

„OVIDIUS” UNIVERSITY OF CONSTANȚA  
THE FACULTY OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY  
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

# **PhD Thesis**

## **(BRIEF)**

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**HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE  
CHURCH IN THE LIGHT OF THE  
BOOK *ACTS OF THE APOSTLES***

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## **HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE CHURCH IN THE LIGHT OF THE BOOK ACTS OF THE APOSTLES**

**Keywords:** Work of..., Holy Spirit, Pentecost, Descent, Acts of the Apostles, Church, Baptism, Divine grace, Sacraments, Holy Trinity, New Testament, Community, Redemption, Relationship, Evangelization, Person, Rapport, Sanctification, Mission, Unity.

### **1. Argument. Research objectives**

The Acts of the Apostles is the most comprehensive book on the exegesis of the New Testament of the Holy Bible, because of its multiple dimensions. The narrative dimension is verified in the fact that it locates the expansion, the development of early Christianity in historical and geographic parameters. The Acts of the Apostles is unique in the historical and theological development of the New Testament because it is the book that continues "the story of Jesus in the story of the Church". In this book, the author, Luke, presents a portrait of the Church, recording the organic formation of the Christian Church and the shaping of a new religious identity in the religious landscape of the world, identity anticipated in Judaism, but actually historically articulated in the first Christian communities.

For these methodological reasons, this doctoral thesis entitled "The work of the Holy Spirit in the Church, in light of The Acts of the Apostles " will be a theological approach, founded on the Scripture, regarding the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church, in the newly established Christian community, work which is constantly updated in our Church today. Noting the work of the Spirit and His cultic experience, in the sacramental and liturgical space of the Church, we may be able to offer an Orthodox response to the Pentecostal movement and other contemporary religious trends, which propose a certain experience of the Holy Spirit, a pseudo-experience, relieved of the authentic shrine of this experience: the Church. This is just the idea on which our research will be focused on: the organic connection between the Holy Spirit and the Church.

The Holy Spirit is the one who makes, in anticipation, the very kingdom of God, present. He is the one who binds the present Church not only with the historical community of the Apostles from the day of Pentecost, but the congregation in "the last days" around the Lamb (Ap 5 and 6). Since Pentecost, the ecclesiological age intertwines with the eschatological era because where the Spirit is present and working, there's where the kingdom of God comes and installs in history (Acts 2.17 to 21).

There is an organic unity, inseparable between Spirit and Church, unity that St. Irenaeus expresses in a well known and concise formula: "Where the Holy Spirit is, that is the Church". The Holy Spirit's ecclesiological role could be explained thus: Jesus Christ gathered around Him the community of the New Testament, which has its foundation in the group of the Twelve Apostles, direct witnesses of the incarnation and resurrection (Acts 1.8). The apostles have a unique role in the establishment and founding the Church because they personally received the Holy Spirit from Christ, after His resurrection (In 20.22 to 23). In The Acts of the Apostles it is clearly observed that the institution of the Apostles is not only fundamental to the constitution of the Church, but that it is the body through which the Holy Spirit works. The phrase "being filled with the Holy Spirit" is common in The Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2.4), indicating that the Holy Spirit introduces a new reality in people's lives, which He shares in various forms, to build up the church (1 Cor 14). The Holy Spirit is present in the choosing of the seven deacons (Acts 6.3 to 10), inspires and assists in decision making, the gathering in Jerusalem (Acts 15:28).

Jesus Christ remains present in history in the Holy Spirit with His body, the Church, whose head is, in which and through which his redemptive act is updated. The Church Fathers make a comparison between the tower of Babel and the Pentecost: the tower of Babel is the symbol of mixing languages, of people's confusion, of breaking the dialogue and communion between God and men. Pentecost, on the contrary, is the symbol of resumption of dialogue and communion between persons and God, of restoration of unity of thought and speech. By coming, personally, upon the Apostles at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit makes the institution of apostolate a single missionary and ecclesial structure. The concern of the Apostles is not only about strengthening the community in Jerusalem – the preach of the Apostle Peter after Pentecost (Acts 2.14 to 41) - especially the passing of the Gospel from the Judeo-Palestinian community in Jerusalem to the Non Judeo-Hellenistic world. All Holy Fathers make a connection between the universality of the Gospel, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on those present in Jerusalem at Pentecost and the missionary apostolate of the Church, sacramental institutions, through which the Church preserves continuity with the apostolic community of Jerusalem, have a deep ecclesial and missionary character. Among them, the primary place is occupied by the baptism with the Holy Spirit and water in the name of the Holy Trinity (Matthew 28:19).

The sacramental nature of receiving the Holy Spirit is underlined firmly in The Acts of the Apostles. In the texts that mention the baptism of the first Christians originating in "the nations", meaning non Jews - to Caesarea, after the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10, 44-48) -

it can be seen, that receiving the power of the Holy Spirit is inseparable from sacrament of baptism. At Pentecost we celebrate the baptism with the Holy Spirit, which differs from the baptism of repentance, with water, of John (Acts 1.5), but the Apostles will continue to administer baptism by water, as a sacrament of initiation (Acts 2,38). Luke notes another sacramental act related to baptism, the laying on of hands as a sign of sharing the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 8.14 to 17). This act is observed at the meeting of the Apostle Paul to Ephesus with John's disciples who were not aware of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Acts 19.1 to 6).

