

73// HERE BEGINNETH OF THE BLESSED HOLY FEAST OF PENTECOST OR OF THE HOLY GHOST

The Holy Ghost, as witnesseth St. Luke in the story of the Acts of the Apostles, on this day was sent to the apostles in the form and likeness of tongues of fire. And of this sending and coming [seven] things be to be considered. First, from whom he was sent. Secondly, in how many manners he was sent. Thirdly, in what time he was sent. Fourthly, how oft he was sent to the apostles. Fifthly, in what wise he was sent. Sixthly, into whom he was sent. Seventhly, wherefore he was sent.

1. FROM WHOM HE WAS SENT

As to the first, it is to weet [is to be known] that he was sent from the Father, and from the Son he was sent, and he also himself, the Holy Ghost, gave and sent himself.

Of the first saith St. John, *Johannis xiv.*: The Holy Ghost which is said *paraclitus*, whom God the Father shall send in my name, this is he that shall teach us all.

Of the second saith St. John: If I go, saith Jesus, I shall send him to you.

2. IN HOW MANY MANNERS HE WAS SENT

A) THREE MANNERS ACCORDING TO THE SENDER

Now it is to wit that the sending is compared in three manners to the sender. First, as he that giveth being in his substance, and in this manner the sun giveth his rays or beams. Secondly, as in giving virtue or strength, and so is the dart given by the virtue and strength of him that casteth it. Thirdly, to him that giveth his jurisdiction to another, and thus the messenger is sent from him of whom he hath the commandment.

And after these three manners the Holy Ghost may be said to be sent, for it is said: sent of the Father and of the Son as having virtue and authority in his operation, notwithstanding himself giveth and sendeth him. The which thing seemed to be veritable after this that the gospel of John saith, *Johannis decimo sexto, Cum autem venerit ille Spiritus veritatis, etc.*: “When the spirit of truth shall come, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me that he cometh from me.”

Now saith St. Leo in a sermon of the Pentecost: “The incommutable deity of the Blessed Trinity is without any changing, one in substance, not divided in operation, all one in will, like in omnipotence, equal in glory, and in his mercy. He hath taken to himself the work of our

redemption, that the Father be to us merciful, the Son to us profitable, and God the Holy Ghost inflame us. And because that the Holy Ghost is God, therefore he giveth himself.”

And that this is true, St. Ambrose in the book of the Holy Ghost sayeth thus: “The glory of the Divinity is approved by four reasons, or for that he is without sin, or for that he leaveth the sins, or for that he is creator and not creature, or for that he worshipped none but he is worshipped. And in that is showed to us that the Blessed Trinity was all given to us, for the Father hath offered all that he had.”

As saith St. Austin: “He hath sent to us his Son in price of our redemption, and the Holy Ghost in sign of our adoption. Semblably the Son of God hath given himself unto us.”

For thus saith St. Bernard: “He is our pastor, he is our pasture, and he is our redemption, for he gave his soul in price of our redemption, his blood in to drink, his flesh in to meat, and his divinity in to final reward.”

Semblably the Holy Ghost gave himself all to us; like as the apostle saith: “By the Holy Ghost is given the word of sapience [wisdom] to one, to another of science [knowledge]; and thus of all graces particular is given by the same Holy Ghost.”

And hereof saith St. Leo the Pope: “The Holy Ghost is the inspirer of the faith, giver of Science, teacher of chastity, and cause of all health.”

B) THE VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE WAYS THE SPIRIT IS SENT

As to the second, he is sent in four manners, that is to wit, that the Holy Ghost is sent in two manners, visibly and invisibly. As touching into the hearts pure and chaste he descended visibly, when by some sign visible he is showed.

The Invisible Ways the Spirit is Sent

Of the sending invisible saith St. John, *Johannis iii.: Spiritus ubi vult spirat*. “The Holy Ghost where he will he inspireth the hearts, but thou knowest not whence he cometh nor whither he will go.” And it is no marvel, for as St. Bernard saith of this word invisible:

He is not entered by the eyes, for he is not coloured, ne by the ears, for he soundeth not, ne by the nostrils, for he is not meddled with the air, ne he entereth not by the conduit of the mouth, for he may not be swallowed, ne by the feeling or attouching, for he is not maniable [touchable], ne may not be handled. Thou demandest then if he hath sought any place natural or human by which thou mightest know that he be come into thee. Know thou that of the moving of the heart I have understood by his presence; and by the fleeing of vices I have felt the virtue of his puissance [power]; and by the discussion and reproving of my sins hidden, I am amarvelled of the deepness of sapience and of the amendment of my manners how little and small that they be. I have experience of the bounty of his mansuetude [patience] and of the reformation and renovation of the spirit of my

heart. I have pierced the thickness and the nobleness of his beauty, and of the regard and consideration of all these things, I am abashed of the multitude of his greatness.

