (Lk. vi. 19).

Who will doubt the Father is light, since we read of the Son, that He is the *Brightness of His Eternal Glory* (Heb. i. 3)? Of Whom save of the Eternal Father is the Son the Brightness, Who is forever with the Father? Nor does He shine forth from a different glory, but from the same.

*That the Spirit is also Fire.*

And Isaias makes known that the Holy Spirit is not alone Light, but Fire: *And the light of Israel shall be as a fire, and the Holy One thereof as a flame* (x. 17). And because of this the prophets call Him a burning fire; because we observe the power of the divinity very frequently under these three aspects: it is of the nature of the Divinity to *sanctify*; to give light is a property of *light* and *fire* equally; and it is the divine way to be seen, or to be described, under the appearance of fire: *The Lord thy God is a consuming fire*, as Moses declared (Deut. iv. 24).

For he had seen fire in the bush, and had heard the Lord when a voice spoke to him from the midst of the flames, saying: *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob* (Exod. iii. 15). The voice then came from the flames, and the flames enveloped the bush, yet the flames did not hurt it. The bush was on fire, yet it was not burnt; that the Lord might show us by this mystery, that He would come to cast light on the thorns of our body, that He would not con-



sume the afflicted but would lighten our afflictions, that He would baptize in the Holy Spirit and in fire (Mt. iii. 11), that He would give us grace, and destroy our sins. And so the plan of God is laid bare to us under the figure of fire.

Also, in the Acts of the Apostles, when the Holy Ghost descended upon the faithful, He appeared under the image of fire. For we read: *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting; and there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire* (Acts ii. 2, 3). So was it when Gideon was about to defeat the Madianites, and commanded his three hundred men to take pitchers, and to carry burning torches in the pitchers, and a trumpet in their right hands (Jgs. vii. 16); so our Fathers cherished what they have received from the Apostles; because our bodies are pitchers, formed from the clay of the earth, which shall burn with the fire of spiritual grace, and shall bear witness with the voice of confession to the Passion of the Lord Jesus.

Who then may doubt of the divinity of the Holy Ghost, since where the Divinity appears in visible form, there the grace of the Spirit is found? From testimony such as this we arrive, not at diversity, but at the oneness of divine power. For how can there be division in the divine power, where the result of Their activity is the same in each One (i.e. *grace*)? Neither can there be any grace of sacraments, except where there has been forgiveness of sins.<sup>8</sup>

What therefore is this fire? Of a certainty it is not built up from a

lowly bush; nor does it flame up from the burning brambles of the forest. This is a fire which, as with gold, makes what is good better, and devours sin as stubble. Here beyond doubt is the Holy Spirit, Who is called the Countenance of the Lord, and Fire, and Light: Light, because the countenance of the Lord is light, and it is the light of the Holy Spirit: *The light of thy countenance O Lord, is signed upon us* (Ps. iv. 7). And what is this light signed upon us, if not that of the spiritual sign, *believing in which you were signed with the holy Spirit of promise* (Eph. i. 13).

And as He is the Light of the Divine Countenance, so also is He the Fire that burns before the Face of God, as it is written: *A fire shall burn before thee* (Ps. xlix. 3). Grace shall shine forth on the Day of Judgement, that the forgiveness by which the obedience of the just shall be rewarded may follow. O great riches of the Scripture, which no mind can describe! O supreme witness of the Divine Oneness! How many things are made clear to us in these two verses!

3. *The Holy Spirit is Life.* We have said that the Father is light, that the Son is Light, that the Holy Ghost is Light. Let us believe also that the Father is Life, the Son Life, and the Holy Ghost Life. For John has said: *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life: For the life was manifested; and we have seen and do bear witness, and declare unto you the life eternal, which was with the Father* (I Jn. i. 1, 2). And the Word of life He has also called Life; that the

Son, as well as the Father, might signify life. For what is the Word of God, but the Word of Life? And through this both God and the Word of God are Life. And as He is called *the Word of Life*, so is He also called the Spirit of life. For it is written: *And the Spirit of life was in the wheels* (Ezech. i. 20). And as *the Word of life* is Life, so also *the Spirit of life* is Life.

Let you therefore believe, that as the Father is the Fount of Life, so also, as many have stated, is the Son revealed to us as the Fount of Life: in that, *with thee*, as the psalmist says (xxxv. 10), *is the fountain of life*, thy Son, O Omnipotent God; that is, the Holy Spirit. For the Spirit is life, as the Lord tells us: *The words that I have spoken to you, are spirit and life* (Jn. vi. 24); for where the Spirit is, there also is life; and where is life, there also is the Holy Spirit.

Yet many believe that in this place in Scripture the Father alone is signified by the *fountain*; though it is plain that the Scripture says: *With thee is the fountain of life*; that is, that Son is with the Father: since the Word is with God, as He was in the beginning, with God. Whoever interprets these words to mean that it is the Father Who is the Fountain, or that it is the Son, in neither case do we mean a fountain of created water, but the Fountain of divine grace; that is, the Fountain of the Holy Ghost: for He is the Living Water. For it was of Him the Lord said: *If thou didst know the gift of God, and who he is that saith to thee: Give me to drink; thou perhaps wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water* (Jn. iv. 10).

The soul of David thirsted for this water. *As the hart panteth after the*

*fountains of water; so my soul panteth after thee, O God* (Ps. xli. 1). The hart longs for the fountain of this water; it does not thirst for the poison of the serpent. For the water of grace is living, and by this it purifies the depths of the spirit, washes away all sin from the soul, and cleans us from the stains of pagan superstition.

4. *The Holy Spirit is a Great River.* Should anyone presume to say, that because the water flowing from it is but a limited part of the fountain, that consequently a diminution of the Spirit is implied, and so there is in Him a difference in dignity from that which belongs to the Father and the Son, let them suffer no harm from this comparison with created things, which are not adequate to illustrate the divinity. Let them understand that the Holy Spirit is called, not water alone, but also *river of water*. For we read, that: *Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Now this he said of the Spirit which they should receive, who would believe in him* (Jn. vii. 38, 39).

The Holy Spirit is therefore a river, and the supreme river, which, according to the Hebrews, flowed from Jesus down to the earth; as was foretold by the mouth of the prophet Isaias: *Behold I will bring upon her as it were a river of peace, and as an overflowing torrent the glory of the Gentiles which you shall suck* (lxvi. 12). Mighty is this river, which flows for ever, and never grows less. And not alone the river, but also the rushing of the torrent, and its overflowing splendour, of which David has also said: *The stream of the river maketh the city of God joyful* (Ps. xlv. 5).

Nor is that Jerusalem, which is above, watered by the course of any earthly river, but by that flowing from the Fountain of Life, the Holy Ghost, of which we are filled at a single draught; that delights to pour out ever more abundantly upon the heavenly Thrones, Dominations, and Powers, upon the Angels and Archangels, rushing forth in the full stream of its sevenfold spiritual power. For if a river, overflowing the tops of its banks, spreads out, how much more will not the Spirit, overtopping every created thing, make joyful with a more abundant richness of grace the creatures of heaven, when it pours out over the as it were lowlier fields of our soul!

Do not be troubled that John has said *rivers* (vii. 38), and, in another place, *the seven spirits of God* (Apoc. v. 6). By these tokens of the sevenfold Spirit is meant the fulness of powers, as Isaias has said: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness, the spirit of the fear of the Lord (xi. 2). One therefore is the river, but many the channels of its spiritual gifts. This then is the river that flows forth from the Fountain of Life.

And do not turn your mind aside towards inferior things, because there is an obvious difference between a fountain and a river. For the Divine Scripture provides for all things, so that the limited human mind may not be led into error by the poverty of human speech. For whatever be the river you imagine to yourself, it comes from a fountain; they are of the one substance, the one clarity, and the one beauty.

Let you then say, the Holy Spirit is one in substance with the Son of God, and with God the Father, one in brightness, and one in glory. Let me take an example of oneness of power, and here I have no fear of any question of degrees of divine dignity. In this example also the Scripture has provided for us. The Son of God says: *He who drinks of the water I shall give him, it shall become in him a fountain of water, springing up into life everlasting* (Jn. iv. 14). This fountain, spiritual grace, is beyond doubt a river flowing from a living fountain. The Holy Spirit therefore is also a Fountain of Life.

You see then that the Oneness of the Divine Majesty is made known to us from the very words of Christ; and it cannot be denied by the unbelieving, that Christ also is a fountain; since He as well as the Holy Spirit is spoken of as a fountain. *Behold I will bring upon her* (Jerusalem) *as it were a river of peace, and as an overflowing torrent the glory of the Gentiles* (Isa. lxvi. 12). Who can doubt that the Son of God is the river of life from Which have issued forth streams of life eternal?

Spiritual grace therefore is good water: who will give to my breast this fountain? Let it spring up in me; may He flow in me, the Giver of eternal life. May this fountain overflow upon us, not pass us by. For Wisdom says: *Drink water out of thy own vessel, and the streams of thy own well: let thy fountains be conveyed abroad, and in the streets divide thy waters* (Prov. v. 15, 16). How shall I hold this water, lest it vanish, lest it slip away? How shall I keep my vessel safe, that the water of eternal life may not trickle away, leaking through some crack of sin? Teach

us, Lord Jesus, teach us as Thou didst teach Thine Apostles, saying to them: *Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth; where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal* (Mt. vi. 19).

He means that the unclean spirit is the thief, who cannot steal from those who walk in the light of good works. But if a man has taken his delight in the dark of earthly desires, or in the midst of earthly pleasures, he will strip him of every enduring flower of virtue. And it is because of this the Lord says: *Lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven: where neither the rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal* (v. 20).

Our rust is wantonness, our rust is wilful passion, our rust is luxurious living, all things that darken the brightness of our soul with the stains of shameful living. Again, our rust is Arius, our rust is Photinus (*heresiarchs*), who by their impiety tear asunder the holy garment of the Church; and, eager to shatter the indivisible oneness of the Divine Power, they gnaw with blasphemous teeth at the precious veil of the Faith. Water is poured forth if by chance Arius' teeth make a rent; it flows away should Photinus thrust his dart through another's vessel.

We are but poor clay; quickly we give ear to evil. But let no one say to the Potter: *Why hast thou made me thus?* (Rom. ix. 20). For though lowly our vessel, yet it is one thing when held in honour, another when held in ignominy. Then leave not

thy cistern uncovered; do not dig under it with the vices, and with evil doing, so that no one may say: *He hath opened a pit and dug it; and he is fallen into the hole he made* (Ps. vii. 16).

If you seek Jesus, forsake the old pits; for Christ sits not by a pit, but by a well. There the Samaritan woman found Him; she who believed, she who desired to draw water from the well (Jn. iv. 6). And though you ought to have come early, yet though it is late, still come; for even at the sixth hour you will find Jesus, weary from His journey. He is weary, but because of you, because He has long sought for you; it is your long unbelief has wearied Him. Yet He will not be offended should you come now; He asks that He may drink, Who will give you to drink. He drinks, but not of the stream that goes past, but of your salvation. He drinks of your love, He drinks of the chalice, that is, of that Passion which redeemed you from your sins; that the drink of His sacred blood may extinguish in you the thirst of this world.

So Abraham merited after he had dug the well (Gen. xxi. 30). So did Isaac merit as he walked to the well (xxiv. 62), receiving as his wife her who came there as a figure of the Church. The believer at the well; the unbeliever at the pit. And lastly Rebecca, at the well, as we read, found him who sought her; and harlots washed themselves in blood in the pool of Jezabel (III Kgs. xxii).<sup>10</sup>

## III. ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

*The Gifts of the Holy Ghost*<sup>11</sup>

I. Great indeed, and beyond the power of man's tongue to describe, are the gifts this day bestowed on us by a most loving God. And because of this we all rejoice together, and rejoicing give praise to the Lord. For today we celebrate a great public festival as well as a feast day. For as in the course of the year the seasons and the solstices succeed each other, so in the Church one feast succeeds another, and brings us all together. But recently we celebrated the feast of the Cross, the Passion, the Resurrection, then the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ to heaven. Today we have reached the very summit, the capital (*metropolis*) itself of the feasts, to the very maturing of the promise of the Lord: *If I go not, He said, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go I will send him to you.*

Behold His solicitude for us. Consider His unspeakable kindness. Previous to these present days He had ascended into heaven, taking possession of His royal throne, and receiving back His place at the right hand of the Father. Today He bestows on us this Descent of the Holy Spirit, and through Him imparts to us a thousand other gifts of heaven. For of all the gifts which contain within them our soul's salvation, which of them has not been given us by the ministry of the Spirit? Through Him we are freed from slavery, called to freedom, made children of God through His adoption, and above all we have been, if I may say so, remade, putting off the heavy and fetid burthen of our sins. Through Him we see

before us the choirs of priests, through Him we have the help of our schools of instructors. From this source come the gifts of revelations, the graces of healing, and all the other gifts with which the Spirit adorns the Church of God.

This is what Paul proclaims in the words: *All these things one and the same Spirit worketh, distributing them to each one according as he wills* (I Cor. xii. 11). *According as he wills*, he says; not according as He is commanded. *Distributing*, not distributed; showing Himself the Author of these gifts, not as subject to another's authority. And the power which Paul testifies that the Father possesses, the same He attributes to the Holy Ghost. And as He says of the Father: *It is the same God who worketh all in all* (v. 6), so does he also say of the Holy Ghost: *All these things one and the same Spirit worketh, distributing to each one according as he wills* (v. 11). Behold here the fullness of authority. Where the Nature is one, there can be no doubt that the same also is the Dominion: and being equal in dignity, Their power and Authority is also one.

Through Him we obtain forgiveness of sin; through Him are we made clean of every stain. Through the gift of Him we have been changed from men into angels, those among us who co-operate with His grace: not actually changing our nature, but, what is more wonderful, while remaining in the nature of men we show forth a manner of life that is worthy of angels.

Such then is the power of the

Spirit. And just as material fire, applied to the soft clay, changes it to hard pottery, so the fire of the Holy Ghost, when it penetrates our soul, though it should find it softer than the clay, yet it will make it more unyielding than iron. And the soul that a little while ago was stained with the mire of sin, is all at once more splendid than the sun.

It is this that the blessed Paul teaches us, when he cries: *Do not err: Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate, nor liars with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall possess the kingdom of God* (I Cor. vi. 9, 10). And when he had recounted almost every kind of unworthiness, and had taught us that those who made themselves the slaves of these would be strangers to the kingdom of heaven, he goes on to say: *And this some of you were; but you are washed, you are sanctified.* How? In what manner? For it is this we must know. *In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* See here then, Beloved Brethren, the power of the Holy Ghost. See how it is the Spirit wipes away all this iniquity, and uplifts to the highest dignity those who before had been betrayed by their own sins.