On this solid basis, the Orthodox tradition gave great importance to the sacraments and rites that accompany the receiving of Holy Spirit's grace, making a direct link between personal faith, energies of the Holy Spirit and the sacraments of the Church.

St. Basil the Great says that faith and baptism are "two ways of salvation" tied together inextricably. Faith receives its perfection in Baptism, which is based on faith. Baptism is the seal of personal confession of faith. From this perspective, ecclesial ministries, as well as spiritual gifts and the whole Christian life have their roots in the work of the Holy Spirit, which coincides with the work of the sacraments, this being the responsibility of the sacramental priesthood. It can therefore be said that the Holy Spirit is the origin of the Christian life, at a personal and ecclesial level, but the Spirit's work manifests and shares sacramentally through the Sacraments instituted by the Apostles, according to the command of Jesus Christ. The Apostles consider themselves and their followers "as servants of Christ and stewards of God's sacraments" (1 Cor 4,1). In this respect, any church service and any personal charisma has its principle in the energies of the Holy Spirit which are shared through the sacraments set up as signs of the New Testament, whose founder is Jesus Christ. The charismatic dimension of the Church flows from its sacramental nature, or rather there is a reciprocity between these two realities: personal charisma arises from the Church and the sacraments lead to spiritual gifts.

The sacrament of salvation, the ontological communion between God and man, is performed in the possession and personal experience of the deified humanity of Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. This explains why the sacraments of initiation play an important role in Christian life. In Baptism, the human nature is restored to its original identity and unity, "in the image of God". At the sacrament of Unction, the baptized is confirmed as a subject conscious of the presence of God's grace in him, called to exercise his own "blessing" in the communion of the Church. The "Seal" of the Holy Ghost is the security of the person, its unity and freedom. The believer is, as the expression of the Church Fathers, bearer of the Holy Spirit, that "spiritual man" of which St. Paul speaks. All of the Christian ethics engages

in this direction: the possession of the Holy Spirit as the source of a new life full of freedom and responsibility in communion.

The Holy Spirit reconstructs not only the integrity of nature and unity of the human person, but also the communion of persons with the model of the Holy Trinity in mind. The Holy Spirit is the creator of communion, who sits in front of people capable of dialogue and mutual intercession. Having the Sacrament of Communion as model, Orthodox spirituality is based on the exchange of spiritual gifts within the ecclesial body. Therefore, a Christian community is not a simple, voluntary gathering of isolated individuals, but a communion in the Spirit, which do not mix people, does not separate them, but distinguishes and unites them, thus shaping a Eucharistic and liturgic spirituality. For these reasons, in the Orthodox cult, the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Unction are performed together, because there is a deep sacramental coincidence between the Baptism, the sacrament of human nature restoration – its anthropologic aspect – Unction, the sacrament of a person in communion – its sacerdotal and blessed aspect – and the Eucharist the sacrament of communion of the deified humanity of Christ – its ecclesial aspect.

In the history of the Church, sometimes appeared some trends that have tried to modify the ratio between the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church and its sacramental and canonical institutions. For example, rigid institutionalism and impersonal ritualism, which empty the hierarchical ministry of the Spirit's vibration, which have no pastoral or missionary efficiency and prevent the renewal of ecclesial life. Also, prophetism, which pushes the church to break the continuity with tradition and eliminate its basic and sacramental structures, under the pretext that this way it would become more dynamic. Today, a charismatic movement of pentecostal origin took a large scale, which, unlike in the past when it was organised at the periphery of traditional Churches as a separate trend, it tends to fall within these Churches as a group of radical renewed and prophetic inspiration. Unlike these trends, Orthodoxy has avoided such extreme movements.

## 2. Theme relevance in the context of current research

The last decades of the last century were marked by an extraordinary and surprising rediscovery of the Holy Spirit. From the Protestant Pentecostalism to the charismatic movement that influenced more or less all Christian traditions, there has been a movement of returning from back from a theology centered uniquely on Christ, a hristomonism, as it was called, to try and better understand the person and work of God as the Holy Spirit. The Seventh Assembly of the Universal Synod of Churches, held in Canberra in 1991, chose a typical pneumatological theme: "Come, Holy Spirit. Renew all creation!"

The results of this reorientation has been promising theological reflection, but also puzzling in many ways. Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement, in their many forms, tend to disconnect from a traditional trinitarian theology and focus exclusively on some of the phenomena associated with Spirit, like speaking in tongues, healing miracles and prophetic language. The Assembly in Canberra, the Orthodox have reacted when the "spirit" invoked in a remarkable presentation proved to be a stoicheion, "a pauline elemental spirit of the universe", more like the pagan spirits of this world than the Spirit of God. Subsequent years unfortunately have not brought significant progress towards the rediscovery of a traditional trinitary approach to the mystery of the Holy Trinity, an approach that gives biblical and patristic testimony full attention.