The Visible Ways the Spirit is Sent

The sending visible, when it is in any sign visible, it showeth. And it is to wit that in five signs visible the Holy Ghost is sent and showed. First, in sign of a dove upon Jesu Christ when he was baptized, *Luke iii*: “The Holy Ghost descended in bodily likeness of a dove upon him.” Secondly, in likeness of a fair cloud and clear upon Jesu Christ at his transfiguration, Matthew xvii: “Lo! he yet speaking a bright cloud shadowed them.” This was upon the Mount Tabor where Jesu Christ spake with St. Peter, James, and John. And thus as he spake there descended a clear cloud that covered them all, whereas the gloss saith thus: When Jesu Christ was baptized, and also when he was clarified, the mystery of the Trinity was showed. The Holy Ghost was showed at the baptism in likeness of a dove, and in the hill in the likeness of a clear mountain and cloud. Thirdly, he was showed in likeness of a blowing or a blast, as saith St. John, *Johannis vicesimo* [John 20]: “He breathed and blew on them and said: ‘Take ye the Holy Ghost in you; of whom ye forgive the sins, they shall be forgiven, and of whom ye retain the sins, they shall be retained.’” Fourthly, in likeness of fire. Fifthly, in likeness of tongues. And in these two manners he appeared to us to give us to understand that the properties of the tongue and of fire he putteth in the hearts when he descendeth.

The dove hath wailing for her song, she hath no gall, she maketh her house in an hole, or in a wall of stone. And thus:

[First,] the Holy Ghost, them that he replenisheth, he maketh them to wail for their sins. Whereof saith Isaiah the prophet, Isaiah lix.: “We all shall roar like bears, and wail like doves, in thinking humbly and bitterly how we have erred against the Scripture.” And this comforteth us the apostle St. Paul, *ad Romanos* [Epistle to the Romans] viii: “The Holy Ghost ceaseth not to pray for us in moving us to wailings without number, for our sins which be without number.”

Secondly, the doves be without gall, and the Holy Ghost maketh them such where he descendeth, for that is his nature. Whereof saith the wise man, *Sapientiae* [Wisdom] xii.: *O quam bonus et suavis, etc*: “O Lord God, how much good and sweet is this spirit in us.” Item, in the same place he is called sweet, benign, and human, of that he maketh us benign and human, that is to wit, sweet in word, benign in heart, and human in work.

Thirdly, the doves dwell within the holes of walls of stone, that is to say, in the wounds of Jesu Christ he maketh them dwell. That he fulfilleth whereof it is said in the *Cantica Canticorum ii*: “Arise thou my spouse, my love and my dove, my spouse and love,” that is a devout soul, “and come my dove for to nourish small pigeons in the holes of the wall,” that is in the wounds of our Lord. Whereof St. Jerome saith: *Spiritus oris nostri, etc.*, thus as he would say, the Spirit that is of our mouth, that is Jesu Christ, for he is our mouth. And our flesh maketh us say to

Christ, 'In thine umber [shadow], that is, in thy passion, in which Jesu Christ was obscure, dark and despised, we shall live by continual memory.

Secondly, he was showed in likeness of a cloud. The cloud is *lift up from the earth* by virtue of the sun, and nourisheth and engendereth rain, and *refresheth* and cooleth the air and the earth. Thus

[First,] the Holy Ghost, them that he replenisheth [fills] he *lifteth from the earth* for to despise the earthly things, as saith the prophet Ezechiel: "The Holy Ghost hath lift me into the air between heaven and earth, and hath brought me into Jerusalem, in the vision of God."

Secondly, he *refresheth* the earth, that is the hearts, against the dryness of burning of vices. And of this was said to the Virgin Mary *Spiritus sanctus superveniet in te, etc.*, "The Holy Ghost shall come in thee, and the virtue of him that is highest shall shadow thee," and from all ardour of vices shall cool thee. And the Holy Ghost is called water because that water hath the virtue and nature to refresh and cool. Whereof saith St. John the Evangelist: "From the Holy Ghost the floods of living water shall run." And that same saith he of the Holy Ghost, which the apostles received, and of them that received him, for the rivers ran through all the world upon them that believed in God.