2. Who is there then who does not rightly grieve over and deplore the blasphemy of those who seek to take away the dignity of the Holy Spirit, who like persons out of their mind are not restrained from this ingratitude by remembrance of the greatness of His gifts? Nay, they are not ashamed to work against all that relates to their own salvation, rejecting Him, endeavouring as far as they can to take from Him the dignity of

Lord, and reduce Him to the rank of creature. Of these I would like to ask one question. You, for what reason do you war so bitterly against the majesty of the Holy Spirit, or rather, against your own salvation? Do you not want your minds to take in what Christ said to His Disciples: *Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?* (Mt. xxviii. 19).

Here you can behold equality in dignity; here you see the most perfect accord. Here you behold the Undivided Trinity. Do you see anywhere a difference, a diminution or change? What are you presuming to add to the words of the Lord? Do you not know that in human affairs anyone who should attempt this, who had gone so far in madness as to add or to detract something from the letters of a king, who is one of our own kind, and a sharer of our common nature, he would suffer the supreme penalty, and nothing could deliver him from his merited punishment? And if such danger threatens you in human affairs, what pardon will they receive who have gone so far in their presumption that they try to corrupt the words of the common Saviour of all mankind, and will not deign to listen to the words of Paul—in whom Christ Himself spoke—as he cries out to us in a clear voice: *That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him* (I Cor. ii. 9).

If then eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to imagine what good things are prepared for those who love God, from where, O Blessed

Paul, shall we be able to come to the knowledge of these things? Listen a moment and you will hear him answer. He goes on then to add: *But to us God hath revealed them, by his Spirit.* Nor does he stop there, but, so that he may show the greatness of the Spirit's power, and how He is of the same nature as the Father and the Son, he continues: *For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.* Then, desiring to implant in our souls a yet more precise knowledge, by means of human examples, he adds: *For what man knoweth the things of man, but the spirit of man that is in him? So the things also that are of God no man knoweth, but the Spirit of God.* You see here the most complete teaching. Just as the things that are in the mind of a man, he says, cannot be known by another, and he alone knows his own secrets, so the things which are in the mind of God no one knows but the Spirit of God: a perfect and wholly becoming illustration of the dignity of the Spirit. For the illustration he employs conveys to us, as it were, that it cannot happen that the things a man has in his mind are unknown to him, and so in exactly the same way the Holy Spirit knows the things of God.

But it cannot be denied that in these words the blessed Apostle comes down on those who, because of their own notion, and against their own salvation, show themselves as opposing the dignity of the Spirit, and striving as far as in them lies to lower Him to the rank of creature. But while these, led by the spirit of contumacy, show themselves as enemies of Sacred Scripture, we, accepting the divine teachings as coming down from heaven, offer

them fitting reverence, and with upright faith proclaim the exact knowledge of the truth.

But what has been said will suffice against those who dare to teach what is contrary to the words of the Holy Spirit. But for our own part, it is our duty to say a few words to Your Charity with regard to the cause of these so precious gifts which the Lord bestowed on us, not immediately following His Ascension, but after allowing some days to pass, so that the Disciples might recover themselves, when He sent down the grace of the Spirit. Nor was this done lightly, and without reason. For mankind did not know how to value the wondrous good things in its hands, nor how to honour, sufficiently, what seemed so great and pleasing, unless they had first experienced their contraries. For example—for this must be put clearly—he who has a sound healthy body neither sees, nor can he know accurately, how great a good is the health he enjoys, unless through a sudden illness he also learns what sickness is. And he who sees the day again does not think anything of a lamp, until the dark of night comes on. So the experience of contrary things teaches us clearly the value of what we now enjoy.

And because of this, after His coming the Disciples began to enjoy countless good things, and while He was with them the time passed most pleasantly, for all the people of Palestine looked up to them, as to wondrous luminaries, when they began raising the dead to life, healing lepers, casting out devils, healing the sick, and doing many other wonderful things. Therefore because they were so admired, and so famous, for

this reason He permits them to be deprived of the great power which had assisted them, so that when they were deprived of it they would then learn how much the presence of its goodness had bestowed on them; and when they had come to see how great was the grace they had enjoyed, they would then with greater eagerness receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For He consoled them when they were grieving, and when they were filled with sorrow and mourning for the loss of their Master He shone down upon them with the beams of His own light; He raised up those who were almost prostrate, scattered the darkness of their grief, and ended their uncertainty.

For when they had heard the voice of the Lord saying: *Go, teach all nations*, they were at a loss and did not know whither each one should turn, and in what part of the world each one should preach the word of God. The Holy Ghost came in the form of tongues, and He assigned to each one of them the region of the world where each should teach, making known to them by means of the given tongue, as though by a written tablet, the limits of the realm entrusted to them, and of their teaching.

For this cause the Holy Spirit came in the form of tongues, but not for this cause alone, but to recall the past to our minds. For when of old men, filled with pride, had sought to build a tower to reach the heavens, through the division of their tongues God put an end to the evil purpose of their common speech (Gen. xi.). Because of this the Holy Spirit descends upon them now in the form of fiery tongues, that by

this means He may join together the divided world. So there then took place something new and wondrous: for as in times past tongues divided the world, and changed an evil accord into division, so now tongues join the world together, and bring together in harmony those that before were divided.

And so He appeared in the form of tongues, and of tongues of fire, because the thorn of sin in us has grown into a forest. For as land, which though rich and fertile is left uncultivated, will bring forth a large crop of thorns, so is our nature which, though created good, and suited to the cultivation of the crop of virtue, because it had never felt the plough of reverential love of God, nor received the seed of the knowledge of God, had brought forth impiety as though it were thorns and other useless growth. And as, as often happens, through the dense growth of thorns and unprofitable weeds the face of the earth is not even seen, so the purity and nobility of our soul did not appear until the husbandman of the nature of man had come, and, touching it with the fire of the Spirit, cleansed and prepared it, that it might be ready to receive the good seed.

3. Such as these and many more besides are the good things we have received through His Coming. And since this is so, I beseech you, because of the dignity of the good things that have been heaped upon us, let you celebrate this feast, not simply by adorning the city, but by beautifying your own souls; not by decking out the Forum in rich tapestries, but by making our own souls joyous with the garment of



virtue, that in this way we shall be enabled, both to receive the grace of the Holy Spirit, and thereafter to gather in Its fruits.

*What is the fruit of the Holy Spirit?*

What is the fruit of the Spirit? Let us hear Paul speaking. *The fruit of the Spirit is, charity, joy, peace* (Gal. v. 22). What precision of speech, what harmony of teaching! He places charity first; then recounts what follows. He establishes what is the root; then shows us the fruit. He lays down the foundation; then leads on to the edifice. He begins with the fountain; and at once goes on to the streams. For a foundation cannot be laid for joy, if we value our own health and happiness before that of others, our own welfare above that of our neighbour. This will not come to pass until the rule of charity prevails. Charity is the root, the fount, the mother of all good. And as a root she sends forth countless branches of virtues, as a fount she gives birth to many streams, and as a mother she embraces within her folds those who have recourse to her. And this the blessed Paul clearly understood, and called it the fulfilment of the Law: *Love, therefore, is the fulfilment of the law* (Rom. xiii. 10). Indeed the Lord of all has placed before us, as a true indication, and a sign worthy of belief, that a man has proved himself His disciple, no other token than that demanded by charity, when He said to us: *By this shall all men know you are my disciples, if you love one another* (Jn. xiii. 35).

Because of this, I beseech you, let us all fly to it, and hold fast to it, and with it let us celebrate this festival. For where there is charity

the worst faults come to nothing; where there is charity the unruly thoughts of the mind come to an end. *For charity, he says, dealeth not perversely, is not puffed up, is not ambitious* (I Cor. xiii. 4, 5). Charity works no evil against a neighbour; where charity rules there is no Cain slaying his brother. Take away the fount of envy, and you have taken away the river of all evil things. Cut off the root, and you cut off the fruit with it, at the same time.

I have spoken these words to you because I am more concerned with those who envy than with those who are envied. For it is they above all who suffer most; bringing disaster upon themselves. For those who suffer through envy it is a beginning of the crown of glory, if they will it. See with me how Abel the Just is remembered with honour; the manner of his death the occasion of his glory. Even after death he cried out by his blood, and with a clear voice denounces the one who was guilty of his death (Gen. iv. 10). But he who remained received the reward of his deed; living out his life on earth fearful and lamenting. But the other, slain and laid to rest, after his death gave forth even more perfect testimony of his justice (Heb. xi. 4). And just as the sin of Cain, even while he lived, made him more unhappy than the dead, so the justice of Abel rendered him more perfect after he was dead.

Because of this we too, that we may give greater testimony to ourselves both here and in heaven, that we may with greater joyfulness gather the fruits of this feast, let us cast from us the soiled garments of the soul, and especially let us strip ourselves of the cloak of envy. For

though you may think to yourself that you have already gained countless merits, you will be deprived of all of them if this sharp and brutal taint should afflict us.

May it come to pass that we shall all escape it, especially those who this day through the grace of baptism have cast aside the ancient garment of their former sins, and now shine even more brightly than the sun. I exhort you, accordingly, you who this day have been enrolled as sons by adoption, who have clothed themselves in this shining garment, preserve with every care the bright-

ness of soul in which you now stand clothed, and at every turn shut out the approach of the devil, that you may be able to gather the more abundantly the joys of the grace of the Spirit; one thirtyfold, another sixtyfold, and another a hundredfold: that you may be made worthy to meet with confidence the King of Heaven when He shall come, and shall distribute the good things that are above all speech to those who have brought this present life to a just end, in Jesus Christ our Lord to Whom be praise and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

#### IV. ST AUGUSTINE, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

##### *Exposition of the Gospel*<sup>12</sup>

1. When the Disciples question their Master Jesus, and when He answers their questions, we also, whenever we read or listen to the holy Gospel, are being instructed together with them. So when our Lord had said: *Yet a little while: and the world seeth me no more. But you shall see me*, Judas asked Him the meaning of these words; not that Judas who betrayed Him, who was surnamed Iscariotes, but the one whose Epistle is numbered among the canonical Scriptures. *Lord*, he said, *how is it, that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not to the world?* Let us be with them as disciples questioning Him, and let us also listen to the answer of our common Master. For the holy Judas, not the defiled one, not the betrayer, but the follower of our Lord, asked Him why He was to show Himself to His own, and not to the world, and why the world, in a little while, would not see Him, but they would see Him.

2. *Jesus answered and said to him: If any one love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my words.* Here then is the reason why He will show Himself to His own, not to strangers, whom he calls by the name of *the world*; and the reason is, that the one love Him, and the others do not. This is the reason why the sacred psalm intones: *Judge me, O God, and distinguish my cause from the nation that is not holy* (xlii. 1). For they who love are chosen because they love; but they who do not love, though they speak in the tongues of angels and of men, become as sounding brass and as a tinkling cymbal. And if they had the gift of prophecy, and should they know all mysteries, and all knowledge, and if they had all faith, so that they could move mountains, and should they give away all they possess, and deliver up their bodies to be burned,

it will gain them nothing (I Cor. xiii).

It is love which distinguishes the sanctified from the world; love which makes men dwell together in peace in the same house (Ps. lxxvii. 7). And it is in this house the Father and the Son make their abode; They Who give this love to those to whom They will also finally give the Vision of Themselves. It was concerning this last Vision the Disciple questioned his Master, so that not alone might they then hear the answer from His mouth, but that we also might come to know it through His Gospel. For he had asked about the seeing of Christ, and he learned about love and indwelling. There is therefore a certain inward vision of God of which the wicked know nothing; for them there is no vision of the Father and the Holy Ghost: of the Son there could be, but in the Flesh. But this is not the same as the other, and such as it is they cannot have it for ever, but only for a little while; and this for their judgement, not their delight; to receive punishment, not reward.

*These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I have said to you. Peace I leave you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, do I give unto you.* In the words of the Holy Gospel which precede these just now recited the Lord Jesus had said, that He and the Father would come to those who loved Them, and would take up Their abode with them. And a little before this He said of the Holy Ghost: *But you shall know him; because he shall abide with you, and*

*shall be in you* (v. 17); and from this we understand that God the Trinity dwells all together in the sanctified as in a temple.

Now He says: *These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you.* There is accordingly one *abiding* which He promises us is yet to come; this is another, which He declares is now present to them. The one is spiritual, made known inwardly to the soul; the other bodily, made known outwardly to their eyes and ears. The one will ever give joy to the delivered; this other now visits those to be delivered. In the first the Lord does not depart from those who love Him; in this other He comes, and He goes away. *These things, He says, have I spoken to you, abiding with you,* that is, abiding with you in the Body; which was visible to them as He was speaking to them.

*But the Paraclete, He says, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you.* Is it that the Son speaks, and the Holy Ghost teaches, so that when the Son speaks we hear the words, and when the Holy Ghost teaches we understand them? As though the Son speaks without the Holy Ghost, or the Holy Spirit teaches without the Son; or as though it is not the case that the Son also teaches, and the Holy Ghost also speaks, and that when God says or teaches something, it is the Trinity Itself that both speaks and teaches?

But since it is the Trinity, it was necessary to make known Its single Persons, that we should hear It in Its separate Persons, and understand Them as inseparable. Hear the Father speaking, where you read the

words: *The Lord said to me; thou art my Son* (Ps. ii. 7). Hear Him again, where you read: *Every one that heard of the Father, and hath learned, cometh to me* (Jn. vi. 45). Just now you have heard the Son speaking, for He says of Himself: *Whatsoever I shall have said to you*. And should you wish to know Him as a Teacher, recall the Master saying: *One is your master, Christ* (Mt. xxiii. 10). Furthermore, the Holy Ghost, Whom just now you have heard of as teaching, where it was said that, *He will teach you all things*, hear Him also speaking, where you read in the Acts of the Apostles that the Holy Spirit said to the blessed Peter: *Go with them, for I have sent them* (x. 20).

The whole Trinity therefore both speaks and teaches, but unless It had been made known to us, Person by Person, in no way could the human mind have grasped It. Since It is wholly inseparable, if It were always spoken of inseparably, the Trinity would then never be known: for when we are speaking of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, we do not speak of them together; though they cannot be other than together. Because He added: *He will bring all things to your mind*, we must also understand, that the most salutary monitions relate to God's favour, as the Spirit reminds us.