If theology has any substance, whether it truly reflects the God, His presence and purpose in this world, then theology must be based, in particular, on the self-revelation of God Himself, as it appears in the canonical writings of the Church. Because only here you can hear the authentic voice of the first testimonies of the Church and the experience of the living God can be depicted. Eastern Church Fathers showed that prosopon or "the face" of the Son is revealed by the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit himself has another person to make him known. Does He really has a "face", a personal identity? The ecclesial experience answer yes. Biblical theology and the observations of the Holy Fathers, set in dogma, question the foundation of this faith.

Orthodox liturgical tradition keeps a few prayers directed to the Third Person of the Trinity. Besides the usual invocation "Heavenly King" and the canon Compline at Pentecost, in the Slavic tradition, perhaps the most significant is Exapostilar Pentecost: "Most Holy Spirit, who from the Father you come and through the Son you came to the ignorant disciples, save those that I have met you God, and sanctifies them all." As it can be seen, this prayer is a trinitary one.

The ancient player Marana tha (Come, Lord) refering to Christ's parusia into glory, is an old liturgical element which serves as a "epiclesis of Christ" (Revelation 22, 20; 1 Cor 16, 22). The Saint Apostle John ends his Apocalypse with the prayer: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come! ... Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!". If the Church invokes Christ's coming as Judge and Saviour, it does so only with the power of the Spirit. Similarly, it invokes the coming of the Spirit to renew the whole creation, by the power and authority of Christ. Each epiclesis to the Holy Spirit, or the Son, is ultimately addressed to God the Father, from who the Son is born forever and from who the Spirit proceeds from eternity.

Orthodox Christian theology and ecclesial experience know that the Holy Spirit is the "third person" of the Trinitarian God. In accordance with the Niceean-constantinopolitan Creed, the Spirit must be honored as "Lord and Giver of Life", titles awarded in their own meaning, only to the divine being. The Holy Spirit is "worshiped and glorified together" with other two persons of the Trinity, because He is consubstantial (homoousios), shares the same nature, substance and essence with the Father and the Son. No emanation from God or separate Deity, the Spirit is essentially and ineffably God.

To address the mystery of the Spirit as God, orthodox researchers have developed lately a number of exegetical studies which emphasize the mysterious relationship between the Spirit and the Son. These investigations focus on both the "immanent Trinity" God's mysterious life and the "Working Trinity", the project and the interventions of God in the created world. Gradually, in the dogmatic theological chronology, has appeared what is called "pneumatological Christology." According to this perspective, the Spirit "prepares, determines, keeps and sends" the mystery of Christ, according to Father John Breck. (St. Scripture tradition of the Church, Patmos Publishing, Cluj-Napoca, 2003).

The correspondence between the Son and the Spirit can be seen at the Incarnation, through baptism and the earthly mission of the Son to give in the human nature into the grace which culminates with His work as resurrected and ascended Lord. During this deployment, the Son is in a mutual and deep relationship with Spirit. On one side, the Son was "sent" by the Spirit to assume human form in the Virgin's womb (Luke 1.35, Flp 2.7), is led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (Mk 1.2) is empowered by the Spirit to fulfill his messianic mission (Lk 4, 14, Mt 12, 18, In 3, 34). On the other hand, the Son "sends" or transmits the Spirit with the function of Teacher of truth and Lawyer or Defender in the name of faith (Allos parakellos, In 14, 16, 16.7, 13-15; Mk 13:11). The Christology is fundamentally Pneumatological in the sense that the being itself of the incarnated Word is the being of the Holy Spirit, and the saving mission of Christ is to restore the life giving grace of the Holy Spirit to all creation according to the purpose of the Father. This goal is entirely divided between the Son and the Holy Spirit, because divine hypostases are perfectly united in their joint will.

A complementary emphasis on pneumatological Christology is centered on the significance of Jesus Christ in the shaping of the biblical image of the Spirit. This "Christological pneumatology" tries to prove how the mystery of the Holy Spirit is revealed, established and communicated by Jesus, the Son of God, and emphasises the way in which Apostolic writers intended to shape the description of the Holy Spirit according to their image

of Jesus. In the Johannine tradition in particular, the face, or person of the Comforter, or the Spirit of Truth becomes visible - that is perceptible and open to human - by reflecting their own personal traits of Jesus and of His revelatory and salvific work. As the Son reveals his personal image of God the Father (Mt 11, 27; 1:18; 17.4, 5, 26), so does Jesus reveal the Holy Spirit as one who continues his own: functions, and revelatory, "Paraclete" or intercessor, of Jesus in the eschatological age of the Church.

To see the relevance of these complementary functions in recognition of the "face" of the Spirit, the personal image of this very deep and hidden aspect of divine life, there should be a reliance on biblical texts. For these methodological reasons, an evaluation is required, as much as it can be done, in the space of this thesis, of the evolution of the concept of Spirit in religious consciousness of Israel and also of the great change that took place in this consciousness as a result of the experience of the Pentecost.