Thirdly, he *engendereth rain*, the which descendeth by drops. And this is that David saith: "The Holy Ghost shall blow and make waters to flow," that is to say by the tears coming from the heart dropping from the eyes.

He is showed in likeness of breath, which is a spirit of the heart which is cast out by the mouth, which is *light, hot, sweet, and necessary to breathe with*. Thus:

[First,] the Holy Ghost is *light* [unheavy] to be shed into a man, he is most swift of anything that is movable, as the gloss saith upon this word, *Factus est repente de caelo sonus, etc.*: At the coming of the Holy Ghost he made moving as of thunder, and of wind, vehement and sudden, and fulfilled all the house where the apostles sat, which abode him in great devotion. For the grace of the Holy Ghost wrought not in his operation of space, ne of time, but he had sudden motion.

Secondly, he is *hot* for to enflame the hearts. Whereof Jesu Christ saith: "I am come to cast fire in the earth," but this is that burneth and inflameth the hearts. And is compared to wind which is hot, whereof is said in the Canticles: *Veni auster et perfla hortum meu*, "Come wind of the south, and blow in my garden," that is, my soul.

Thirdly, he is *sweet* for to make sweet the hearts, and therefore he is named by the name of unction; the sweet unction of him teacheth us which appertaineth to our health. And it is named by name of dew whereof singeth holy Church: *Et sui roris aspersione fecundet* [and let is be made fruitful by the sprinkling of his dew],

where she prayeth that the aspersion and springing of the dew make our hearts to grow in virtue, and also by space of time still and calm. After the stroke of the fire, descended a sweet sound of air soft and small, and there was our Lord.

Fourthly, it is *necessary to breathe* in such manner that if it might not issue out of the mouth that he might not breathe, anon the man should die. And thus should we understand of the Holy Ghost, after this that David saith: *Auferes spiritum eorum et deficient et in pulverem, etc.* “Lord God as soon as thou shalt take away their spirit they shall fail.” And therefore saith he: *Emitte spiritum tuum, etc.*, “Lord God send thy spirit into them and they shall be created by spiritual life and be renewed,” for the Holy Ghost is he that giveth life.

Fourthly, he was showed in the likeness of fire. Fifthly, in likeness of tongues. And the cause for which he appeared in these two manners I shall hereafter say.

3. IN WHAT TIME HE WAS SENT

As to the third principal, in which time he was sent, he was on the fiftieth day sent, after Easter, for to give to us knowledge that the Holy Ghost came, and it is the perfection of the law, the remuneration perdurable [everlasting], and the remission of sins.

THE PERFECTION OF THE LAW

It appeareth of the perfection of the law, for from the day that the Lamb was sacrificed in that old law, the law was delivered the fiftieth day after that, as the Church saith, in fire. And also in the New Testament, fifty days after Easter, descended the Holy Ghost on the mount of Sion in likeness of fire. Like as the law was given in the highest of the mount of Sinai, so the Holy Ghost in the solier [upper room] where the supper of Jesu Christ and of his apostles was made. In this appeareth that the Holy Ghost is the perfection of all the law, for in that is the plenitude of dilection [fullness of happiness].

PERDURABLE REMUNERATION

Secondly, the perdurable remuneration is in the Holy Ghost, whereof the gloss saith thus, that the forty days in which our Lord conversed with his disciples signify the holy church, also the fiftieth day on which the Holy Ghost was given, expresseth the penny of the last retribution and reward perdurable.

THE REMISSION OF SINS

Thirdly, of the Holy Ghost is the remission of sins, as saith the gloss. Therefore it was given in the fiftieth day, because in the fiftieth year was the Jubilee, and all things pardoned, and by the Holy Ghost the sins be pardoned. And it followeth in the gloss: In the jubilee spiritual the prisoners be delivered, the debts be quitted, the exiled be repealed and called home, the heritages be rendered, and the bond men be rendered from their servitude and made free and the guilty of death be made quit and delivered.

Whereof saith St. Paul: “The law of the spirit of life in Jesu Christ hath delivered me from the law of sin and of death.” After, the debts of sin be left, for charity covereth and quencheth great multitude of sins. The exiled men be called home, and the prophet saith: *Spiritus tuus bonus, etc.* “Lord thy good spirit hath brought me into the right land of my country,” that is, into heaven.