*Peace I leave you*, He says, *my peace I give unto you*. This is the peace we read of in the prophet, *Peace upon peace* (Is. lvii. 19, Sept.). Going away He leaves us peace; when He comes at the end He will give us His own peace. He leaves us peace in this world; His own peace He will give us in the world to come. He leaves us peace, abiding

in which we shall overcome the enemy; He will give us His own peace, when we shall reign without an enemy. He leaves us peace, so that even here we may love one another; He will give us His own peace, where we can no more be divided. He leaves us peace, that as long as we are in this world we may not judge one another in our secret faults; His own peace He will give us, when He makes manifest the counsels of the heart, when every man shall have his praise from God (I Cor. iv. 5).

Yet it is in Him, and from Him, we have peace, whether that which He leaves us as He goes to the Father, or that which He will give us when He brings us to the Father. What does He now leave us as He ascends to the Father but Himself, as long as He does not withdraw from us? *For He is our peace, who hath made both one* (Eph. ii. 14). He it is then Who is our peace; both while we believe that He is, as well as *when we shall see Him as He is* (I Jn. iii. 2). For if as long as we are in this corruptible body, which afflicts the soul, we walk by faith, and not by sight, He does not leave us journeying far from Him (II Cor. v. 6, 7), how much more will He not fill us of Himself, when we have come before His sight?

But what does it mean that, where He says, *Peace I leave you*, He does not also add the word *my*, while where He says, *peace I give you*, He says, *my peace*? Are we to think *my* is implied where it was not said; because what was said once, can also be referred to both? Or is there perhaps something hidden here, to be asked for, and sought after, to be opened to those who knock? What

if He wishes us to understand as His peace that which He Himself possesses? This which He leaves us in this world is to be called ours rather than His. For within Him there is no conflict, for He is wholly without sin; while the peace we possess is such that we must still say, *forgive us our trespasses*.

We have then some peace, for within us we delight in the law of God; but it is not a complete peace, for we see another law in our members warring against the law in our minds (Rom. vii. 22, 23). And we have peace with one another; for we believe that we love one another. Yet neither is this perfect; for we see not the thoughts of each other's heart, and we believe certain things about one another, either for better or for worse, which are not in us. This then is *our* peace, though left to us by Him: for unless it were from Him we would not have even this. But this is not the peace He possesses. But if we keep to the end what we have received, what He has we also shall have; wherein nothing of ourselves shall war within us, and nothing shall be hidden in us from one another.

I know that these words of the Lord can also be so understood as to appear but a repetition of the same phrase: *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you*; that when He had said *peace*, He repeated it saying,

*my peace*; and having said, *I leave with you*, He repeated this saying, *I give unto you*. Each may take it as he wishes. Nevertheless, it gives me great joy, and I believe you also, my beloved brethren, so to keep this first peace, wherein united we shall defeat the enemy, as yet to long for that other peace, wherein we shall have no enemy.

That the Lord goes on to say: *Not as the world giveth, do I give unto you*, what does this mean, but that not as men who love the world give peace do I give it to you? They so give peace to one another that without the distraction of wars and quarrels they may be able to enjoy, not God, but their friends in this world. And when they leave the just in peace, in that they do not persecute them, that cannot be a true peace, where there is no true accord: for their hearts are far from one another. For as he is called a partner who is joined with you in fortune, so must they be called partners who are united in heart.

Let us then, Brethren, to whom Christ has left peace, to whom He gives His own peace, not as the world gives it, but as He gives it by Whom the world was made, that we may be at peace one with another, let us be joined in heart to one another, and let us lift up our hearts, that they may not be corrupted on earth.

## V. ST AUGUSTINE, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

### *The Holy Spirit the Soul of the Church*<sup>13</sup>

I. The Solemnity of this day brings to our minds remembrance of the great Lord God, and of the great grace that has been poured out on us. It is so that we may not suffer to be

wiped from our memory what has once taken place that a solemnity is held. A solemnity, as we know, receives its name from that which takes place once a year; just as a

stream is called perennial which does not dry up in summer, but flows all the year round. So as what goes on all the year is perennial, what takes place but once in the year is solemn.

Today we celebrate the Coming of the Holy Ghost. For this day the Lord sent down the Holy Spirit Whom He had promised us while He was on earth. And as He had so promised that He was about to send Him from heaven, *for he cannot come*, He says, *unless I go; but when I go I will send him to you*, He then suffered, He died, He rose again, He ascended into heaven. There remained then that He should fulfil what He had promised.

Therefore, His Disciples, to the number of one hundred and twenty souls, as it is written, tenfold the number of the Apostles, for He had chosen twelve, and sent the Holy Spirit down on one hundred and twenty, persevered together in prayer, in one house, awaiting the fulfilment of His promise. Now they began to desire this with faith, with prayer, with eagerness of the spirit. They were the new wineskins, and they looked for the new wine from heaven. For the great Grape Cluster had been trodden out, and glorified. For we read in the Gospels: *The Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified* (Jn. vii. 39).

## II. *The Gift of Tongues.*

What great wonder followed you have already heard. All who were present in that assembly had learned but one tongue. The Holy Spirit came. They were filled with Him, and they began to speak in the tongues of different nations, which they neither knew before, nor had

learnt. But He taught them Who had come. He entered into them, and they were all filled with Him. He transformed them. And this then was a sign of whoever had received the Holy Spirit, that of a sudden filled with the Spirit, they began to speak in the tongues of every nation; not these one hundred and twenty alone.

The Sacred Writings teach that after men had believed, were baptized, and received the Holy Ghost, they began to speak in the tongues of all nations. Those present were astonished, some wondering, some mocking, so that they said: *These men are full of new wine* (Acts ii. 1-13). They laughed, yet they said a true thing. For these skins were filled with new wine. You heard when the Gospel was being read, how, *no one puts new wine into old wineskins* (Mt. ix. 17): the carnal minded cannot grasp spiritual things. The carnal mind is age, grace is newness. To whatever degree a man is changed for the better, so much the more does he grasp the flavour of truth. The new wine bubbled up, and as the must boiled the tongues of the nations poured forth.

## III. *Why the Gift of Tongues is not given now.*

Is the Holy Spirit not given now, Brethren? Whoever thinks this is not worthy to receive Him. He is given; even now. How is it then that no one speaks in the tongues of all nations, as they spoke who at that time were filled with the Holy Ghost? Why? Because what this wonder signified is now fulfilled. What is that? When we celebrated Quadragesima (*the fortieth day, i.e. the Ascension*) you remember that we told you, that the Lord Jesus

Christ had established His Church, and ascended into heaven. His Disciples had asked Him, *When shall the end of the world be?* He answered: *It is not for you to know the times or moments, which the Father had put in his own power.* Yet He promised them what He has this day fulfilled: *You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth* (Acts i. 6-8).

The Church that was then within one house received the Holy Spirit: it was few in numbers, in tongues it represented the whole earth. Behold how far it has now spread. That this little Church spoke with the tongues of all nations, what does this mean but that this mighty Church, from the rising of the sun to its going down, speaks in the tongues of all nations? What was then promised, is now fulfilled. We have heard, and we have seen. *Hearken, O Daughter, and see* (Ps. xlv. 11). To the queen (*the Church*) was it said: *Hearken, O Daughter, and see.* Hear the promise; see the fulfilment. Thy God has not deceived thee; thy Spouse has not failed thee; He has not failed thee who endowed thee with His Blood. He has not failed thee who changed thee from ugliness to beauty, from a wanton to a virgin. Thou wert promised to thyself; promised to a few, but fulfilled in many.

IV. *The Holy Spirit the soul of the Church; Does not dwell outside It.*

Therefore, let no one say: I have received the Holy Spirit, why do I not speak in the tongues of every

nation? If you wish to have the Holy Spirit, attend to what I say, my brethren. The spirit within us, by which a man lives, is called a soul; our spirit, by which each single one of us lives is called the soul. Consider what the soul does within the body. It gives life to all the members. It sees through the eyes, hears through the ears, smells through the nostrils, speaks by the tongue, works by means of the hand, walks by means of the feet. It is present at the same time in all the members, that they may live. It gives life to all; to each it allots duties. The eye does not hear, the ear does not see, the tongue does not see, and neither does the eye speak, or the ear; and yet each lives. The ear lives, the tongue lives. The duties are diverse, but the life is one.

Such is the Church of God. In some of its saints it works miracles, in others of the saints it utters truth; in some saints it cherishes virginity, in others of the sanctified it upholds conjugal modesty; in others this, in others that. Each one does what belongs to him, but they live in the same manner. What the soul is to the body of man, the Holy Ghost is to the Body of Christ: which the Church is. What the soul does in all the members of one body, this the Holy Spirit does throughout the Church.

But see that you are on your guard, see that you are restrained, see that you fear God. It happens sometimes in the human body, that from this same body something is cut off, a hand, a finger, a foot. Do you think the soul follows the part cut thus off? While it belonged to the body it lived. Cut off it loses life. So likewise the

Christian Catholic man; while in the Body he lives, becoming a heretic he is cut off: for the Spirit follows no amputated member. If therefore you wish to live in the Holy Ghost, hold fast to the bond of charity, love the Truth, long for Unity, that you may attain to eternity.

Turning then to the Lord our God, the Father Almighty, let us as

best we can give thanks with all our hearts, beseeching Him that in His Goodness He will mercifully hear our prayers, and by His grace drive evil from our thoughts and actions, increase our faith, guide our minds, grant us His holy inspirations, and bring us to joy without end, through His Son our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

## VI. ST AUGUSTINE, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

### *The Holy Spirit the Unity of the Church*<sup>14</sup>

1. *The Coming of the Holy Ghost with the Gift of Tongues foretells the Unity of the Church throughout all peoples.*

This is a solemn day for us, because of the Coming of the Holy Ghost; the fiftieth day from the Lord's Resurrection, seven days multiplied by seven. But multiplying seven by seven we have forty-nine. One is then added: that we may be reminded of unity.

What is the meaning of the Coming of the Holy Ghost? What did it accomplish? How did He tell us of His Presence; reveal It to us? By the fact that all spoke in the tongues of every nation. There were a hundred and twenty people gathered in one room; ten times twelve. The sacred number of the Apostles was multiplied ten times. What then, did each one upon whom the Holy Spirit descended speak in one of the tongues of each of the nations: to this man one language, to this man another, dividing as it were among themselves the tongues of all the nations? No, it was not so: but each man, singly, spoke in the tongue of every nation. One and the same man spoke the tongue of every

nation: the unity of the Church amid the tongues of all the nations. See here how the unity of the Catholic Church spread throughout all nations is set before us.

2. *The Holy Spirit not outside the Church.*

He therefore who possesses the Holy Spirit is in the Church, which speaks in the tongues of all nations. Whosoever is without this Church, has not the Holy Spirit. For this reason the Holy Spirit deigned to reveal Himself in the tongues of all nations, that each may understand, that he possesses the Holy Spirit who is nourished within the unity of the Church, which speaks in every tongue. *One body*, says Paul the Apostle, *one body and one Spirit* (Eph. iv. 4).

Attend to this, you who are our members. A body is composed of many members, and one spirit gives life to all the members. By the human spirit, by which I am myself a man, I join together all my members: I command my members to move, I direct the eye to see, the ears to hear, the tongue to speak, the



hand to work, the feet to walk. The duties of each member are different, but one soul joins all together. Many things are commanded, many done, but one commands, one is obeyed. What our spirit, that is, our soul, is to our own members, this the Holy Spirit is to the members of Christ, to the Body of Christ, which is the Church.

And so, where the Apostle speaks of it as *a body*, let us not think of it as a dead body without life. *One body*, he says. But, I ask you, is this a living body? It is living. By what does it live? By one spirit. *And one Spirit*. Be watchful therefore, brethren, within our own body; and grieve for those who are cut off from the Church. As long as we live, while we are in our senses, let all members fulfil their duties among our own members. Should one member suffer anything, let all the members suffer with it (I Cor. xii. 26). Yet, though it may suffer, because it is in the body, it cannot die. For what does *to die* mean but to lose the spirit? Now if a member be cut off from the body, does the soul follow it? It can still be seen what member it is: it is a finger, a hand, an arm, an ear; besides substance, it has form; but it has no life. So is it with a man separated from the Church. Seek if he has the sacrament. You learn he has. Look for baptism. You find it. The creed? You find it. This is the outward form; but unless inwardly you live by the Spirit, in vain do you glory in the outward form.

3. *Unity is put before us in the Creation, and in the Birth of Christ.*

Dearly Beloved, God greatly commends unity. Let you dwell

upon this, that in the beginning of creation, when God established all things, He placed the stars in the heavens and trees and all green things upon the earth. He said: *Let the earth bring forth*, and trees and all living things were brought forth. He said: *Let the waters bring forth creeping things and flying things*; and it was done. *Let the earth bring forth the living creature in its kind and cattle and beasts of the earth*; and it was done. Did God make the other birds from one bird? Did He make all the fish from one fish? All horses from one horse? All beasts from one beast? Did the earth not produce many things at the same time? Did it not complete many created things with numerous offspring?

Then He came to the creation of man, and He created one man; and from one man the human race. Nor did He will to create two separate beings, male and female, but one man; and from this one man He made woman (Gen. i. 11). Why did He do this? Why did He begin the human race from one man, if not to commend unity to mankind? And the Lord Christ was born of one person. Virgin therefore is unity; let it hold fast to its integrity; let it preserve it uncorrupted.

4. *Christ commends to the Apostles the Unity of the Catholic Church.*

The Lord commends to the Apostles the unity of the Church. He shows Himself; and they think they are seeing a spirit. They are frightened. He gives them courage, when He says to them: *Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See my hands: handle and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have.* And see how

as they wondered for joy He takes food; not from necessity, but for His purpose. He eats it before them. In the face of the unbelieving He commends to them the reality of His Body; He commends the Unity of the Church.

For what does He say? *Are not these the words I spoke to you, while I was with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me? Then he opened their understanding, the Gospel says, that they might understand the scriptures. And he said to them: thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day* (Lk. xxiv. 44). Behold our Head. Behold our Head; but where are the members? Behold the Bridegroom; where is the Bride? Read the marriage contract; listen to the Bridegroom. You seek the Bride? Learn from Him. No one takes away from Him His Bride; no one puts another in Her place. Learn from Him. Where do you seek Christ? Amid the fabrications of men, or in the truth of the Gospels? He suffered, He rose the third day, He showed Himself to His Disciples. We now have Him; we ask where She is? Let us ask Him. *It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead, the third day.*

Lo, this is now come to pass; already we have seen Him. Tell us, O Lord; tell us Thou, Lord, lest we fall into error. *And that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.* It began at Jerusalem, and it has reached unto us. It is there, and it is here. For it did not cease there to come to us. It has grown forth not changed places. He com-

mended this to us immediately after His Resurrection. He passed forty days with them. About to ascend to heaven, He commended the Church to them again. The Bridegroom now about to depart entrusted His Bride to the care of His friends: not that she should love one among them, but that She might love Him as Her Spouse, and them as friends of the Bridegroom; but none of them as the Bridegroom.