### 3. Short frame of work

This thesis is divided into six chapters, each chapter is in turn divided into several sections for the consideration of a clear, complete and logical analysis of the theme researched.

The first chapter, entitled "The Acts of the Apostles in the exegetic light and the erminia of the New Testament" is a chapter of theological introduction in the Lucan work in which it will be specified the author and the authenticity of The Acts of the Apostles, which is par excellence a record of historicity and the geography of early Christianity and not least will emphasize the theological value of The Acts of the Apostles in the condoning Christian identity.

The second chapter "The work of the Holy Spirit in the horizon of the Church according to The Acts of the Apostles" is a theological approach of the Holy Spirit and the events that led to the foundation of the Christian Church. In this regard, we aim a methodological deployment of ideas ; it will be considered the presentation of the biblical concept of the term "Holy Ghost" (πνευμα, רוח, הָרָוחַ), the theological profile of Ruach Yahweh in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit in the horizon of the theology of the New Testament, with three sections: the Holy Spirit as the "face" of the Son - continuity and mutual involvement in the work of salvation, revealing functions, educational, soteriological of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit as "the Spirit of resurrection" (Rom 8, 15) - a new way of relating of the human with the divine. In the last section of this chapter we will focus our attention on the Pentecost event and the foundation of the Christian Church, given the descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 1-13), speaking in tongues (Acts 2, 5-13) - effect of Holy Spirit's

descent and anticipation of the universal message of Christianity and the unity of the Christian community in the Holy Spirit: matrix of ecclesial identity.

The third chapter, entitled "The relationship between baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit in The Acts of the Apostles. Exgetico-theological reflection on 8: 14-17, 10, 44-48, 19, 1-6", proposes an exegetic analysis of certain events in the life of the early church, with an amount of theological and practical details: "Εβάπτισεν ὑδατί (water baptism) - Βαπτισθήσεσθε ἐν Πνεύματι Ἅγιῳ (baptism in the Holy Spirit) in Lucan perspective (Acts 1: 5), receiving the Holy Spirit after baptism by water in the case of the Samaritans (Acts 8: 14-17) receiving the Holy Spirit before the baptism by water (Acts 10, 44-48), "the baptism of John" as a baptism of repentance and receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 19: 1-6) and the ritual gesture of laying the hands and receiving the Holy Spirit.

The fourth chapter, "The Holy Spirit and mission of the Church after The Acts of the Apostles", is a theological-historical analysis of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the expansion of Christianity. To this end, we will pursue the following approach: Holy Spirit - catalyst in the efficiency of the evangelizing mission of the Apostles. The Apostolic Synod of Jerusalem; missionary journeys - dynamic exercise of evangelization of "the nations" under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; Holy Spirit's work in dogmatic development of evangelical teaching ("He showed himself to us and to the Holy Spirit"); Christian mission - a continuous update of the risen Christ through the Holy Spirit.

The fifth chapter, entitled "The Holy Spirit and timeliness of its work in the Church. Theological-dogmatic reflections", will focus on dogmatic elements resulted from the involvement of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church: divine grace, spiritual gifts and their relationship with the grace and the sacraments. Of course, first we'll try to paint a picture of the person of the Trinity of the Holy Spirit in Orthodox theology, we'll continue by emphasizing that divine worship is a continuous updating of the Pentecost, and finally we'll present human condition in the sanctifying horizon of divine grace.

The last chapter "The ratio between the Pentecost, glossolalia and the Pentecostal movement", will show a profile of the Pentecostal movement, charismatic and their influence on the Romanian territory without concluding with an amount of apologetic explanations.

#### 4. Research Methods

The central objective of this paper is to analyze thoroughly the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church with direct reference to The Acts of the Apostles, where for the first time, the Trinitarian person enters history in a visible way, using an appropriate methodology for its research. Therefore, I will present the methods, techniques and procedures used in this

scientific endeavor. Using as a reference point the Bible scientific approach, I will use the specific methods of research suited for this type of research:

a) exegetico-hermeneutical method: by which it was interpreted Luca's revealed text from a biblical, missionary, dogmatic and pastoral work perspective. The interpretation of the New Testament passages was based on the works of the Holy Fathers, romanian theologians, but also modern and contemporary works of theologians belonging to the western area which intersected with The Acts of the Apostles.

b) The historical method: by which it was attempted the contextualization of the events presented in the Lucan opera, events of prime importance for the history of the Christian church, with relevance for the time past, but with a strong echo and contemporaneity. The purpose of using this method in my work was the observation characteristic of Christian thinking in the first century, regarding the Holy Spirit and the diagnosis of the early Christian community, which then outlined the theological way of explaining certain events in the missionary dynamic of Christianity expansion thought the teachings of the Apostles. Thus, one can outline a complex historical picture of the Christian theological thought and life in which the Holy Ghost occupied an important place.

c) the systematic method by which I aimed to emphasize the theology of the Holy Spirit in reference to the book of The Acts of the Apostles in general, and His work in the Church in the light of Lucane work.