The heritage lost is rendered, whereof saith St. Paul: “The Holy Ghost hath given witness to our Spirit that we be the sons of God. And if we be sons we be heirs, which were servants to sin, we be made free to God, for where the Holy Ghost is, there is franchise [freedom] and liberty.”

4. HOW OFT HE WAS SENT TO THE APOSTLES

As touching the fourth, how oft he was sent to the apostles, after that the gloss saith: “He was given to them by three times, that is to wit before the passion of Jesu Christ, after the resurrection, and after the Ascension. First to do miracles. Secondly to release the sins, and thirdly to confirm the hearts.”

BEFORE THE PASSION OF JESU CHRIST

First, when he sent them to preach, and to cast fiends out of bodies, and to heal the sick malades [sick people], he gave to them the puissance [power]. And these marvels did they by the Holy Ghost.

Nevertheless it is not consequent that whosoever have the Holy Ghost do miracles. For St. Gregory saith: The miracles maketh not a man holy, but show him holy, nor also every man that doth miracles hath not the Holy Ghost. For evil people avaunt them to have done miracles, saying: Lord, Lord, say they, have not we well prophesied in thy name? Thou hast given to us the spirit of prophecy.

God doth miracles by his angels, by matter amiable that they have, and the fiends by virtues natural, which be in things created naturally, and the enchanter, by help of fiends. The good Christian man by justice public, the evil Christian man by signs of justice.

AFTER THE RESURRECTION

Secondly, they had the Holy Ghost when he breathed on them saying: “Take ye the Holy Ghost in to you, to whom ye loose their sins they shall be loosed, and of whom ye retain, they shall be retained.”

Nevertheless none save God may forgive sins as to the sin that is in the soul, and which is the obligation to pain perdurable, or as to the offence of God, the which is only forgiven by the infusion of the grace of God, and by the force and virtue of contrition. Nevertheless we say that the priest assoilleth [forgiven] of sins, as for that he is insinued, or showeth that the sinner is assoilled of God.

As to that, that the pain that should be perpetual, he changeth into temporal of purgatory, and also for that the pain temporal is due, he releaseth part.

AFTER THE ASCENSION

Thirdly, the Holy Ghost was given to them on this day, when he confirmed so their hearts that they dreaded no torment by the virtue of the Holy Ghost, which all overcometh. Whereof saith St. Austin: "Such is the grace of the Holy Ghost that if he find heaviness in the heart he breaketh it; if he find desire of evil, he destroyeth it; if he find vain dread, he casteth it out." And St. Leo the Pope saith: "The Holy Ghost was hoped of the apostles, not for then first he had inhabited in them, but because that the hearts to him sacred [consecrated] and dedicated, he more should visit them, and more abundantly by grace should abide in increasing his gifts not then begun, of which he was not newly showing his operation, for his largess passeth all abundance."

5. IN WHAT WISE HE WAS SENT

As to the fifth, that is to wit, how he was sent. It is to be known that he was sent with great sound in tongues of fire, the which tongues appeared sitting. And the sound was sudden from heaven, vehement and shining. It was sudden for he had no need of space temporal. It was from heaven, for he made them celestial that he replenished [filled completely]. Vehement for he gave dread of love, or for that he took away the sorrow perdurable, which is malediction; or for that that he bare the heart out of carnal love.

HE FILLED THE APOSTLES COMPLETELY

Also he was replenishing, for he fulfilled all the apostles. As saith St. Luke: *Repleti sunt omnes Spiritu Sancto*. And it is to weet that there be three signs of replenishing that were in the apostles.

The first is that the place where he is giveth no sound, like a tun [barrel] of wine that is full. To this purpose speaketh Job: "Shall the ox cry and roar when the racke [feeding trough] is full?" The ox shall not low nor cry when the crib shall be full, like as he would say when the heart is full of grace, him ought not grudge by impatience. This sign had the apostles, for in the tribulation that they had, they resounded not, ne grudged by impatience, but joyously went to the presence of the tyrants, to prison, and to torments.