They are jealous for Him, the friends of the Bridegroom; and they will not suffer her to be corrupted by a wanton love. Men hate rather when they so love. Listen to the jealous friend of the Bridegroom, when he knew, through friends, that the Bride was in a way to being corrupted. He says: *I hear there are schisms among you; and in part I believe it* (I Cor. xi. 18). Also, *it hath been signified to me, my brethren, of you, by them that are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you, that everyone of you says, I indeed am of Paul; and I am of Apollo; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul then crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?* (I Cor. i. 11-13.) O friend of the Bridegroom! He refuses for himself the love of Another's Spouse. He will not to be loved in the place of the Bridegroom, that he may reign with the Bridegroom.

The Church therefore has been entrusted to them (the friends of the Bridegroom). And when He was about to ascend into heaven, He said so to those who thus asked Him about the end of the world: *Tell us when shall these things be? And when shall be the sign of thy coming?* And He said: *It is not for you to know the*

times which the Father hath put in his own power. Hear, O disciple, what you have learned from your Master: *But you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you.* And it has come to pass. On the fortieth day He ascended into heaven, and behold, coming upon this day, all

who were present are filled with the Holy Ghost, and speak in the tongues of all nations. Once more unity is commended; by the tongues of all nations. It is commended by the Lord rising from the dead; it is confirmed this day in the Coming of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

## VII. ST AUGUSTINE, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

*The Meaning of Pentecost*<sup>15</sup>

1. Since we are celebrating the Solemnity of a day so holy, the day upon which the Holy Spirit came down among us, such a joyful and blessed occasion as this moves us to speak to you concerning this very gift of God, the grace of God, and upon the abundance of His mercy towards us; that is, to say something to you concerning the Holy Ghost Himself. In the School of the Lord we are all fellow pupils. For we have one Master; in whom we are all one, and Who, for fear we might dare to pride ourselves upon being a master, has warned us, saying: *Be you not called Rabbi (Master); for one is your master, Christ (Mt. xxiii. 8).* So therefore, since we ought to be instructed in His Scriptures, pay heed to the few words I shall say to you, in the Presence of that Master whose Chair is heaven; He assisting my efforts Who has commanded me to speak.

Those who already know of these things, let them recall them to mind. And those who do not know of them, let them listen and learn. Oftentimes it puzzles the devoutly curious mind—if it be allowed that human lowliness and weakness of mind may search into such things, and this is allowed; for what is closed to us is still not so denied us

that it will not be opened to us if we knock, as the Lord tells us: *Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you*—oftentimes then it puzzles the devoutly curious mind of those who study these things, why was it that the Holy Ghost was sent to us on the Fiftieth day after the Lord's Passion and Resurrection?

2. *Why the Holy Ghost could not come till Christ was gone. The Humanity of Christ, to which human affection clung, needed to be taken away from before the eyes of the Disciples. The Rock on which the Church is founded is Christ Himself.*

*If I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you (Jn. xvi. 7).* In the first place I wish Your Charity to take the trouble to consider, why was it the Saviour then said: *If I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you?* As though the Lord Christ had, if we speak in human fashion, laid up something in heaven, and coming down from there He had placed this in the care of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit could not come down to us until He had given back what had been entrusted to Him; or as if we were not able to receive Them Both, and neither could we endure the Presence of Both. As though

One should be separated from the Other; or else, should they both come to us, either They would be incommoded, or we would need to be enlarged.

What then is the meaning of the words: *He cannot come unless I go?* For He says: *It is expedient to you that I go. For if I go not the Paraclete will not come to you.* What this means then let Your Charity now briefly take in with the ear of the mind, in as far as we are able to grasp it, or enter into it, or with His help understand it; or, because we are speaking of what we believe.

It appears to me that the Disciples were taken up with the human figure of the Lord Christ, and, as men, were held by their human love for Him as a man. He began now to wish them to have rather a divine love, and so change them from unspiritual men to spiritual: which a man does not become without the gift of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, this is what He says: I shall send you a gift whereby you will become spiritual men; namely, the gift of the Holy Ghost. But you cannot become spiritual men unless you cease to be unspiritual. You will cease to be unspiritual, if this human form is taken from before your eyes, so that the form of God may be grafted instead upon your hearts.

It was by this human form, the form that is of a servant, that the Lord emptied himself, taking the form of a servant (Phil. ii. 7). By this form of a servant the human affection of Peter was held, since He loved Him so greatly that he was in great fear lest He should die. For he loved the Lord Jesus Christ as man loves man, as one in the flesh

loves one in the flesh, not as the spiritual man loves the divine majesty. How do we prove this? Because when the Lord asked His Disciples Whom did men say He was, and when they said, telling the opinions of others, that some said He was John, others Elias, others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets, He said to them: *But whom do you say that I am?* And Peter as the leader of the others, one speaking for all of them, said: *Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God* (Mt. xvi).

This he said perfectly; most truly. Rightly did such an answer deserve to hear: *Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: because flesh and blood has not revealed it to thee, but my father who is in heaven. And I say to thee, because thou hast said this to me; thou hast spoken: now listen; thou hast confessed: receive in turn a blessing. Therefore: And I say to thee: Thou art Peter: because I am the Rock, thou art Peter; for the Rock is not from Peter, but Peter is from the Rock; because Christ is not from Christian, but Christian is from Christ. And upon this rock I will build my Church: not upon Peter (non supra Petrum) who thou art, but upon the Rock (sed supra petram) Whom thou hast confessed. I will build my church: I will build thee, who in this answer are in yourself the figure of the Church. This fact and other things, because of which Peter had said, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God*, and so had heard, as you remember, *Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee*, that is, a human mind, human infirmity, human ignorance of the things of God did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.*

Then the Lord Jesus began to

foretell His Passion, and to reveal to them what He was now to suffer at the hands of impious men. This terrified Peter; and he feared lest Christ the Son of God should perish in death. But Christ the Son of the Living God, the Good from the Good, God of God, the Living from the Living, the Fount of Life, and True Life, had come to destroy death; not to perish in death. Nevertheless, Peter, a man in great fear, whose human love was, as I have said, centred around the physical person of Christ, said: *Lord, be it far from thee, that this shall not be unto thee.* And the Lord rejected such words with a worthy and fitting reply. Just as He bestowed merited praise on his confession of faith, so here He gave a fitting rebuke to his faltering. *Go behind me, Satan,* He said.

Of whom is it said, *Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona?* Compare the words of praise, and the words of correction. Mark the reasons for both; the confession, and the faltering. The reason for the confession: *Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven.* The reason for the fear: *Because thou savourest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men* (Mt. xvi. 13-23). We will therefore that such words should not be uttered, *for it is expedient for you that I go: for if I go not the Paraclete will not come to you.* Unless this human form is taken away from your bodily eyes, you will be wholly unable to take in, to perceive, to think of anything divine. Let this suffice.

Hence it was necessary that after the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, His promise of the Holy Spirit should be fulfilled. For so had John the Evangelist of

his own accord spoken, when Jesus, signifying the same Holy Spirit, had cried out, saying: *If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink; and out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water,* the Evangelist continued, saying: *This he said of the Spirit which they should receive, who believed in him; for as yet the Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified* (Jn. vii. 37-9). Glorified therefore by His Resurrection and Ascension into heaven, our Lord Jesus Christ sent forth the Holy Ghost.

3. *Why the Holy Spirit came on the Tenth Day after the Fortieth Day from the Ascension. The mystery of the Number Forty, and of the Number Ten. The Holy Spirit comes on the Tenth Day to signify the Law is fulfilled through Grace. How without Grace the letter killeth. The Holy Spirit was sent to complete the Law.*

As we learn from the Sacred Scriptures, the Lord remained with His Disciples for forty days after His Resurrection, making clear to them the reality of His risen Body, lest they should believe it to be something fictitious; eating and drinking with them. On the fortieth day, which we celebrated ten days ago, before their eyes He ascended into heaven, and it was promised at the same time, that He would come again as He had departed (Acts i. 3-11); that is, in the human form in which He had suffered judgement, in that same form shall He come again to give judgement.

He willed to send the Holy Spirit on a day other than that on which He ascended; not after two or three days, but after ten. This question compels us to search into and to examine certain obscurities with

regard to numbers. Ten by four give forty days. As far as I can see there is a divine mystery placed within this number. For we are speaking as men to men; and we are called rightly preachers of the Scriptures, not assertors of our own opinions. This quadragenary number, therefore, containing four tens, signifies, as it seems to me, this world through which we are now passing, and in which we now labour. We are borne along, and are troubled in the course of our years, by the uncertainty of things, by their recurring, and by their passing, by their fleeting rapacity, by as it were the stream of things that never stand still. This world therefore is signified, because of the four seasons of the year, also because of the four cardinal points of the earth, known to all, and frequently spoken of in the Sacred Scriptures: *From the east and the west and the north and the south* (Lk. xiii. 29). Throughout these fourfold seasons, and throughout this fourfold division of the world, the Law of God, as the number ten, is preached. For this reason also the Decalogue was first given to us. For the Law was built upon the Ten Commandments; because there seems to be a certain perfection in this denary number. For in counting a man goes up to this number, and then returns again, from one up to ten, and back again to one, and so on to hundreds, to thousands, which again multiplied by tens grow without end into a forest of numbers. The perfect law therefore is in the number ten, and the law, preached throughout the four parts of the world, ten multiplied by four, becomes forty.

And we are taught that while

living in this world we should refrain ourselves from worldly desires: which the forty days' fast known to us all as Lent signifies. This the Law imposes on you, this the Prophets, this likewise the Gospel. Because of this the Law, Moses, fasted for forty days; because of this Prophecy, Elias, fasted for forty days; because of this the Gospel, the Lord Christ, fasted for forty days. Then after the forty days were ended, when another ten days had passed after the forty days, one set of ten, ten simply, not fourfold, the Holy Spirit came, that the Law might be completed through Grace. For the Law without Grace is a killing letter. *For if there had been a law given, it says, which could give life, verily justice should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise, by the faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to them that believe* (Gal. iii. 21, 22). And therefore, *The letter killeth, but the spirit quickeneth* (II Cor. iii. 6). Not that you should fulfil something other than what the letter lays down, but that the letter alone makes us guilty; Grace delivers us from sin, and enables us to fulfil the letter.

Hence is it that through Grace comes forgiveness of all sins, and the faith which works through charity. Do not therefore think that the letter is condemned, because it was said that the letter killeth. For this means that the letter puts us in peril of the law. A commandment is given, and you are not aided by grace. At once you find yourself, not alone not a *doer* of the law, but even guilty of a fault. *Where there is no law, neither is there transgression* (Rom. iv. 15). When therefore it was said that, *the letter killeth, but the*

*Spirit quickeneth*, the Law was not thereby condemned; as though the former was condemned, the latter praised. But *the letter killeth*; the letter alone, without grace. Here is an example. In a certain sentence we are told that *knowledge puffeth up* (I Cor. viii. 1). What does this mean, *knowledge puffeth up*? Is he condemning knowledge? If it makes us puffed up, it is better to remain ignorant. But since he adds: *But charity edifieth*, as where he adds: *But the Spirit quickeneth*, the Apostle gives us to understand, that the letter without the Spirit kills, with the Spirit it gives life and enables the letter to be fulfilled; so knowledge without charity inflates, with charity it edifies. Therefore the Holy Spirit was sent so that the Law might be fulfilled, and that come to pass which the Lord Himself had said: *I am come, not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it* (Mt. v. 17). This gift He bestows on the believing; this grace He grants to the faithful; this He gives to those to whom He gives the Holy Ghost. The more capable a man becomes by means of it, the easier does it become for him to fulfil the law.

4. *The Law is fulfilled by Charity; not through fear of punishment. Charity is from the Holy Spirit.*

I shall tell you something, Beloved, which you can both readily see and readily reflect upon: that charity fulfils the law. Fear of punishment makes a man do what is good, but in a servile manner. For if you do good because you are afraid to suffer evil, or avoid doing what is evil, because you fear to suffer evil, should anyone promise you immunity from punishment

you would soon put your hand to evil doing. Supposing it were said to you: Do not be afraid, you will not suffer any punishment, do as you wish. You would do it. You are held back only through the fear of punishment, not because of your love for justice. For charity has not begun to work in you.

See therefore how charity works. Let us so love Him Whom we fear, that we may fear Him with a chaste love. For a chaste wife fears her husband. But consider carefully these different fears. A chaste wife fears lest she should be forsaken by her absent husband. An adulterous wife fears lest her husband should find her out when he returns. Love therefore fulfils the law: for *perfect love casts out fear* (I John iv. 18), that is, servile fear; fear arising from sin. *The fear of the Lord is holy, enduring for ever and ever* (Ps. xviii. 10). Therefore, if love is the fulfilling of the law, from where does this love come? Reflect carefully, and note and understand, that Charity is the gift of the Holy Ghost. *The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, Who is given to us* (Rom. v. 5). Rightly then at the end of ten days, by which number the perfection of the law is indicated, the Lord Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit; for Grace enables us to fulfil the law, which it came not to destroy but to fulfil.

5. *The Holy Spirit commended to us in the Number Seven. Sanctification, and the Rest of the Seventh Day.*

The Holy Spirit is commended to us in the number seven, not in the number ten: the law by the denary number, the Holy Ghost by the septenary. That the law relates

to the denary number we have seen; why the Holy Ghost has affinity to the septenary number let us now relate. In the very first book, at the beginning of the Book called Genesis, the works of God are recounted to us. Light was made, the heaven was made, which was called the firmament between *the waters and the waters*. The dry land appeared, the sea is separated from the land, and to the earth is given the fruitful bringing forth of all growing things. And He created the greater and the lesser lights, the sun, the moon, and the other stars. The waters bring forth their increase; the earth also. Man is made in the image of God. And on the sixth day God completes all His work. In no one of these so manifold works, recounted and completed, is there any mention of sanctification.

The Lord said: *Be light made; and light was made; and God saw the light, that it was good.* Yet it is not said that God sanctified the light. *Let there be a firmament made; and a firmament was made; and God saw that it was good.* Yet it is not said that He sanctified the firmament. And, that we may not linger too long here, so on with the rest of creation, up to those things which were made on the sixth day, when man was made to the image of God. All are recounted; but nothing is spoken of as sanctified.