As exegetical working tools I used the following editions of the Holy Scriptures: The Holy Bible, printed under the guidance and care of His Beatitude Teoctist, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, with the approval of the Holy Synod; Mission and Bible Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Bucharest, 1989; The New Testament, revised, edited and commented by Bartolomeu Anania, Bucharest, 1995; Alfred Rahlfs (Ed.), The Septuagint. Id est Vetus Graeca iuxta interpretes LXX, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart, 2004; Rudolph W. et K. Elliger (Eds.), Stuttgartensia Hebraica Bible, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart, 1999; Robertus Weber (Ed.), Sacred Bible Version iuxta Vulgatum, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart, 1994; B. Aland, K. Aland, J. Karavidopoulos, C.M. Martini & B. M. Metzger (Eds.), The Greek New Testament, United Bible Societies New York, 1993; The Acts of the Apostles. Being as the Greek Text Revised by Drs. Westcott and Hort, Fenton John Anthony Hort, Brooke Foss Westcott and Thomas Ethelbert Page (Eds.), Cambridge University Press, New York, 2009.

Finally, we mention that the interpretation of several old biblical sections will involve a linguistic analysis of key terms (Holy Spirit, pneuma, Pentecost), which prompted me to

appeal to lexicons, dictionaries and specialty encyclopedias: A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament, Barclay M. Newman, Jr., Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft United Bible Societies, Hendrickson Publishers, 2010; A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, Frederick William Danker (Ed.), 3rd edition, University of Chicago Press, 2001; Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible, Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Ed.), Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, 2005; Bible Dictionary, JD Douglas (Ed.), Translated by Liviu Pop, John Tipei, Romanian Missionary Society Publisher "Christian book" Oradea, 1995; Bible Dictionary, Vol. I, translated from French by Constantin Moisa, Publisher Stephanus, Bucharest, 1995; Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible, David Noel Freedman (Ed.), William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Cambridge, 2000; Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich (Eds.), Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Volume 6, Translator and Editor: Geoffrey W. Bromiley, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 2003; HarperCollins Bible Dictionary, Revised Edition, Paul J. Achtemeier (Ed.), HarperSanFrancisco, New York, 1996; J. Lust, K. E. Eynikel & Hauspie, A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint, Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2003; JM Harden, the Vulgate New Testament Dictionary of, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, 1921; The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Vol. 1, Colin Brown (Ed.), Regency, Grand Rapids, 1975.

## CONCLUSIONS

For Christians today is actually quite natural to confess his faith in the holy, divine and life-giving Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But this confessed belief is based on the teachings in the Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition about the one true God, in Trinity worshiped and glorified. But, going back in history, a brief research reveals that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity barely crystallized in the ecumenical councils because of the erroneous teachings spread by heretics.

The object of this essay, the person of the Holy Spirit, which is the pivot of unity in the church, through its descent in the form of tongues of fire at Pentecost, according to the divine work, shows not only the divine will to include the church, the place where love fully manifests itself, everybody unified in this love, and also the will for this unity to maintain the identity of each person.

The consubstantiality, equality and perichoresis of the Trinitarian persons determines the trinitarian synergy or, in the words of V. Lossky "the theological Trinity", reflecting as a "working Trinity" through a creative kenosis, sanctifying and ultimately saving.

St. Augustine's pneumatology is also generally intertwined with considerations about the Father and the Son in his Trinitarian theology all without systematization, with many utterances and comebacks.

The Holy Spirit is a reality of self and subsistant through itself, being represented in the world as a gift, but not to be confused with the gift that is not self-subsistent, but hypostatically subsists in it, because as St. Basil the Great says "the life Holy Spirit sends to another person is not separated from him."

St. Basil shows in his work that the Holy Spirit is not a creature, He is holy by nature as the Father and Son are holy by nature, thus completing the Holy and Blessed Trinity, because there can be no full communion in two, but a true communion is fulfilled and perfected by the third.

Through the divine work which is completed "in the Holy Spirit" or "through the Holy Spirit" it is ultimately aimed the realisation of the kingdom of God. Therefore, St. Cyril says that the Son makes, "in the Holy Spirit" or "through the Holy Spirit", the kingdom of God.

The Holy Spirit as a principle of unity of the Church - St. Luke recounts in his second letter, entitled The Acts of the Apostles, the fulfilment of the promise made by Jesus Christ the Son of God to the Holy Apostles: the descent of the Holy Spirit upon them, the founding of the Church and the spread of Christianity in Palestine and in the main centers and regions of the Roman Empire, from Jerusalem to Spain.

The church is founded when the Holy Spirit was bestowed upon the Holy Apostles which "they were apostles all together in one place" (Acts II, 1) and when faithfully receiving the word they preached, there were baptized about three thousand people (Acts II, 14-41).