The second sign is that he may receive no more, else he were not full. In this manner he that is all filled demandeth no more. In like wise the saints that have plenitude of grace, may receive none other liquor of earthly delectation; and because they have tasted the sweetness of heaven, they have none appetite to the earthly delectations. Whereof saith St. Austin: "Whoso drinketh one drop of delights of paradise, the which one drop is greater than all the sea ocean." Which ought to be understood that all the thirst of this world is in him extinct. And this sign had the apostles which would have none of the goods of this world in proper, but put it all in common.

The third sign is for to run over out, as it appeareth by a river which ariseth and runneth over his banks. As Solomon saith: "Which filleth as Phison wisdom." This flood, or river Phison,

of his nature ariseth and springeth over, and watereth and arroseth [waters] the land about him. In like wise the apostles began to spread abroad. For after they had received the Holy Ghost they began to speak divers languages, where the gloss saith, that that was the sign of plenitude, for the vessel full sheddeth over, as it appeareth of St. Peter, for anon as he began to preach he converted three thousand.

HE CAME AS TONGUES OF FIRE

Secondly, he was sent in tongues of fire. And here be three things to be considered. First, for whom he was sent conjointly in the tongues of fire. Secondly, wherefore he was sent in tongues of fire more than in another element. Thirdly, wherefore he was sent in tongues more than in another member.

For Whom He Was Sent as Fire

As to the first, for three reasons he was sent and appeared in tongues of fire, to the end that their words should inflame the hearts. Secondly, that they should preach the fiery law of God. Thirdly, that they should know that the Holy Ghost, which is fire, spake in them, and {they were not to have any doubt about this, nor to claim the conversion of others as their own doing. Thus all who heard their words heard them as words of God.}

Reasons for Sending the Spirit in the Form of Fire

{On the second point, let it be known that there are several reasons for the sending of the Spirit in the form of fire.

{The first is related to *his sevenfold grace*, for the Spirit, like fire, lowers the lofty by the gift of fear, softens the hard by the gift of piety, enlightens the obscure through knowledge, restrains the unsure by the gift of counsel, reinforces the weak through fortitude, refines the metals by removing dross through the gift of understanding, and mounts upward by the gift of wisdom.

{The Spirit came as fire also by reason of *his dignity and excellence*. Fire surpasses the other elements by its appearance, its rank, and its power; by its appearance because of the beauty of its light, in rank by the sublimity of its position, in power by its vigor in action. So too the Spirit excels in all these respects – in the first, because he is called the Holy Spirit without stain, in the second because he penetrates all intelligent spirits, in the third because he} is invincible, for he hath all strength, seeing all things from far.

The third reason is taken as to *his manifold effect*. And this reason assigneth Rabanus, saying that the fire hath four virtues or natures. It burneth, it purgeth, it chauffeth, it lighteth. In likewise the Holy Ghost burneth the sins, he purgeth the hearts, he casteth away all coldness and dread of the hearts, and he illumineth them that be ignorant:

Of the first saith Zachary the prophet: "He broileth and burneth the hearts as the fire burneth the silver." Also David saith: "Lord I pray thee, burn my reins and my heart, and dry them from all sin."

He purgeth also the hearts after that, as saith Isaiah: "When our Lord hath washed away the filthes of the daughters of Sion, and hath purged the blood of Jerusalem from the middle of him in the spirit of judgment and in the spirit of burning, then shall they be in safety and surety, and kept against all tempest." And the prophet speaketh of the purgation that shall be made at the last, when all shall be purged pure and clean that shall go in to heaven.

He casteth out also all coldness and pusillanimity of the hearts, whereof the apostle saith, "Be ye fervent in spirit," that is of heart, the which thing the Holy Ghost maketh when He espriseth him of his love. And hereof saith St. Gregory, "The Holy Ghost appeared in fire for all the hearts which He replenished, and voided the coldness of fire, and inflamed them with desire of the glory perdurable."

He illumined also the ignorant, whereof saith the wise man, "Lord God who shall know thy science, if thou give not thy sapience and send to us thine Holy Spirit from above," that is he that all enseigneth and teacheth?

The fourth reason is taken after *the nature of his love*. Love is signified by the fire for three causes:

The first cause is for the fire is always moving. So is it of the Holy Ghost; for them that he replenisheth he maketh them to be in continual moving of good operation. Whereof saith St. Gregory, "The love of God is never idle. As long as it is in the heart of a devout person it fructifieth. And [if] it fructifieth not, it is a sign that it is not there.