We come to the seventh day, on which no work was done, but it is made known that God rested, and that God sanctified the seventh day. Sanctification is spoken of for the first time in the septenary number of the days; searched for in every place of Scripture, here first found. Where God's rest is spoken of, our own rest

is also taught. For God did not need a rest because He worked; so that after toil He rejoiced in the holiday, and sanctified that day on which He was allowed to rest! This is an earthly notion. But here it is made known to us, that as God rested after all His good works, so after all our good works we too shall have rest.

*God made all things, and they were good. And he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done.* Do you also wish to rest? Then first do all your works well. Thus, in an unspiritual way, the observance of the sabbath was laid upon the Jews; as were other things also, those which signified the mysteries. For a certain period of rest was commanded. Seek you then what this rest implies. For tranquillity of soul is spiritual rest. But tranquillity of soul comes from a good conscience. He then truly observes the sabbath rest who does not sin. For it is this they were commanded on whom the sabbath rest was laid. *You shall do no servile work therein* (Lev. xxiii. 7). *Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin* (Jn. viii. 34).

The septenary number is accordingly dedicated to the Holy Ghost, as the denary is to the Law. This Isaias also reveals to us where he says: *The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness, the spirit of the fear of the Lord* (xi. 2). As though spiritual grace coming down to us begins at wisdom and ends at fear. But we, ascending from below, striving upwards towards the highest things, should begin with fear and end at wisdom. For *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom* (Ps. cx. 10).



It would take too long, and it would be beyond our powers though not our willingness, to recount to you all the testimonies there are regarding the number seven, as it relates to the Holy Spirit. Therefore let these suffice.

6. *In the number fifty the Law is commended to us in the ten, and the Holy Spirit in the seven.*

Let us consider now how, as the Law is perfected through grace, by this same grace of the Holy Spirit both the number ten, as we have shown, and the number seven were brought before our mind and commended to us. Christ commended to us, in the number ten, the law which He commanded to be fulfilled, when after ten days He sent us the Holy Spirit. Where shall we find in Scripture a commendation of the number seven that is specially connected with the Holy Spirit? In the Book of Tobias you will read, that this Festival, that is, Pentecost, consists of *weeks* (Tob. i. 2, *Sept.* rightly, II Mach. xii. 31). How is this? The septenary number multiplied by itself, that is, seven by seven, as we learn in school; seven times seven is forty-nine.

As to this form of the septenary number, seven by seven: since it is the Holy Spirit Himself who gathers us together, and unites us, it is for this reason He gives us this first sign of His Coming, that they who would receive Him would, each of them, speak in all tongues. For the unity of the Body of Christ is gathered together from all tongues, by means of all the peoples who are spread throughout the whole earth. And that one should then speak in the tongues of all, bore witness to

the unity that was to be between all peoples. But the Apostle says: *Supporting one another in charity*, which is love; *careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace* (Eph. ii. 2). Therefore, as the Holy Spirit gathers us together from many into one body, so unity is received into the mind through humility, and driven out through pride. For the heart that is humble is like water seeking a hollow place where it may come to rest. Driven out by the exaltation of pride, as by the swelling of a hill, it runs away. Because of this was it said: *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble*. What does *giveth grace* mean? He gives the Holy Ghost. He fills the humble, because He finds them capable of receiving Him. Therefore, since these things are so, to the number forty-nine, made up of seven by seven, one is added; and unity is commended to us.

7. *Concerning the Two Fishings; and the 153 Great Fishes taken after the Resurrection.*

That the zeal of Your Charity may be a help to my own infirmity of mind before the Lord, receive with the ears of your own minds something that, as it seems to me, is as sweet after it has been explained, as it is obscure if it is not explained. The Lord, after He had chosen His Disciples, and before His Resurrection, bade them cast their nets into the sea. They cast them, and they took such an innumerable multitude of fishes that the nets broke, and the ships being overladen were near to sinking. He did not say to them on what side they should cast their nets; but only said: *Let down your nets* (Lk. v). For had He told them to

let down their nets on the right-hand side, they would have caught only the good fish; if on the left, they would have caught only the bad. Because they cast at random, neither to the left nor the right, they caught both good and bad.

This is a figure of the Church of the present time, in this world. Likewise those servants sent out to those who were invited, going forth gathered all they found, both good and bad, and brought them in; and the marriage was filled with guests (Mt. xxii. 10). Good and bad therefore are now gathered in. And how do schisms happen, if not through the nets breaking? How are the ships overladen, if not when the Church is weighed down with the scandals of lustful disorders that wickedly disturb it?

This the Lord did before His Resurrection. But in like manner after His Resurrection He again found His Disciples fishing. He again bade them cast in their nets, but not anyhow, and at random; for now it is after the Resurrection. For after the Resurrection His Body, which is the Church, will no longer contain the bad. *Cast the net*, He says, *on the right side of the ship, and you shall find* (Jn. xxi. 6). They cast the net, as He told them, on the right-hand side of the ship, and they caught a certain number of fish. For those caught which were not numbered are those from that draught by which the Church is signified as it now is. *I have declared, and I have spoken: they are multiplied above number* (Ps. xxxix. 6). These are understood to be above the due number, and, in a measure, superfluous. Those however caught on the right-hand side are *great fishes*,

and numbered. *He that shall do and teach*, He says, *he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven* (Mt. v. 19). And so there were taken *great fishes*, to the number of one hundred and fifty-three.

Who does not feel that this number was not mentioned without reason? And that neither was it without meaning that the Lord should say: *Let down your nets*, or that it should concern Him that they should be cast on the right-hand side of the ship. This number one hundred and fifty-three also signifies something. And the Evangelist had a purpose in telling this, as though he were looking back to that first draught, where the broken nets foreshadowed schisms—because in the Church of eternal life there will be no schisms, because there will be no division; and all shall be *great*, for all shall be filled with charity. Therefore, looking back as it were to what had happened the first time, as portending schisms, he was at pains to say of this second draught: *And although there were so many, the net was not broken* (Jn. xxi. 11).

And so what the right hand meant has been told us; namely, that they are all good. What their greatness signifies is also told; because, *he that shall do and teach, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven*. We are told what it means that *the net was not broken*: for in heaven there shall be no schisms. What then is the meaning of the number one hundred and fifty-three? This assuredly will not be the number of the blessed. The saints will not be limited to one hundred and fifty-three; for they alone *who were not defiled with women* are numbered *a hundred forty-four thousand* (Apoc.

xiv. 1-4). This number seems to grow like a tree from some seed. The seed of this great number is in a certain lesser number, which is ten and seven. Ten and seven make a hundred and fifty-three; if you count from one to seventeen, and add up all the numbers. If you do not add up the numbers from one to seventeen, all of which you counted, there will only be seventeen. But if you add them up this way, one, two, and three make six, six plus four and five make fifteen, and so on up to seventeen, you reach a total of one hundred and fifty-three.

Recall now what I reminded you of and commended to you a while ago, and think of what and Whom does ten and seven signify. Ten means the Law; seven the Holy Spirit. By this number what are we to understand, but those who will be the Church of the eternal Resurrection, where there shall be no schisms, where death shall no more be feared, for after the Resurrection it *shall be no more*; those therefore who shall live forever with God, who have fulfilled the law by the gift of God, the grace of the Holy Spirit, Whose feast we celebrate this day? Turning then etc.

### VIII. ST AUGUSTINE, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

#### *What is Peace?*<sup>16</sup>

John xiv. 27. It is the voice of the Lord, Dearly Beloved: *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.* As we are to speak of peace, let us learn first what are the rewards of peace. Peace is serenity of mind, tranquillity of soul, simplicity of heart, the bond of love, the fellowship of charity. This it is that takes away enmities, restrains wars, holds back anger, treads down pride, loves the humble, calms those who quarrel, reconciles those who are enemies, and is pleasing and acceptable to all. It seeks nothing that belongs to another; regards nothing as its own. It teaches a love that has never learned to hate. It knows not how to be lifted above itself. It knows not how to be puffed up.

He therefore who acquires this peace, let him hold fast to it. He who has broken it, let him strive to restore it again. He who has lost it, let him seek earnestly to find it again. For whosoever is found

without this peace is rejected by the Father, disinherited by the Son, and becomes a stranger to the Holy Ghost. He refuses a gift offered to him who despises the blessing of the law (of peace) that is given to us. Nor can any man attain to the inheritance of the Lord who refuses to accept his will. He cannot have the friendship of Christ who is deliberately at enmity with another Christian.

Therefore, it is the offence of stubbornness that we are to reject from us, that we are bidden to oppose, commanded to turn away from. What part have you with enmities, O Christian Soul? Why should you love rages and quarrellings which cannot be pleasing to the Author of peace? Why do you foster enmities whose consequences not even the devil could escape, who first invented them? For in the beginning, as a serpent, he practised enmities against the First Man, and

destroyed him. And in bringing misfortune on Man he was himself brought down to the dust. While he was trying to entrap Adam, he was himself entrapped from the beginning in his own snares.

Therefore, O Christian, either you embrace the Charity of Christ, or else you must know and understand, that in following the likeness of the devil's works, you are yourself become like to the author of all enmity. Amen.

## IX. ST AUGUSTINE, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

### *Peace the Inheritance of Christ*<sup>17</sup>

1. We read in the Gospel, dearest Brethren, that as the time of His Passion drew near, our Lord and Saviour began to make known to His Disciples His own *crossing over* from this world to the Father. And among other discourses which He bestowed on His beloved companions, as part of their remembrance of Him, He commended to them, as a special gift, the blessing of unity and peace, saying to them: *Peace I leave you, my peace I give unto you*; as though He said to them: In peace I leave you; in peace I shall find you. Going away from them, He wishes to give them what He desired to find in all men at His return. To His own He left this inheritance, and foretold all the good things of His Promise, and the rewards of keeping peace. And therefore, Brethren, if we wish to be heirs of Christ, we must possess and abide in His peace. Christ has given us peace, as you have heard. He has commanded us to be at peace, and to be of one mind with one another. He has laid it upon us that we keep unbroken and inviolate the bonds of peace and of love.

In another place He makes known to us the rewards of peace, where He says: *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God* (Mt. v. 9). And if a man begins to be called a child of God, who has

begun to be a peacemaker, he refuses to be a child of God, who is unwilling to embrace peace. He who scorns to be a peacemaker denies that God is his Father. The children of God must therefore be peacemakers, kind in heart, simple of speech, united in the peace of love, joined firmly one to another in the bonds of fellowship.

2. *With whom are we to be at peace. The effects of peace.* This peace is to be observed only with the good, and with those who keep the commandments of God; not with the wicked, or with evil doers; who are at peace with one another in their sins. The peace of Christ leads us to eternal salvation. The peace that belongs to the devil leads us to eternal damnation. We must ever be at peace with the just, and ever at war with evil: for we must for ever hate the evil doing of the wicked. For men themselves, even though they are wicked, must still be loved; for they are creatures of God. The peace therefore which is found in the good, joins brothers together in peace, neighbours in love for one another.

Peace brings us the Spirit of God in a special manner. Peace is the mother of love. Peace is a mark of holiness. The Lord, through His

prophet, says of it: *Love ye truth and peace* (Zach. viii. 19). Peace is the healing of the people, the glory of the priesthood, the joy of our country, and the terror of our enemies, visible and invisible. Every man must be watchful of peace, Brothers; for he is always living in God who lives in holy peace, and shares with the saints the company of God.

3. *The Office of Priest. Without peace neither prayer nor gift is acceptable.* It is the duty of the priest to instruct his people that they must live in peace. It is the duty of the people to hear in obedience what the priest must teach them. It is the duty of the shepherd to forbid what is not lawful. It is the duty of the people to learn this teaching, and to follow it. And all, both priests and people, should in all circumstances keep *the bond of unity* in faith and love; for without peace neither the prayer of the priest nor the offering of the faithful is acceptable to God. So if we wish that God will speedily answer our prayers we must live in true peace. *If therefore thou offer thy gift at the altar, and there thou remember that thy brother hath anything against thee: leave there thy offering before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother: and then coming thou shalt offer thy gift* (Mt. v. 23, 24).

4. That God desires that we live in peace and in one mind towards each other our Saviour reveals to us, where He speaks in the Gospel to His heavenly Father. *Holy Father, He says, keep them in thy name whom thou hast given me; that they may be one as we also are* (Jn. xvii. 11). And because of this the Apostle exhorts

the faithful, saying to them: *I beseech you, brethren, that you all speak the same thing, that you be perfect in the same mind* (I Cor. i. 10). And again: *Let there be no contention and envy among you* (Rom. xiii. 13). *Let all bitterness, and anger, and indignation, and clamour, and blasphemy, be put away from you, with all malice* (Eph. iv. 31). And in another place he says: *Supporting one another in charity, careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit; as you are called in one hope of your calling* (Eph. iv. 4).

This unity of mind was therefore to be found among the Apostles. So the new people of those who believed in Christ, observing the commandments of the Lord, observed also His charity. The divine Scriptures prove this. *And the multitude of the believers had but one heart and one soul* (Acts iv. 32). And in another place we read: *All were persevering in one mind in prayer, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren* (Acts i. 14). And so their prayers were heard: for they could ask with confidence for whatever it was they sought from the mercy of God.

5. *The diminution of Charity, the falling away of faith.* This unity of heart grows less in proportion as our generosity in good works falls away. The early Christians sold their houses and their lands, and laying up treasure for themselves in heaven, they gave to the Apostles, for the needs of the poor, the money they received (Acts ii. 45). But now we do not give even a tenth of what we possess. And where the Lord has bidden us to sell, we buy so as to increase what we have. So the strength of faith

has grown less in us; the power to believe has grown less. And because of this our Lord, having our days before His eyes, says to us in the Gospel: *The Son of man when he cometh, shall he find, think you, faith on earth?* (Lk. xviii. 8).

We are seeing what He foretold coming to pass. Faith consists of the fear of God, of the law of justice, of love, of good works. There is no one who thinks in fear of that which is to come. There is no one who thinks of the Day of the Lord, and of His Anger, of the punishments to come upon those who will not believe, of the eternal torments that have been decreed for the wicked. That which the conscience would fear if it believed, that it fears in no way, since it does not believe. For if the conscience believed it would be watchful. And if it was vigilant, it would escape punishment.