At Pentecost, when the Church is born, it is fulfilled the prophecy of Joel: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh ..." (Acts II, 17, cf. Joel III, 1). In this birthday of the Church, the Holy Spirit, as an element of unity, is seen and felt through the "gift" of glosolalia, given to the Apostles (Acts II, 4) and through the "gift" of understanding this new languages (Acts II 6) granted to listeners of different nationalities.

Through its purpose and meaning, the miracle at the Pentecost has the completely opposite effect to the phenomenon at Babel. It sanctifies, confirms and legitimizes the diversity of all languages of the earth, it does not abolish them, does not replace them with a

single language like that before Babel, but keeps them in their multiple diversity. The double charismatic Pentecostal phenomenon, bringing together the variety of languages, shows that the Word of God is addressed to all people and can be translated into any language. Therefore, comparing the miracle at the Pentecost with what happened at Babel, St. John Chrysostom says: "The old languages divided the earth and changed to separation a bad association. Today they become the bond that links together the parts of the world and change discord into harmony. This is the deeper significance of the appearance of the Holy Spirit in the face of tongues of fire".

The Holy Apostles receive the fullness of the grace at Pentecost (Acts 2), the official date of birth of the Church. It is for the Church, what baptism was for Jesus Christ, when the Holy Spirit dwelt visibly upon him, and when God, The Father confessed his Son and Savior of the world (Acts X, 38).

The Holy Spirit descends upon the Apostles, and they teach one lesson. The unity of teaching stems from the fact that they only speak about what they saw and heard (Acts 4, 20). In any event, at the temple (Acts 2, 46, 3, 1, 5, 12, 26, 42 etc.), in houses (Acts 4, 42, 12, 12, 18, 7 etc.) in the synagogues (Acts 13: 5, 14, 42; 14: 1; 17: 1-2, 10, 17, 18, 4-5, etc.) in front of the high priests and the whole Sanhedrin (Acts 13 3 etc.), the Apostles continually teach and preach (Acts 5, 42), the same one Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that "God resurrected" (Acts 2, 24, 3, 15, 26, 4, 10; 5, 30, 10, 40, 13, 33 etc.) and "exalted by his right Ruler and Savior" (Acts 5, 31) and that "ordained to be the judge of the living and the dead "(Acts 10, 42). This Christ is "the chief corner stone" because "no one else is salvation, for there is no other name under heaven, but among men, in who we must save ourselves." (Acts 4: 11-12) .

The Holy Spirit has a great work in the Church, but it occurs within the Trinitarian work of salvation. The pneumatology is included both in theology and the general work of the Holy Trinity.

Since creation of the world, the work of the Holy Spirit supports and gives movement to the cosmos using uncreated divine energies.

The joint work of the Word and the Holy Spirit was also manifested in the creation of man. The words of Genesis: "Let us make the man in our image and likeness" (1, 26) indicates the participation of all the divine persons to the act of creation. The biblical narrative underlines that God created man from the dust and breathed into his face the breath of life, therefore he became alive (Fac. 2, 7). Loissky interprets this biblical act in the sense that in the act of creation, grace is involved, and the soul receives in the same time life and grace. The grace of the Holy Spirit is the true principle which underpins our spiritual existence.

The contribution of the Logos becomes evident especially in the creation of reason, which illuminates the mind and on which judgment is based, while the Holy Spirit endowes the heart with the gift of virtues, as well as the warmth of the divine love. Such a separation may seem artificial, although it is based on the writings of the Holy Fathers.

At all times theologians have long talked about the significance of the divine image after which the man was created. The most widespread opinion, especially among the Orthodox, is that the Holy Spirit, while instilling life to Adam it also gave him the grace by which the man is akin to God and thus became the image of his Creator. Olivier Clement apparently sees here the germ and the promise of Pentecost. On the other hand, St. Cyril of Alexandria says that a being, conceived from the ground, could not be made in the image of God, if it had not received the divine breath.

The work of the Holy Spirit, however, was not limited to people discovering Christ's deity. Over the entire life of Jesus, He never stopped to assist Him in difficult moments and continued his work of sanctification of the human nature, which began at the incarnation. In turn, Christ will make the Holy Spirit known to people, revealing some of its essential characteristics, before sending it over the heads of the apostles.

Since the birth of Jesus, the presence of the Holy Spirit is shown and revealed to angels, called to proclaim the good news to the shepherds. The glory, which the evangelist speaks (Lk 2, 5) is just the sign of the presence of the Spirit, because He who gives grace is "also called the Spirit of Glory (1 Peter, 4, 14).

The bringing of baby Jesus to the temple also happened at the shadow of the Holy Spirit, which is often cited in the story of this episode. About the righteous Simeon, who revealed the Messiahship of the baby and the meaning of his call, it is said that "the Holy Spirit was upon him" (Luke 2, 25). During the long period spent by Jesus in Nazareth, a period about which we know almost nothing, it is assumed that the sanctification of human nature in Jesus, started at the incarnation, continued through the intercession of uncreated divine energies, whose source is found both in the divine nature of Christ and the Holy Spirit, the grace divisor. The penetration of the divine energies into the depths of human nature of Christ filled it with the Holy Spirit, thus making possible the restoration of man. The years spent in secret at Nazareth were the ones in which the slow transformation of the human nature of Jesus took place, accomplished under the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit. The genesis of John the Baptist's personality is also explained by the presence of the Holy Spirit, with which he will be filled, according to the testimony of St. Luke, still in his mother's womb (Luke 1, 15). He called to reveal Christ to Israel and baptize him, had to be driven and

enlightened by the Holy Spirit. He himself will confess that the descent of the Holy Spirit over Jesus' head was the sign through which He who had sent him told him that he will have to acknowledge Christ. St. John says of himself that he is but a voice. The voice that speaks through him and announces the arrival of the Messiah, is the Holy Spirit.