The second is, for the fire among all the other elements hath but little matter, but strong virtue in operation it hath in his quality. Thus the Holy Ghost, whom he replenisheth, maketh them to have but little love to earthly things, and great to spiritual things, in so much they love not worldly things more worldlily, but spiritually. St. Bernard putteth four manners of love; that is to wit, to love the world fleshly, the spirit fleshly, the flesh spiritually, and the spirit spiritually.

The third cause is, for that the fire abasheth and meeketh the things high. He hath tended on high things desperced, to unite them, and them desperced to bring together. And by these three things be understood three virtues of love. For as saith St. Denis in the book of the names divine: The fire hath three virtues, for he inclineth the high things down, he lifteth the things low in height, he ordaineth the things equal to their ordinance. And these three things maketh the Holy Ghost in them that he replenisheth. For he inclineth them by humility, he lifteth them up by desire of high things, and ordaineth them together by unity of manners.

Why He Was Sent As Tongues

Thirdly, he appeared in likeness of a tongue more than in another member, and for three reasons. The tongue is the member that is inflamed of the fire of hell, and is of great difficulty to govern, and profitable when it is well governed. And because that the tongue was inflamed of the fire of hell, she had need that the Holy Ghost should come to inflame it. As saith St. James: It is the fire of the Holy Ghost, and because it is evil and lightly governed, she hath the more need. For after that that saith St. James in his chronicle: “All nature of beasts, of birds, and of serpents be mastered and ruled by man, but the tongue may not be mastered.” And because it is a member profitable when it is well governed, therefore he had need of the Holy Ghost that should govern it.

He appeared also in a tongue, which is much necessary. To preachers he is necessary, for he maketh them to speak fervently without dread, and therefore he was in that likeness. As saith St. Bernard: “The Holy Ghost descended upon the disciples in tongues of fire to the end that they should preach and speak the law of the tongues of fire.” The Holy Ghost also maketh them to speak and preach hardily and constantly, as St. Luke saith in the Acts of the Apostles: “They were all replenished with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with hardiness the word of God.” He maketh them also to speak in many manners for the great and diverse multitude of hearers, and therefore it is said they began to speak with divers tongues in such wise as the Holy Ghost administered to them.

He made them also to preach profitably to the edification of the people, whereof saith Isaiah: “The Holy Ghost is descended upon me, and hath anointed me with his grace, whereof he hath made my words pleasant and profitable to the health of creatures.”

THE TONGUES APPEARED SITTING UPON THE APOSTLES

Thirdly, the tongues appeared sitting, in signifying that he was necessary to presidents and judges, for he giveth authority for to pardon and to forgive sins, as saith St. John: “Take ye the Holy Ghost, by whom ye shall take away the sins of them-that will repent them.”

He giveth also wisdom for to deem and judge, whereof saith Isaiah: “[I] shall put, saith God, my spirit upon them that shall judge and deem truly.”

He giveth also debonairty [meekness] and sweetness for to support and mollify the judgment, as it is said, *Numeri* [Numbers] xi: “I shall give to my people of my spirit that is in thee, for to support the burden of my people.” The spirit of Moses was the spirit of benignity and of sweetness that was in him for to judge the people. Moses was most meek and most debonair, and therefore God delivered to him his people for to govern.

The Holy Ghost giveth also adornment of holiness for to inform, as saith the Scripture: “The Holy Ghost hath adorned the heavens, that be the hearts wherein he descendeth.”

6. INTO WHOM HE WAS SENT

And as to the sixth, into whom he was sent, into the apostles that were vessels clean and pure, and disposed to receive the Holy Ghost, And that for seven causes that were in them.

First, they were quiet and peaceable in heart, and this signifieth that is sung: *Dum complerentur dies pentecostes, etc.* The day of the pentecost they were all together in one place still assembled. The day of the pentecost is the day of rest, after that Isaiah saith: Upon whom shall my spirit descend, but upon an humble heart and being still.

Secondly, he was heard by dilection [joy]. And this is that the Scripture saith: *Erant omnes pariter*, they were all together, for they were all of one heart and of one will. And thus the spirit of man giveth not life to the members but that they be together; in likewise the Holy Ghost giveth not spiritual life but to the members united spiritually. And as the fire quencheth and goeth out when the brands be taken away, so the Holy Ghost goeth away when the members by discord be divided. And therefore it is sung of the apostles that the Holy Ghost found them all of one accord by love and by charity, and illumined them with clearness shining in them of the divine Deity.