6. *Vigilance.* Let us stir up our hearts, as much as we can, Dearest

brethren, and come out of the sleep of our past neglect, and let us, each one of us, be vigilant in keeping, in fulfilling, the commandments of the Lord. Let us be like those to whom he said: *Let your loins be girt, and lamps burning in your hands. And you yourselves like to men who wait for the Lord, when he shall return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately* (Lk. xii. 34, 35). We must stand ready with our loins girt; lest when the day of our setting forth comes, it may find us bound and encumbered. Let our light be shining with good works, and let it glow so brightly that it will lead us out of the night of this world into the day of eternal brightness, where with Christ the True Author of peace, and with His angels, we may come to enjoy peace without end, and joy without end, by the help of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who with the Father and the Son, reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

## X. ST LEO THE GREAT, POPE AND DOCTOR

### *The Work of the Holy Spirit*<sup>18</sup>

*Synopsis:*

- I. The Christian Pentecost succeeds to the Mosaic.
- II. How speedily and wondrously the Disciples were taught by the Holy Ghost.
- III. The Perfect Equality of the Persons of the Most Holy Trinity.
- IV. Heresy of the Montanists against the Holy Ghost: the Fount and Cause of every good.
- V. That all things in the Church are sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and that by Him the Fasts also were instituted.

I. The hearts of all Catholics are fully aware that this day's Solemnity is to be venerated among the greatest of the Feasts. We have no uncertainty as to the reverence due to this day, made sacred by the Holy

Spirit in the surpassing miracle of the gift of Himself. For this is the tenth day that has shone upon us from that on which the Lord *mounted above the heaven of heavens* (Ps. lxxvii. 34), to sit at the right hand of God

the Father, and the fiftieth from His Resurrection in Whom the day begins. And it holds within it great mysteries which relate both to the Old and the New Dispensations, wherein it is most clearly revealed to us, that grace was foretold by the law, and that the law is made perfect through grace.

For as of old on the fiftieth day after the Sacrifice of the Lamb, the Law was given on Mount Sinai to the Hebrew people, now delivered from the Egyptians, so, after the Passion of Christ, in which the True Lamb of God was slain, on the fiftieth day after His Resurrection, the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and upon the people who believed (Acts ii. 3); so that an earnest Christian might know beyond any uncertainty, that the sacred rites of the Old Testament had served as foundations for the Gospel, and that by this same Spirit was the Second Covenant laid down, by Whom the first had been established.

II. For as the history of the Apostles bears witness, *when the days of the Pentecost were accomplished, they were all together in one place: and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak* (Acts ii. 1-4). How swift the word of wisdom; and how quickly when the Lord is our instructor do we learn what He teaches! There was no need of an interpreter to understand, nor for

usage to give them facility, nor of time for study, for the Spirit of Truth, breathing where it willed, the particular tongues of every nation are shared together in the mouth of the Church.

From that day forth the trumpet of the preaching of the Gospel has sounded. From that day the rain of spiritual graces, the streams of blessings, have watered every desert, and the whole parched world; for *the Spirit of God moved over the waters* (Gen. i. 2) to renew the face of the earth, and the brightness of new light began to flash forth to scatter the old darkness, when, in the splendour of those ardent tongues, the shining word, the burning eloquence of the Lord was received; which holds within it both the power of making light, to give understanding, and the power of fire, to burn away all sin.

III. But, though truly wondrous, Dearly Beloved, was the manner in which all this took place, and though beyond doubt that in the midst of this joyous harmony of every human tongue the divine majesty of the Holy Spirit was present, yet let no one imagine that the divine substance showed itself in these things which were seen by bodily eyes. His Invisible Nature, which belonged also to the Father and to the Son, revealed the nature of His office and of His work, in the manner He willed, but the substance of His divine Being was contained within His divinity; for as the Father and the Son so likewise the Holy Ghost is inaccessible to human sight.

For in the Divine Trinity there is no dissimilarity, no inequality, and

all that can be conceived of Its substance can be separated neither from Its power, nor Its glory, nor Its eternity. And though in Their separate Persons the Father is one Person, the Son another, the Holy Ghost another, yet there is no other Godhead and no other divine nature. For since the Son is the Only-Begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost the Spirit of both Father and Son, not as any creature whatever which belongs to the Father and the Son, but as possessing life and power with Them Both, and being eternally of that which the Father and Son are.

For this reason, when the Lord on the day before His Passion promised His Disciples the Holy Ghost would come, He said: *I have yet many things to say to you: but you cannot bear them now. But when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will teach you all truth. For he shall not speak of himself; but what things soever he shall hear, he shall speak; and the things that are to come, he shall show you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine; therefore I said, that he shall receive of mine, and show it to you.* It is not therefore that some things belong to the Father, some to the Son, and some to the Holy Ghost, but that all that the Father has the Son has, and the Holy Ghost has also; nor has the Trinity ever been wanting in this communion, for in the Trinity to have all things is the same as to exist for ever.

There, let no times, no degrees, no differences be thought of; and if there is no one can explain what God is, let no one dare to affirm what He is not. For it is more to be pardoned that we say nothing

worthy of His sublime nature, than that we say what is contrary to it. And so whatever pious hearts may understand of the eternal and unchangeable glory of the Father, let them understand the same of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, without distinction and without separation. For this reason do we confess that the Blessed Trinity is one God, because in these three Persons there is no difference either in substance, in power, in will or in operation.

IV. Therefore, as we detest Arians, whose desire it is to place a certain division between the Father and the Son, so do we likewise detest the Macedonians, who, though they admit equality between Father and Son, believe at the same time that the Holy Spirit is of a lower nature; not thinking that they are falling into that blasphemy which shall be forgiven neither in this world nor in the judgement to come, according to the words of the Lord: *He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come* (Mt. xii. 32). Whosoever continues in this heresy is unpardonable: for he has cut himself off from Him through Whom He could confess God; nor can he ever attain to the remedy of forgiveness who no longer has an Advocate (Paraclete) to intercede for him. For it is through Him we call upon the Father, from Him come the tears of repentance, from Him the groans of those who kneel in supplication; *no man can say the Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost* (I Cor. xii. 3), Whose Omnipotence and Unity with the Father and the Son the Apostle most clearly proclaims: *There are diversi-*



*ties of graces, but the same Spirit; and there are diversities of ministries, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but the same God, who worketh all in all (ib. 4-6).*

V. Let us one and all be encouraged by these and innumerable other testimonies, in which the authority of the divine eloquence shines forth, to the highest veneration of Pentecost, rejoicing in honour of the Holy Spirit, by Whom the whole Catholic Church is sanctified, and every rational being instructed, Who is the Inspirer of Faith, the Teacher of knowledge, the Fount of love, the Seal of chastity, the Cause of all virtue. Let the souls of all who believe rejoice, that in all the world One God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is praised in the confession of every tongue; and that this Sign which appeared in the form of fire has steadfastly continued both in power and in deed.

For it is the Spirit of Truth Him-

self which causes the house of His glory to shine with the splendour of His own light, and in this temple He wills that there shall be nothing unworthy, nothing wanting in fervour. It is also by His teaching and assistance that the purification of fast and almsdeeds has been imposed on us. For this venerable day is followed by the most salutary practise of abstinence; which all holy men have ever found most profitable to themselves, and which we exhort you, with all pastoral solicitude, that you carefully observe, so that should you in these days have acquired any stain through heedless neglect, then let the correction of fasting cleanse it, and the devotion of your piety amend it.

Accordingly, let us fast on the fourth and sixth day of the week. On the sabbath (Saturday) we shall celebrate the same with the customary devotion of the vigil. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest world without end. Amen.

## XI. ST LEO THE GREAT, POPE AND DOCTOR

### *The Redemption the Work of the Trinity*<sup>19</sup>

#### *Synopsis:*

- I. That the Holy Spirit did not make a beginning of His gifts at Pentecost, but increased them; when the Trinity indivisibly wrought.
- II. It is a consequence of sin, that the Persons of the Trinity would share amongst Them the work of our reparation; in what manner?
- III. That this sharing is in no way contrary to Their Equality and Consubstantiality.
- IV. We should not think regarding the Trinity, Which is wholly Equal, as we do of created, visible things.
- V. Why Christ wished His Disciples to rejoice at His Ascension.
- VI. The Three Persons have but one Being and one Power of Operation.

I. The Coming of the Holy Ghost, Dearly Beloved, Who, on the fiftieth day after the Resurrection of the

Lord, flowed down upon the Apostles and the Faithful, has consecrated the Festival that is revered

this day throughout the whole world. They had awaited it in hope, for the Lord Jesus had promised He would come (Acts i. 8); not that He would then begin to dwell within the sanctified, but that He would then fill more abundantly, inflame more ardently, the breasts that were consecrated to Himself; increasing, not beginning, His gifts to them; not new in operation, but now more abounding in richness.

For never was the divine majesty of the Holy Spirit separated from the Omnipotence of the Father and of the Son, and whatever the divine dispensation has done in the ordering of all things proceeded from the Providence of the Whole Trinity. One is the mildness of divine mercy, and one the correction of Its justice; and there can be no separateness in Their work in Whom there is no separateness in their willing. Whom the Father enlightens, the Son enlightens, the Holy Ghost enlightens; and since one is the Person Sent, Another the Sender, and another the Promiser, their Unity and Trinity is together revealed to us: since being equal in essence, yet including separateness of Person, this may be understood of the one Substance, but not of one and the same Person.

II. Allowing therefore for the indivisible operation of the Divinity, such is the Plan of our Redemption, the Design of our salvation, that the Father in Person does certain things, the Son likewise yet other things, the Holy Ghost the same. For had man, made to the image and likeness of God, continued in the dignity of his own nature, and had not been deceived by the fraud of the devil,

he would not have turned aside through evil desires from the law laid down for him, and the Creator of the world would not have become a creature, the Eternal subject to time, nor would God the Son, the Equal of God the Father, have taken upon Himself the form of a servant, and the likeness of our sinful flesh. But because *by the envy of the devil, death came into the world* (Wisd. ii. 4), and because human bondage could be undone in no other way, unless He took our cause upon Him Who without loss of His divine majesty could become both true man and the One only free of the infection of sin, the Merciful Trinity shared among Them the work of our redemption: so that expiation might be offered to the Father, the Son might offer expiation, and the Holy Ghost purify by fire.

There was need that they also who were to be saved should do something for themselves, and, turning in heart to their Redeemer, turn away from the domination of the devil; for as Paul says, *God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father* (Gal. iv. 6). *Now the Lord is a Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty* (II Cor. iii. 17). And also: *No man sayeth the Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost* (I Cor. xii. 3).

III. If therefore, Dearly Beloved, guided by grace, we come in faith and wisdom to know what, in the work of restoration, is proper to the Father, to the Son, and what to the Holy Ghost, and what they do in common, let us without any doubt so receive what was done for us in a lowly and bodily manner as not to think unworthily of the glory of the

One and Undivided Trinity. For though no human mind is able to conceive of God, as He is, and no human tongue to speak of Him, nevertheless, whatever the human understanding comes to see of the nature of the Godhead of the Father, unless it is one and the same with that which we conceive, either of His Only-begotten Son, or of the Holy Spirit, such a human mind is not spiritually enlightened, rather is it carnally darkened, and that which it seems to conceive rightly of the Father profits it nothing. For we separate ourselves from the Trinity, if we do not hold fast to Its Unity: for in no way is that truly one with the divine nature which is contrary to it through some inequality.

IV. When therefore we turn the understanding of our soul to the praise and confession of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, let us put away from our minds the outward appearances of visible things, the ages of temporal things, and the places which bodies occupy. Put out of your mind what is extended through space, enclosed within boundaries, or whatever is not always and everywhere complete and perfect.

Let the notion we form in our mind of the divinity of the Trinity understand nothing of differences, and seek for no degrees. And if the mind has come to think of what is worthy of God, let it not dare to deny this to any Person: as though it would attribute to the Father, as the more worthy, what it does not attribute to the Son, or to the Holy Ghost. There is no reverence for God in preferring the Father to the Son. An affront to the Son is an

offence to the Father. What is denied to the One is withheld from Them Both. The Father is not believed Omnipotent and Unchanging, if He should beget One Who is inferior to Himself, or made greater by having One Whom He before had not, since Divinity and Eternity is common to Them Both.

V. The Lord Jesus, as we read in the Gospel, said indeed to His Disciples: *If you loved me, you would indeed be glad because I go to the Father: for the Father is greater than I* (Jn. xiv. 28). But those ears which had often heard: *I and the Father are one* (Jn. x. 30); and, *He that seeth me, seeth the Father also* (xiv. 9), do not receive these words as implying a difference within the Divinity, nor do they understand them of that Being they came to learn was of the same nature and everlasting with the Father. It is the exaltation of man's nature, through the Incarnation of the Word, that is being placed before the Holy Apostles. And they who were troubled when told of the Lord's going from them, are heartened onwards towards eternal joy by this enlargement of their own dignity. *If you loved me; you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father; that is, could you see with perfect understanding what honour is given you, that I, Begotten of God the Father, am also born of a human mother; that I the Lord of all ages have willed to become one of mortal men; that I the Invisible have visibly revealed Myself; that I Eternal in the Form of God have taken upon Me the form of a servant: you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father.*

For it is to you the Ascension is

given; it is your lowliness that is exalted in Me above all the heavens, and placed at the right hand of God! But I, Who with the Father am what the Father is, remain Inseparable with Him Who has begotten Me. And as in coming to you I do not go from Him, so, returning to Him, I do not leave you. Rejoice therefore, *because I go to the Father: for the Father is greater than I.* For I have united you to Myself; and become a Son of man that you may be children of God.

And so, though I am the same Person in either nature, yet in that in which I am made like to you, I am less than the Father. But in that nature in which I am not separated from the Father, I am greater even than Myself. Therefore, let the nature that is lower than the Father go to the Father, that where the Word is, there always the Flesh may be; and let the one Faith of the Catholic Church, which doubts not that as man He is less than the Father, believe that He is Equal with Him as God.

VI. Therefore, let the blind and foolish subtlety of heretical impiety be despised, Dearly Beloved, which flatters itself with a perverted interpretation of this sentence—*for the Father is greater than I*—and even with the Lord saying: *All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine*

(Jn. xv. 16), it will not understand that it takes from the Father whatever it dares to deny the Son. And it is so foolish in what relates to His humanity, that it thinks that, because the Son of man took our nature upon Him, He lost what was His Father's!

In God mercy does not lessen power; nor is the restoration to God of the creature He loves a lessening of His own eternal glory. What belongs to the Father belongs to the Son, and what belongs to the Father and the Son belongs also to the Holy Ghost; for the Whole Trinity together is One God. And this belief is no discovery of earthly wisdom, and neither has human opinion convinced us, but the Only Begotten has taught it to us; the Holy Spirit has established us in it: that Spirit in Whom we must believe in no other way than we believe in the Father and the Son.

