Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

243 The Holy Spirit (*Spiritus Sanctus*)

The Holy Spirit is the best gift. About which Augustine speaks. Great is the mercy of God that gives a gift equal to himself. For just as the human spirit gives to the body what animates sense, word, motion, and standing, so the divine spirit gives man whom he loves the sense of charity not carnality, the word of truth not of vanity, the motion of sanctity not of foulness, the standing of firmness not of foolishness. For he makes us love fervently, to speak wisely, to work innocently, and continue perseveringly. First therefore, he poured in charity for good loving, just as one working naturally without the artificial intends to print his likeness in that which he does, as a fire gives heat in a body in which it acts, a father gives humanity

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in his child, an artist gives the form of his mind in his work. So, the Holy Spirit since it is the divine fire intends to pour into us love and transform us into the likeness of God according to that, [2] Cor. 3[:18]: “But we all are beholding the glory of the Lord with open face.”

¶ Because however, the Holy Spirit loves us well is evident from three things. First because he takes away opposite love, namely sin just as the fervor of fire the rust of metal, the heat of the sun the dampness of the earth, water cleanses the dirt of the body, so the Holy Spirit spiritual dirt, Act. 1[:5]: “John baptized with water, you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit, not many days hence.” And just as the heat is vigorous against the preceding cold because it expels it, against the present it resists it, against the future following because it propels it. So, the heat of the Holy Spirit gives the medicine of health against preceding sins, Rom. 8[:2]: “For the law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus.”

¶ Second, it gives the protection of liberty against the present. For “where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,” and without that Spirit is depression of judgment and debility, [2] Cor. 3[:17].

¶ Third, it gives the precaution of astuteness against the future, just as the rotten oak at night appears glowing but by day it is putrid, so the soul illuminated by the Holy Spirit sees what is truly lucid and what is truly rotten, Gal. 5[:16]: “Walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.”

¶ Second, because it confers the debt of love, for just as an unwashed body by its radiation confers heat, because light is the vehicle of heat, so the Holy Spirit radiates the heart and confers the heat of charity, Rom. 5[:5]: “The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts.”

¶ Third, because it conveys the reward of love. That one who gives in exchange a dearer pledge than the debt itself. It is a sign that he wants to pay the debt itself, but God gives the Holy Spirit in a pledge to promise glory which is a dearer pledge than the promise. Therefore, the Holy Spirit witnesses concerning the reward, [2] Cor. 1[:21-22]: “He who has anointed us, is God. Who also has sealed us and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts.” Rom. 8[:16]: “For the Spirit himself gives testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God.” Just as instinct in the eagle tests concerning the chicks in the nest that they are his sons. If they look upon the sun shining in its sphere with undazzled eyes, so the Holy Spirit by works pleasing to God which are a sign

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of divine filiation is evaluated because thus operating they are sons of God by adoption.

¶ Second, the Holy Spirit imprints the truth for right speaking. For just as the Holy Spirit according to eternal procession is the link and love of the Father and the Son, so according to temporal procession it is the link of God and man. But for this because man becomes the

connection to God by love, it is necessary that they are assimilated to the highest goodness by purity of life, that they be subjected to divine majesty by the humility of obedience and conformed to the first truth by the preaching of wisdom. Therefore, the Holy Spirit teaches us to speak in a threefold manner according to three precepts. First, in confession so that we may be purified and assimilated to the good, just as the wind blowing throws out the straw and purges the grain, Isai. 41[:16]. The spirit purged the sins of that one, namely, David confessing his sins, Ezech. 37[:9]: “Come, spirit, from the four winds, and blow upon these slain, and let them live again.”

¶ The four winds are the four affections of the soul: sorrow for the fault, joy for the mercy, fear for the justice, and hope for forgiveness, Job 7[:7, 11]: “Remember, my Lord, that my life is but wind,” and it follows, “I will not spare my mouth, I will speak in the affliction of my spirit: I will talk with the bitterness of my soul.” Second, in prayer so that we may be humiliated and obey majesty, for the Holy Spirit imprints in us the memory of divine benefits. Wherefore we give thanks, Luke 1[:67]: “Zachary was filled with the Holy Ghost; and he prophesied,” He even made us recollect penalties owed and made us groan, Rom. 8[:26]: “The Spirit also helps our infirmity. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit himself asks for us,” that is, he makes us ask. John 4[:23]: “The true adorers shall adore the Father.” Gal. 4[:4]: “God sent his Son, made of a woman.” Third, in preaching so that we may conform to him and build up our neighbors, for just as a pipe sings to the blowing and touch of the singer, so the preacher at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, Act. 2[:4]: “They were all filled with the Holy Ghost,” etc. Third, the Holy Spirit confers movement for good working, just as the wind agitates the sparks which otherwise would remain quiet. So, the Holy Spirit moves the souls which without him would do nothing, Wis. 3[:7]: “The just shall shine and like sparks,” etc.

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Rom. 8[:14]: “Whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

¶ For the work, however, three things are required: experience of the matter, knowledge of the one working, and to wish to be able. But these three the Holy Spirit confers in the living soul, namely, a directing knowledge, just as the rays of the sun direct the traveler, so the spirit directs the one working, John 14[:26]: “But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things,” that are necessary for the work of salvation.

¶ Second, the power for conducting, like the superior bodies influence the vigor for germination of the lower fruits, Isai. 44[:3-4]: “I will pour out my spirit upon your seed, and my blessing upon thy stock, and they shall spring up among the herbs,” etc. [Psal. 32.6]: “By the word of the Lord the heavens were established; and by the spirit of his mouth.”

¶ Third, the will in conducting the work, just as reason says,[[1]](#endnote-1) the evil is to be fled, the good is to be chosen and incline the will for working. So, the Holy Spirit censures sin, and inclines one to the good. Concerning the first, John 16[:8]: “When he is come, he will convict the world of sin.” which it committed, and concerning justice which it sent forth, and concerning the judgment which he did not fear. Concerning the second, Eph. 5[:18]: “Be filled with the Holy Spirit,” etc. In a sign of this afterwards it was said to the blessed virgin, [Luc. 1:35, 38]: “The Holy Spirit shall come upon you.” This one, prompted by her will, said, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord.”

¶ Fourth, the Holy Spirit confers the state of following up, just as the spirit created while it existed in the body preserves that one from decay and corruption, when separated it does not stay, but is burned up. So, the Holy Spirit while it is in the soul preserves it lest it fall into fault, lest it decay. If it fell, it would rise again, Ezech. 2[:2]: “The spirit of the Lord entered into me, and he set me upon my feet,” that is, he made me stable in holy affections and good works.

1. Cf. John Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones Lib. II. Sentententiarum* 2, Dist. 39, quest. 1 & 2 (Lyon: Laurentii Durand, 1639; 6:1022b-1023a): qui dicit quod eadem virtus, quae inclinat ad bonum prosequendum, inclinat etiam ad malum oppositum illi bono fugiendum; quia ergo talis notitia principiorum, vel actualis, vel habituralis semper dictat ad bonum iustitiae eligendum, et malum oppositum esse fugiendum, et hoc dictare, scilicet de malo fugiendo, est murmurare ostensiue, et in hoc est occasio voluntati, vt remurmuret contra malum. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)