

The Sending of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the divine Love and Gift. The Holy Spirit is the Love and Giving of God by which all the other divine gifts are given.

A Divine Person is said to be sent when he exists newly in someone and he is given in such a way as to be possessed and enjoyed by someone. Neither of these can happen except by the free gift of God through which God makes us holy by enabling us to receive and accept his other gifts.

God is in all things by his essence, power and presence, according to the general, ordinary, or common mode by which, as their cause, God exists in every being. All existing things are good by sharing in God's goodness.

Above and beyond this way, common to everything, there is a special mode belonging to humans wherein God is said to be present in the same way that what we know is in us when we know, and the beloved is in us as lovers. This happens by identity: what we know makes our knowing; loving what we love is our loving. By knowing and loving, humans touch God's true being. God is a Word known and a Loving Love. These are the Divine Son and the Divine Spirit.

According to this special mode, God is said not only to exist in us, but also to dwell in us as in his own temple. Nothing else except the gift of God by which we are made holy by being enabled to receive and accept his other gifts can explain how a divinity could exist in a new way in humans. Hence, the Divine Person of the Holy Spirit is sent, and comes to us in time only in this supernatural way.

We are said to possess only what we can freely use or enjoy: and to have the power of enjoying the divine person can only be by the gift of God which makes us able to receive and accept his other gifts. The Holy Spirit is indeed possessed by humans, and dwells within them, in this sanctifying divine gift by which he makes us able to receive and accept his other gifts. The Holy Spirit Himself is given and sent.

The Spirit is God as Love and Gift, the love and gift by which all is given.

Because this is an interpretative translation I give the Latin text for those who might wish it. *Sed contra est quod Augustinus dicit, XV de Trin., quod spiritus sanctus procedit temporaliter ad sanctificandam creaturam. Missio autem est temporalis processio. Cum igitur sanctificatio creaturae non sit nisi per gratiam gratum facientem, sequitur quod missio divinae personae non sit nisi per gratiam gratum facientem. Respondeo dicendum quod divinae personae convenit mitti, secundum quod novo modo existit in aliquo; dari autem, secundum quod habetur ab aliquo. Neutrum autem horum est nisi secundum gratiam gratum facientem. Est enim unus communis modus quo Deus est in omnibus rebus per essentiam, potentiam et praesentiam, sicut causa in effectibus participantibus bonitatem ipsius. Super istum modum autem communem, est unus specialis, qui convenit creaturae rationali, in qua Deus dicitur esse sicut cognitum in cognoscente et amatum in amante. Et quia, cognoscendo et amando, creatura rationalis sua operatione attingit ad ipsum Deum, secundum istum specialem modum Deus non solum dicitur esse in creatura rationali, sed etiam habitare in ea sicut in templo suo. Sic igitur nullus alius effectus potest esse ratio quod divina persona sit novo modo in rationali creatura, nisi gratia gratum faciens. Unde secundum solam gratiam gratum facientem, mittitur et procedit temporaliter persona divina. Similiter illud solum habere dicimur, quo libere possumus uti vel frui. Habere autem potestatem fruendi divina persona, est solum secundum gratiam gratum facientem. Sed tamen in ipso dono gratiae gratum facientis, spiritus sanctus habetur, et inhabitat hominem. Unde ipsemet spiritus sanctus datur et mittitur. Thomas Aquinas, Summa theologiae, 1.43.3*