For though He is neither the Father nor the Son, He is yet not separate either from the Father or from the Son. And He is a Person of the Trinity; therefore through His Divinity He shares in the Substance of both the Father and the Son, filling all things, containing all things, and, together with the Father and the Son, disposing all things. To Whom be honour, praise, and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

## XII. ST GREGORY THE GREAT, POPE AND DOCTOR

*Given to the People in the Basilica of St Peter the Apostle on the Holy Day of Pentecost*

### *Explanation of the Gospel<sup>20</sup>*

1. We shall, if it is agreeable to you, Dearest Brethren, go briefly over

the words of the Gospel lesson, so that afterwards there may be more

time to dwell in contemplation on this so great Solemnity. For on this day the Holy Spirit, with the sound of a mighty wind, descended upon the Apostles, transformed their souls from the love of earthly things to the love of Him, and by outward visible tongues of fire set their own inward hearts aflame; for as they receive God in the vision of fire, they begin to burn with the sweet fire of His love. For the Holy Spirit is love. And so John tells us: *God is love* (I Jn. iv. 8, 16). He therefore who desires God with his whole soul, possesses Him he loves. For no one could love God unless he does indeed possess Him Whom he loves.

But should any one of you be asked whether he loves God, he will answer with confidence and a sure mind, I do love Him. Now at the beginning of this Gospel you heard what Truth has said: *If any one love me, he will keep my word*. The proof of love then is to show it in deed. On this question the same John says in his Epistle: *If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar* (I Jn. iv. 20). For we truly love God if we keep His commandments, if we restrain ourselves from pleasures. For he who has given himself up to unlawful desires does not of a surety love God; for he contradicts Him in the pursuit of his own pleasures.

2. *And my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him*. Reflect, Dearly Beloved, how great a dignity this is: to have the Lord come and abide in our heart. Should some rich and powerful friend enter your home you would make haste to clean the

whole house, lest there be anything to displease the eye of the one who is coming. Let you then cleanse the stains of evil doing from the house of your soul, in preparation for the coming of God.

But note what Truth says: *We shall come and make our abode with him*. For He comes into the hearts of some, but does not make His abode there; for though because of their remorse God may turn towards them, yet in time of temptation they forget even what it was they repented of, and turn back to continue their evil doing as if they had never repented. He therefore who truly loves God, who keeps His commandments, the Lord enters his heart, and there takes up His abode; because the love of the Divinity has so penetrated him, that in time of temptation he will not turn his back on that love.

He therefore truly loves God whose soul, not consenting to evil delight, is not overcome by it. For the more a man gives himself to the love of the baser things, the more does he cut himself off from the love of God. For this reason He goes on to say: *He that loveth me not, keepeth not my words*. Turn your minds inwards upon yourselves, Dearly Beloved Brethren. See whether you do indeed love God. And let no one believe himself, whatever his mind may say, unless it is confirmed by deeds. Let us ask of our life, our soul, our tongue, whether we love our Creator? The love of God is never idle. It works *great things*, if it is present; if it refuses to bring forth good works, it is not love.

*And the word which you have heard is not mine; but the Father's who sent me*. You know, Dearest Brethren,

that He Who speaks is the Word, the Only-Begotten Son of the Father, and because of this the words the Son speaks are not the Son's but the Father's: for the Son is Himself the Word of the Father. *These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you.* When He was no longer to be with them, being now about to ascend to heaven, He promised them: *Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world* (Mt. xxviii. 20). But the Word Incarnate both abides with us, and departs from us; He departs in His Body, He abides in His Divinity. He says therefore that he was then abiding with them: because He was about to depart from before their bodily eyes, Who was ever present in invisible power.

3. *But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you.* Most of you know, my brethren, that the Greek word *Paraclete* is rendered by the word *Advocate*, or *Comforter*. He is called *Advocate* because He pleads with the mercy of the Father on behalf of sinners. He Who is one in nature with the Father and the Son is said to obtain pardon for sinners, because those whom He fills (with His Spirit) He inspires to pray for themselves. Because of this Paul says: *The Spirit himself asks for us with unspeakable groanings.* But he who pleads is lesser in dignity than he to whom he pleads; how then is the Spirit said to ask Who is not lesser in dignity than Him to Whom he prays? But the Spirit prays for us in that He rouses those He fills to pray for themselves.

The same Spirit is also called

*Comforter*, because He uplifts the soul in its dejection, giving hope of pardon to those who grieve because of the sins they have committed. Rightly was it promised of Him: *He will teach you all things.* Because unless the same Spirit is in the heart of the one who learns, unprofitable is the word of the teacher. Let no one then attribute to the man who instructs him, that which he understands from the mouth of his teacher; for unless He is within Who *will teach us*, the tongue of the teacher labours in vain. All alike hear the voice of the speaker, yet all do not understand alike the meaning of the words they hear. Since the word is the same, why do your hearts not understand alike, if not for the reason that, although the voice of the speaker is directed towards all, it is the Master within us Who teaches us what is said, and some more than others.

Of this anointing of the Spirit John again speaks, where he says: *His unction teacheth you all things* (I Jn. ii. 27). We are not therefore instructed by the voice when the mind is not anointed at the same time by the Spirit. But why do we say this of the teaching of men when even the Creator does not speak for any man's instruction, unless He speaks to him through the unction of the Spirit? Cain, before he had slain his brother, heard the words: *Thou hast sinned, be at peace* (Gen. iv. 6 Sept.). Because of his sins he was admonished by a voice, but not anointed by the Spirit; he could hear the words of God, but he refused to hearken to them.

Let us ask ourselves why is it said of the same Spirit: *He will bring all things to your mind*; since to bring to

another is the task of an inferior? But as the word to bring is also sometimes used by us in the sense of to supply secretly, the Invisible Spirit is said to bring things to our minds, not servilely, but secretly.

*Peace I leave you, my peace I give unto you.* Here I leave it; there I shall give it. I leave it for those who come after Me; I shall give it to those who shall attain to the possession of Me.

4. We have so far, dearest brethren, spoken to you, briefly, on the words of today's Gospel. Let us now turn our hearts to the contemplation of this so great Feast. As there was also read, together with the Gospel, a Lesson from the Acts of the Apostles, let us also draw something from this to assist us in our meditation. You have heard that the Holy Spirit appeared above each of the Apostles, in the form of tongues of fire, and that He gave them knowledge of all tongues. What is revealed to us by this sign if not that the Holy Church, filled by this Spirit, shall speak with the voice of every nation? They who long ago strove to build a tower against God (Gen. xi. 6) lost the tongue they had then in common. But in those who humbly fear God all tongues are made one. Here lowliness has merited power; there pride brought down confusion.

5. But we must also ask ourselves why did the Holy Spirit, Who is Co-eternal with the Father and the Son, appear in the form of fire? Why did He appear in the form of fire, and at the same time in the form of tongues? Why is He sometimes made known to us in the form of a dove, and sometimes as fire? Why

did He appear above the Only-begotten in the form of a dove, and above the Disciples in the form of fire, and did not descend upon the Lord in the form of fire, nor appear above the Disciples in the form of a dove?

Let us return and explain these four points as we have mentioned them. The Spirit that is Co-eternal with the Father and the Son is shown under the form of fire because God is invisible, ineffable, and incorporeal fire, as Paul testifies: *For our God is a consuming fire* (Heb. xii. 29). God is called fire because by Him the rust of sin is consumed. It is of this fire that Truth has said: *I am come to cast fire on the earth; and what will I but that it be kindled* (Lk. xii. 49). And by *the earth* is meant earthly hearts, which as they at times heap up evil thoughts within them, are trodden on by the spirits of evil. But the Lord sends fire on earth when, by the breath of His Holy Spirit, He sets fire to the hearts of unspiritual men. And the earth catches fire when the heart of flesh, indifferent to its own evil pleasures, puts away the lusts of the present life, and becomes inflamed with the love of God. Fittingly then did the Spirit appear in fire; because in every heart that He enters into He drives out the torpor of coldness, and kindles there the desire of His own Eternity.

He is shown in the form of *tongues* of fire, because the Spirit is Co-eternal with the Son, and the tongue has the closest connection with the word. The Son is the Word of the Father. And since one is the substance of the Son and the Spirit, the Spirit should be shown in the form of a tongue. And because

a word proceeds from the tongue, the Spirit appears in the form of tongues; because whosoever is touched by the Holy Spirit confesses the Word of God, that is, the Only-begotten Son, and is unable to deny the Word of God, since he now has in him the tongue of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit appeared in the form of *fiery* tongues, because all whom He has filled He has made both ardent and eloquent. The Doctors of the Church have tongues of fire; for while they preach that God must be loved, they inflame the hearts of their hearers. For unprofitable is the word of the teacher, if it is unable to kindle the fire of the divine love. This fire of doctrine they laid hold of from the mouth of Truth Itself who declared: *Was not our heart burning within us, whilst he spoke in the way, and opened to us the Scriptures* (Lk. xxiv. 32)?

At the hearing of a sermon the soul is enkindled, the cold of mental listlessness departs from the heart, the mind becomes anxious with longing for heavenly things, and a stranger to earthly desires. The true love that fills it torments it with tears; yet tormented by this flame it is nourished by its very sufferings. It delights in hearing heavenly things; and the precepts that instruct it are like so many torches to inflame it; and where before it was chilled by its natural desires, hearing the words it presently grows warm. Well was it said through Moses: *In his right hand a fiery law* (Deut. xxxiii. 2). For the left hand signifies the reprobate, who shall be on the left-hand side. But the elect are called the right hand of God. In the right hand of God, therefore, there is a fiery law; for the elect

never hear the words of God with a cold heart, but loving with all their hearts they burn like torches at hearing them. As the word reaches their ear, their mind, angry with itself, is consumed by the flame of its own inner affection.

The Holy Spirit was represented in the form of a dove, and as fire, because He makes those He fills both simple and ardent; simple in purity, ardent in zeal. For simplicity without zeal, or zeal without simplicity cannot please God. Because of this the Truth has said: *Be ye wise as serpents and simple as doves* (Mt. x. 16). And we must note that the Lord willed not to admonish His Disciples by the figure of a dove without that of the serpent, or of a serpent without that of the dove; in that the cunning of the serpent should sharpen the simplicity of the dove, and the simplicity of the dove temper the sharpness of the serpent.

For this reason Paul says: *Do not become children in sense* (I Cor. xiv. 20). Here we listened to the guile of the serpent; next we are taught the simplicity of a dove: *But in malice be children*. Likewise of Job was it said that, *he was a simple and upright man* (Job i. 1). What is uprightness without simplicity, and simplicity without uprightness? Therefore, since the Spirit teaches us both uprightness and simplicity it was to be shown to us under the figure of fire, and under that of a dove; in order that every heart that is touched by His grace may become tranquil in the mildness of His clemency, and inflamed with the zeal of His justice.

6. Lastly, we must ask ourselves why He appeared above our Redeemer, the Mediator of God and



man, in the form of a *dove*, and above the Apostles in the form of *tongues of fire*? The Only-begotten Son of God is in truth the judge of all mankind. But who could bear His justice if, before drawing us to Himself in mildness, He had willed to search with harsh exactness into our offences? So for man He became man, revealing Himself to man as gentle. He willed not to crush sinners, but to gather them to Himself. He desired to correct with mildness at first, that there might then be those whom afterwards He would save when He came to judge. And so it was fitting that the Spirit should appear as a dove above Him Who came, not now to punish sinners in His zeal, but that He might bear with them yet a while in mildness.

But above the Disciples it was fitting He should be shown in the form of fire; that spiritual fervour might inflame them against themselves, so that these who were but men, and therefore sinners, would themselves punish, through penance, the sins God has spared through patience. For not even they who followed so closely after the heavenly Master could be without sin; as John bears witness when he says: *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us* (I Jn. i. 8).

He came therefore in fire above men, in the form of a dove above the Lord, because we should through zeal for justice search out our own sins, which the Lord had mildly borne in patience, and consume them in the fire of penance. The Spirit is therefore shown as a dove over the Redeemer, as fire over men, because the more the severity

of our Judge is tempered with mildness, the more should our own feebleness be enkindled against itself. So, having explained these fourfold reasons, we now pass on to the consideration of the gifts of the same Spirit.

7. Of this Spirit it was written: *His Spirit hath adorned the heavens* (Job xxvi. 13). For the adornments of the heavens are the virtues of those who preach; and these adornments Paul recounts to us, saying: *To one indeed, by the Spirit, is given the word of wisdom: and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit. To another faith in the same Spirit; to another grace of healing in one Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another the discerning of tongues; to another the interpretation of speeches. But all these things one and the same Spirit worketh, dividing to every one according to his will* (I Cor. xii. 8). As many as are the gifts of those who preach the Gospel, so many are the adornments of the heavens. For this reason again was it written: *By the word of the Lord the heavens were established* (Ps. xxxii). For the Word of the Lord is the Son of the Father. That it might be shown that the whole Trinity together had wrought these heavens, namely, the holy Apostles, there is immediately added, of the divinity of the Holy Spirit: *and all the power of them by the Spirit of his mouth*. Therefore the power of the heavens (the Apostles) is derived from the Spirit: for they would not have dared to withstand the rulers of this world, had not the power of the Holy Spirit sustained them. What the Teachers of the holy Church were like before the

Coming of the Holy Ghost we know; what their courage became after His Coming we shall now see.

8. What fear, what weakness, the very Pastor of the Church, close to whose most holy body we are sitting, showed before the Coming of the Holy Ghost, the maid who was doorkeeper will tell us, should we ask her. Terrified at the voice of a woman, fearful of death, he denied Life (John xviii. 7). And Peter denied Him on the ground at the very time when the Thief would confess Him upon the cross. But let us hear what was the courage of this man after the Coming of the Holy Ghost. There was an assembly of the Council and of the Ancients, and, after they had been scourged, the Apostles were charged that they must speak no more in the name of Jesus. Peter with firm decision replied: *We ought to obey God, rather than men* (Acts v. 29). And again: *If it be just in the sight of God, to hear you rather than God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard* (iv. 19, 20). *And they indeed went from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus* (v. 41). Behold Peter, rejoicing at being scourged, who before had trembled at a word. And he who, when she questioned him, was terrified by the voice of a serving maid, after the Coming of the Holy Spirit, though scourged, stands firm against the power of princes.