The moment when Jesus was baptized by St. John, the Holy Spirit descended upon him like a dove. It should be stressed that this is the only form in which the Spirit showed himself to people, suggesting meekness and purity. There is thus a mysterious correspondence between the Holy Spirit and the form in which He manifested in.

The descent of the Spirit upon Jesus had more endings. It was, on the one hand, the plenar anointing of Jesus the man. The Spirit descended directly on them, and united with His human nature, by means of divine energies, thus consecrating him to his mission. St. Cyril of Alexandria insists that the Spirit's rest upon Christ has resulted in human grace, lost through the fall, being restored to the man..

It should be stressed that only after this consecration, did Jesus begin to preach, his first words with which he addressed the residents of Nazareth being taken from the book of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me" (Lk 4, 18).

Meanwhile, the Spirit's rest upon the person of incarnated God aimed to discover his divinity to the people. This is the true meaning of the word "Epiphany" which means apparition, revelation. The rest of the Spirit upon the Son, which is one of the characteristics of the relations between the two divine Persons in the intratrinitary life plan, and aims to put the Son in the full light, to show him, thus continuing in the time plan. Christ will be known in the Holy Spirit and through the Holy Spirit.

In what concerns Jesus, the descending of the Holy Spirit had another purpose: it assured the Son of the Father's love. The Spirit is the One who unites the Father with the Son through love and heavenly adoption of Jesus, the man. Christ is born of the Virgin Mary by the work of the Holy Spirit and also through Him he receives the heavenly adoption as a man. It is significant that the Father recognized him as Son only after the descent of the Holy Spirit. The Word is the Son of the Father from eternity, but as a man he does not receive this grace until the Holy Spirit came upon him. The perfect union of the two natures, which however will remain separate forever, was done in the shadow of the Holy Spirit.

Only from this unique and mysterious event, that is, from Baptism onwards, did Jesus begin to speak to the people about the good news. Also under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, did St. John the Baptist discovered the sacrificial character of Messiah's mission, which he will call "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1, 29). Enlightened

by the Holy Spirit, he discovered the essence of the mission of the incarnated God who will be sacrificed for the sins of men. The Dove has revealed the Lamb. St. John was the herald of the intertwined mission of the Spirit with that of the Logos, the messenger of Dove and of the Lamb.

Before he began to preach, Jesus had to fight a terrible battle with the tempter, who was trying to prevent the salvation of man. It was the Holy Spirit who led Jesus into the wilderness, where he had to fight the decisive battle, for the salvation of mankind. To regain the glory he had eternally and free the man of the sin subdued by the forces of evil, Christ must defeat the enemy of the human race. This test could not be avoided as it is a crucial step towards salvation.

The life that Christ shares with us is just the life of the Holy Spirit, because only in Jesus we fully meet the Spirit. In the eve of the Passions, the Lord will dwell more on the link that unites them with the Comforter, but since the beginning of his mission, he revealed that one of the purposes of his calling was to restore the Holy Spirit to the man, for salvation.

The Holy Spirit will have the gift to reinstate the man in a relationship of dependency of the son to the Father for, as St. Paul says, Christians are no longer slaves, because God sent the "Spirit of his Son" (Gal. 4, 6) in their hearts. Jesus teaches his disciples to call the Father God, because they will receive the grace of the Holy Spirit, and convert them as sons of the heavenly Father.

The transfiguration of human nature of Christ was made possible through the uncreated energies that have deified it, energies whose source is found both in His own divine nature, hypostatically united with the human nature, as well as in the Holy Ghost. The close relationship between the Son and the Spirit reappears, the Sanctifier of the human nature of Jesus, and the one who contributed to the manifestation of His divinity.

For St. Gregory Palama, the Holy Spirit is the joy of the Father and Son. The Holy Spirit is the divine Person who has the gift to discover mutual love between the Father and the Son and through this vocation, He is the Giver of joy. His mission is to make the joy that he gives, a participated joy, felt jointly by the three divine Persons. Also the Holy Spirit is the one who bestows joy in the souls of the righteous, through the intercession of grace.

Therefore joy is a sign of the Spirit's presence in a soul, while the absence of joy betrays a state of spiritual dryness, deprived of the gift of the Paraclete..

Tertullian, speaking of the Spirit, calls him "merry". It seems that the gift of joy is one of the major blessings that the Paraclete brings. St. Paul also trying to define future eon said, "the kingdom of God is not food and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy

Spirit" (Rom. 14, 17). Only in the kingdom of heaven, the joy given by the Paraclete to believers, will reach fullness.