Thirdly, they were in a secret place; for they were in the place where Jesu Christ made with them his “maundy” or supper, whereof is said, Hosea ii: “I shall lead man's soul into a solitary place and shall speak to it in secret.”

Fourthly, they were in orison [prayer] and prayer continual, whereof is sung: *Orantibus apostolis deum venisse, etc.*, “when they were in prayer then came the Holy Ghost upon them.” Which prayer is necessary to receive the Holy Ghost. Like as the wise man saith: “I have prayed God and the Holy Ghost is come in me.” Whereof saith Jesu Christ, John xiv: “I shall pray God my Father, and I shall send to you in my stead the Holy Ghost that shall comfort you.”

Fifthly, they were garnished with humility and meekness, and that is, that they were sitting when the Holy Ghost came. And hereof saith David: “Lord God, thou art he that sendest the fountains into the valleys,” that is the Holy Ghost which is the fountain of grace, which he sendeth into the humble hearts.

Sixthly, they were in peace together. In that is to be understood that they were in Jerusalem, which is as much to say as “the vision of peace.” And that peace is necessary to receive the Holy Ghost, our Lord showed when he came to them after his resurrection saying: *Pax vobis*, “Peace be with you,” and after said: “Take ye the Holy Ghost.”

Seventhly, they were lift up in contemplation. And this is to understand that they received the Holy Ghost in an high place, wherof saith the gloss: Who that now desireth the Holy Ghost in his heart, let him put the house of his flesh under his feet by lifting up his heart by contemplation.

7. WHEREFORE HE WAS SENT

And as to the seventh, wherefore he was sent; it is to be noted, for seven causes he was sent, that be understood in this authority: *Paracletus autem spiritus sanctus: quem mittet pater in nomine meo ille vos docebit omnia.*

The first cause is for to comfort the sorrowful when is said, *Paracletus*, which is as much as to say as “comforter,” as God saith by Isaiah: “The spirit of God upon me, and it followeth to the end that I should comfort the weepers of Sion, that be the daughters that saw God.” Whereof saith St. Gregory, “The Holy Ghost is said comforter to them that he findeth wailing for their sins that they have committed. He maketh ready hope of pardon in lifting their hearts from affliction of sorrow.

The second is for to quicken the dead when he saith *Spiritus*, for the Spirit is he that quickeneth as it is said in Ezechiel: “Ye bones that be dry and without life, I shall send in you my Spirit and ye shall live.”

The third cause is for to sanctify and make clean the sinners in this that he [is] said *Sanctus*. As it is said “Spirit” because he giveth life, also he saith “Holy,” because he sanctifieth and maketh clean, and it is said pure and clean. Therefore saith David: The grace of the Holy Ghost which is a flood pure and cleansing, he gladdeth the city of God, that is holy church, and by this flood our Lord hath sanctified his tabernacle.

The fourth cause is, he is sent for to confirm love among them that be in discord and hate, which is noted in this word *Pater*. He is said “Father” because that naturally he loveth us, as saith St. John in the gospel, *Johannis xiii*: “Jesu Christ saith: ‘My Father loveth you as his sons, and if ye be his sons, then be ye brethren each to other, and between brethren always ought to persevere love and friendship.’”

The fifth cause is for to save the just and true men. In this that he saith: *In nomine meo*, that is Jesus, that is to say, Saviour, in whose name the Father sent the Holy Ghost to show that he came to save the people.

The sixth cause is for to inform the ignorant in this that he saith: *Ille vos docebit omnia*. The Holy Ghost, when he shall come, he shall teach you all things.

As to the seventh, that he is given or sent first in the beginning of the church by prayer, as thus when he came the apostles prayed God and were in prayer, whereof is sung: *Orantibus apostolis Deum venisse*, “the apostles praying, the Holy Ghost came.” And Luke iii, Jesu praying the Holy Ghost descended. Secondly, he came by hearing attentively and devoutly the word of God. Acts x: “As St. Peter was preaching, the Holy Ghost descended upon them.” Thirdly, he came by holy and busy operation, that is by this that is said: *Imponebant manus super eos et accipiebant spiritum sanctum*. The apostles put their hands on them that believed and anon they received the Holy Ghost. And this imposition of the hands signifieth the absolution of the priest; which absolution give us the Holy Ghost. Amen.

The [iconography of Pentecost](#) is available at the [Christian iconography website](#).

For other saints, see the [index to this Golden Legend website](#).

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