It is my delight to lift up eyes of faith to the wonders of our Creator; and here and there to dwell upon the Fathers of both the Old and New

Testament. I behold with these same eyes, that were opened by faith, David and Amos and Daniel and Peter and Paul and Matthew, and I am moved to consider how great, as Creator, is the Holy Spirit, but in my reflection I fall far short. For it is He Who inspires the youthful harpist, and He Who has created the psalmist (I Kings xvi. 18). He moves the soul of *the herdsman plucking wild figs*, and makes him a prophet (Amos vii. 14). He enters into a young boy, disciplined in spirit, and makes him a judge (Dan. xiii. 46). He enters into a fisherman, and makes of him a preacher of the Gospel (Mt. iv. 19). He fills a persecutor of the Church, and makes him the Doctor of the Gentiles (Acts ix). He fills a publican, and makes of him an Evangelist (Lk. v. 27, 28). What power of creation has this Spirit! In all that He willed there is no pause to learn. As He touches a soul He teaches it; and simply to have touched is to have taught it. For as His Light illumines it, the human spirit of a sudden changes; it rejects on the instant what it was, and shows itself at once as it was not.

9. Let us reflect on what kind of men did this day find the holy Apostles to be, and what kind of men it made them. It is certain, that of those who had remained together for fear of the Jews, each of them had known his own native tongue, yet, even in the tongue they knew, they had not dared to speak openly of Christ. The Spirit came, and as He endows their lips with the gift of diverse tongues He strengthens their minds with firmness. They begin to speak openly of Christ, and in a

strange tongue; they who before had feared to speak of Him even in their own tongue. For their hearts were on fire, and the bodily torments they had dreaded before, they now despise. The love of their Creator defeats the power of their bodily fear. And they who had yielded to the dread of their enemies, now dominate them by their authority. He then Who has raised them to such heights, what shall I say of Him, but that He has made *heavens* of the minds of earthly men?

Reflect, Dearest Brethren, how this day's solemnity has a significance that is next to that of the Incarnation of the Only-begotten Son of God. For this solemnity is held in equal honour with that. In the one God, while remaining God, takes to Himself the nature of man; in the other, men have received God within them as He descends upon them. In the one case, God became man by nature; in the other, men became gods by adoption. If then, Brethren, we do not wish to linger on in death as carnal men, let us love this Life-giving Spirit.

10. But since flesh knows not spirit, someone from his own unspiritual thinking will say to himself: How can I love someone whom I know not? To this we agree; for the mind that is taken up with visible things cannot see what is invisible. For it only thinks of visible things; and even when not actually engaged in them, the mind follows them from within itself, and while thus held fast by bodily things is unable to rise to what is incorporeal. And as a consequence, the more closely it is linked in thought to the earthly creation, the

more imperfectly will it know its Creator.

But since we cannot see God in Himself, there is something we may do, through which the eye of our understanding may approach Him. Since we can in no way see Him in Himself, we may yet see Him in His servants. For when we see them do that which is above the ordinary nature of things, we know for certain that God dwells within their souls. In this spiritual matter let us take an example from things that are not spiritual. There is not one of us can look directly at the orb of our sun as it mounts up in splendour to the heavens: for our eyes weakened by its rays are beaten down. But we can see the mountains glistening in the sunrise, and know from them that the sun has risen. We then, who cannot of ourselves look upon the Sun of Justice, let us look up to the mountains that shine in Its splendour: the Holy Apostles, who shine so clearly by their virtues, who glitter with miracles, who are flooded with the radiance of the Risen Sun, Which, Invisible in Himself, as it were makes Himself visible to us in these sunlit mountains.

For the perfection of the Divinity is as the sun in the heavens. The power of the Divinity revealed in men is as the sunlight upon the earth. Let us then here on earth so look upon the Sun of Justice Whom we cannot look upon in heaven; and walking securely in good works by this light on earth, we may come in time to lift up our eyes and behold It in heaven. And we shall accomplish our earthly journey without stumbling, if we love God, and our neighbour, with all our heart. For

we cannot love God unless we love our neighbour; nor love our neighbour without loving God.

For it was to this end that, as we said in another sermon (xxvi. III), the Spirit was given a second time to the Disciples: the first time, it was given by the Lord Himself while still on earth; afterwards by the Lord reigning in heaven. It was given on earth that we might love our neighbour. It was given from heaven that we might love God. Why was it given first here on earth, and afterwards from heaven, if not that we might clearly understand that which John has said to us: *He that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God, whom he seeth not?* (I Jn. iv. 20).

Let us then, dearest brethren, love

our neighbour. Let us love him who is close beside us, that we may then come to love Him Who is far above us. Let the soul practise towards its neighbour, what it may offer up to God: so that it may merit to enjoy both God and its neighbour for ever.

Then shall we reach to that joy of the heavenly throng, of which we now receive a pledge in the Holy Spirit. Let us press forward with all our heart to that end in which we shall have joy without end. There we shall rejoice in the holy company of the Blessed. There secure happiness, there untroubled rest, there true peace, shall no more be *left with us*, but shall be *given to us* by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth for ever. Amen.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> All editions of the *Catena Aurea*, one presumably following the other, have: Which Christ recalls to our mind—*quae nos commemorat Christus*. But the text in Migne has: *quam nos commemorat Spiritus*: which is what the holy commentator must have cited in the beginning.

<sup>2</sup> PG 31, Liber De Spiritu Sancto. This discourse is made up of chapters nine and ten of the saint's book on *The Holy Spirit*; on the notions regarding the Holy Spirit which conform with the Scriptures, and also on the equality of the Spirit with the Father and the Son. There is a homily on the Holy Spirit attributed to St Basil, but it is not authentic.

<sup>3</sup> St Basil was one of the greatest defenders of the Divine Tradition of the Consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son

against the Arians and Semi-Arians, of whom Eunomius and Macedonius were leaders. This latter gave his name to the faction who were defective in their notions regarding the Third Person of the Bl. Trinity.

<sup>4</sup> The word used is *sunapheia*; which later became a key word in the heresies that arose concerning the union of the Divine and human natures in Jesus Christ. Subsequently, in the third anathema of Cyril against Nestorius, the notion expressed by *sunapheia* was condemned, and the term *sumodos*—union or *natural unity* as against connection, or association, in rank or authority or power—was there formally adopted (Den. 115).

<sup>5</sup> The words of Scripture either confess or deny that the Holy Ghost is truly united with the Father and

the Son. If they must find fault with the union, as there described, then they must not fault Basil.

<sup>6</sup> PL 16. This discourse is made up of chapters 13, 14, 15, and 16 of St Ambrose's Book I on the Holy Spirit, and treats of the names of the Holy Spirit: God, Light, Fire, Life, River.

<sup>7</sup> The *Vetus Itala* version, with which many other versions agree here. Many however have St Jerome's later Vulgate version: *And it is the Spirit which bears witness that Christ is the truth.*

<sup>8</sup> *Gratia sacramentorum.* The holy Doctor is not of course using these two terms in their later defined form, but as simply expressing the living truth of Divine Tradition, which later when defined by the Church became known as *dogma*; for what we know as *dogma* are the living truths of sacred Divine Tradition which have formed part of the faith and practice of the faithful from the beginning and which were received from Christ through the Apostles.

<sup>9</sup> In which the holy Doctor, with a great number (*plerique*) of others, teaches the *procession* of the Holy Ghost from the Son.

<sup>10</sup> This reference cannot be verified. The pool is probably *the pool of Samaria*, which was then Jezebel's also, as queen of Samaria (III Kings

xxii. 38). The substitution of *meretrices* for dogs is, possibly, derived from the reference in Deuteronomy xxiii. 18.

<sup>11</sup> PG 50, col. 463. De S. Pent. II.

<sup>12</sup> PL 35, Tr. 76. The Gospel citations appear to be still from the *Vetus Itala* version.

<sup>13</sup> PL 38, Sermo 267.

<sup>14</sup> PL 38, Sermo 268.

<sup>15</sup> PL 38, Sermo 270.

<sup>16</sup> PL 39, Appendix, Sermo 97. The style is not of Augustine, but rather of St Peter Chrysologus, to whom it has been ascribed. It is also attributed to St Ambrose. It is included here because of its evident antiquity and authority.

<sup>17</sup> PL 39, Appendix, Sermo 98. This sermon is certainly not St Augustine's. The reference says some of it is from St Cyprian; actually, with the exception of a few phrases from Alcuin on *De Virtutibus*, it is taken almost verbatim from the last three chapters of St Cyprian's book on *The Unity of the Church*. It is included here for its venerable authority, and antiquity, on this sacred theme (St Cyprian, PL 4, pp. 517-18).

<sup>18</sup> PL 54, Sermo 75, Pentecost I, col. 400.

<sup>19</sup> PL 54, Sermo 77, Pentecost III, col. 411.

<sup>20</sup> PL Sermo 30. In Evangelia.

# TRINITY SUNDAY

I. ST BASIL THE GREAT: SACRED TRADITION A DIVINE GUIDE

II. ST GREGORY NAZIANZEN: THE HOLY TRINITY

III. ST AUGUSTINE: THE TRINITY IN THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

## THE GOSPEL OF THE SUNDAY

MATTHEW xxviii. 18-20

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.

## EXPOSITION FROM THE CATENA AUREA

V. 18. *And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given . . .*

BEDE: After the blessed Matthew had stated that an angel had announced the Lord's Resurrection, he then relates the vision of the Lord seen by the Disciples, telling us that *the eleven Disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountains where Jesus had appointed them.* For when going towards His Passion the Lord had said to His Disciples, *But after I shall be risen again, I will go before you into Galilee* (xxvi. 23). This the angels also told the holy women. And so the Disciples obey the command of the Master. But only eleven go to adore Him. For one had perished: he who had betrayed his Lord and Master.

JEROME: And so after His Resurrection Jesus is seen on the mountain in Galilee, and there adored; and though some were doubting, their doubt but increases our faith: *And seeing him they adored: but some doubted.*

REMIGIUS: The Evangelist Luke relates this more fully. For he tells us how when the Lord, rising from the dead, appeared to His Disciples, they were terrified and believed they were seeing a ghost.

RHABANUS MAURUS (or BEDE): The Lord appeared to them upon the mountain to signify that the Body which in His birth He had taken from the common earth of the human race, He had now in His

Resurrection exalted above all earthly things. And that He might teach the faithful that if they desired to see the supreme glory of the Resurrection they must be earnest in passing from earthly delights to heavenly ones. And Jesus goes before His Disciples into Galilee, because *Christ is now risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep* (I Cor. xv. 20). And they who are Christ's follow Him and in their order pass over from death to life; to behold the Divinity in visible form. And that Galilee is interpreted to mean, *revelation*, fittingly agrees with this.

AUGUSTINE, *Harmony of the Four Gospels* 3, 25, 81: Let us consider in what manner the Lord was seen bodily in Galilee. For it is evident that He was not seen on the day of His resurrection. For on that day He was seen in Jerusalem at night-fall, as Luke and John plainly agree. Neither was it during the eight following days, after which, John tells us, the Lord appeared to His Disciples when Thomas, who had not seen Him on the day of the Resurrection, saw Him for the first time.

Unless it be said that these were not *the eleven* (who were now spoken of as the Apostles) but eleven out of the great number of His Disciples. But (par. 82) there is another difficulty against this. For when John had related that the Lord was seen, not by the eleven on the mountain, but by seven of them who were fishing by the lake of Tiberias, he adds: *This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to his disciples, after he was risen from the dead* (xxi. 14). We must here understand him as referring to the number of days,

not to the number of manifestations. If however we take it that the Lord was seen by the eleven within those eight days before Thomas had seen Him, this manifestation by the lake of Galilee will be the fourth, not the third. Because of this we are forced to believe that He was seen last by the eleven on the mountain in Galilee.

We find therefore (par. 82) in the four Evangelists, that there were ten separate manifestations of the Lord after His Resurrection.

1. To the women by the sepulchre.
2. To the same women as they are returning from the sepulchre.
3. To Peter.
4. To the two Disciples going to the village.
5. To many in Jerusalem when Thomas was not there.
6. When Thomas saw Him.
7. By the lake of Tiberias.
8. On the mountain of Galilee of which Matthew speaks.
9. To the eleven *as they were at table*, as told by Mark; as they were not again to eat with Him on earth.
10. On the same day, no longer upon the earth, but lifted up in a cloud as He was taken up to heaven, which Mark and Luke relate (par. 84). But as John confesses all were not written down (xxi. 25). For He had frequent conversations with them throughout the forty days which preceded His Ascension into heaven (Acts i. 3).

REMIGIUS: The Disciples seeing Him knew it was the Lord, and casting themselves with their faces to the ground they adored Him. And for this their kind and tender Master, to take all doubt from their hearts, draws near and confirms them in

their belief. Hence there follows: *And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth.*

JEROME: Power is given to Him Who a little while before was crucified and buried in the sepulchre; Who afterwards rose again. RHABANUS (or BEDE): He does not say this of His Divinity Co-eternal with the Father, but of the humanity He assumed, in which *he was made a little lower than the angels* (Heb. ii. 9).

CHRYSOLOGUS, *Serm.* 80: The Son of God brought to the son of the Virgin, God brought to man, Divinity to flesh, that which He possessed forever with the Father. JEROME: Power is given in heaven and on earth, so that He Who before reigned in heaven might now reign on earth through the faith of those who believed in Him.

REMIGIUS: That which the psalmist says of the Lord rising again from the dead: *Thou hast set him over all the works of thy hands* (viii. 7), this the Lord now says of Himself: *All power is given to me in heaven and on earth.* And here we should note, that even before His Resurrection the angels knew they were the subjects of the Man Christ. Willing therefore that it should be known to all men, that He was given all power in heaven and on earth, He sent preachers who would make known the Word of Life to all nations. Hence follows:

V. 19. *Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the . . .*

BEDE: He Who before His Passion had said: *Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles* (Mt. x. 5), now risen from the dead, says: *Go teach all nations.* By this the Jews are confounded, who say that the Christ is to come for their salvation only. And let the Donatists blush for shame who, wishing to limit Christ to one locality, assert that He is only in Africa, and not in any other places.

JEROME: Therefore, they first teach all nations, and when they are taught they are baptized in water. For it may not happen that the body receives baptism before the soul has received the truth of faith. *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;* so that one shall be Their gift Whose Divinity is one; and the name of the Trinity is One God.

CHRYSOLOGUS: Therefore, the One and the Same Power who made them re-creates all nations unto salvation. DIDYMUS, *On the Holy Spirit*, I, 2 (in Jerome): And though there may be someone of so perverted soul that he will attempt to baptize omitting one or other of these Names, and this in disobedience to Christ who laid down the law of baptism; nevertheless he will baptize without effect; or rather, he could not deliver from their sins those he thinks he has baptized.

From these words we may understand how undivided is the nature of the Trinity, that the Father is truly the Father of the Son, and the Son indeed the Son of the Father, and that the Holy Ghost is in truth the Spirit of both the Father and of the Son of God; and that He is also the Spirit of Wisdom and Truth, that