In the moment when he was teaching his disciples the prayer "Our Father", Jesus told them that the gift of the Holy Spirit will never be refused to those who ask. It is the prayer that will always be fulfilled: "If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, the more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him" (Lk 11, 13). The Father, who never rejects a prayer, the more he will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him, for the simple fact of wanting it, denotes a spiritual thirst.

It should be noted, however, that the presence of the Holy Spirit in the soul is linked to that of the Son and the Father. The Spirit never comes alone, and he who receives it is also closely related to Christ, for the Spirit can never be separated from the Son. St. Cyril of Alexandria showed that because the Son dwells in us through the Holy Spirit, we can say that we are called to the divine sonship. The Father will receive us as adopted sons in the virtue of the presence of the Spirit in our hearts.

Another episode in the life of the Lord, which revealed another essential feature of the work of the Paraclete, was the healing of the blind and dumb demoniac. On this occasion, the Pharisees dared to accuse Jesus that he casts out the demons with the help of Beelzebub, the prince of demons. After rejecting the terrible blasphemy, the Lord said: "If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, the kingdom of God has come to you" (Matthew 12, 28). It is a statement of capital significance. He reveals the role of the Holy Spirit in the fight against demonic forces that are trying to enslave people.

That which, in his last speech, will call him "Comforter", is here in the position of defender of man. His work is not limited to strengthen and sanctify the chosen, but also possesses a combative nature when opposing demonic incitement.

The Spirit of Truth must, through its vocation, combat the one Jesus called "the father of lies" (John 8, 44). He confronts, on the basis of his mission, oriented towards fulfillment and fullness, the evil forces that tend towards the destruction and annihilation of every being. On all levels, the work of the Holy Spirit seeks to annul that of demons and urge the man, in the moment he is tempted by the evil spirit. From Jesus' words this results that the mark indicating that the kingdom is close, is the victory over demons achieved by Jesus with the help of the Holy Spirit.

In his Gospel, Luke used instead of the word "Spirit" through which Jesus said he drove out demons, the word "finger": "And if I, with the finger of God cast out devils ..." (Lk 11, 20). The Holy Fathers, and among them particularly Patriarch Callistus and St. Basil,

thought that God's finger could be only the Holy Spirit. The name of "finger" really fits Him whose mission is to reveal, to inspire, to attract attention. "The finger is the symbol of the surrounding work." He discovered the secrets of the future to the prophets and He shows us the way forward.

When, on another occasion, the Pharisees will again dare to accuse Jesus that he has an unclean spirit, He will make a new revelation of the Holy Spirit: "Whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never have forgiveness , but He is guilty of eternal damnation. " (Mark 3, 29). It is an extremely serious allegation, especially if we consider the extended version of Matthew and Luke: "He that says a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but those who will say against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven to him, neither in this world nor in the one to come ". (Matthew 12, 32). This verse has always constituted a milestone for the interpreters, because at first glance it would seem that Christ is beneath the Holy Spirit. However, taking into account the mission of the Spirit, which is to reveal the divinity of the Son, to open hearts to receive the Gospel, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is tantamount to denying the very existence of the Trinity. The one that will offend Jesus, as a man, not knowing that he is the Son of God, will be forgiven. But he that shall rise against the Holy Ghost, rejecting his call will deny the very divinity of the Son in this way and, as such, will question the very existence of the Trinity. A revolt against the Spirit touches the very foundation of Trinitarian Godhead.

The sin against the Holy Spirit can take different forms. Any attempt of rebellion against God, of contesting his presence both in the world and the human soul, is a sin against the Holy Spirit. Also, every defilement of the divine image, a characteristic of every soul, satisfied by personal sin or by pushing thy into temptation, it can be considered as a sin against the Spirit. Let us not forget that St. Paul exhorted the Ephesians to not grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4, 30), for Comforter grieves whenever the man goes away from God.

In soteriologic terms, the sin against the Spirit will not be forgiven, because he opposes the work of salvation, the Holy Spirit beeing the divisor of the divine energies meant to update salvation.

On the eve of the Passions, in a speech given to strengthen the disciples before the heavy breakup, Jesus spoke in the clearest way, about the Holy Spirit and about his mission. Bulgakov compared this speech with a symphony, whose main theme is the sending of the Spirit, theme which, combining with other secondary reasons gives birth to multiple variations, to which the dominant always remains the secret of the third divine Person.

The Savior exhorts his disciples to obey His commandments, proving the love they have for him, while He promises to ask the Father to send another Helper, to be with them forever. It is the first time he pronounces the term of Comforter, a term, which applied to the Holy Spirit involves a real theology.

The word "Paraclete" signifies "lawyer", "defender" in Greek, but also "Comforter", interpretation chosen by the Holy Fathers and translators of the New Testament and which is best suited to suggest the mission of the Holy Spirit. All these names apply to the Spirit, for they reveal different aspects of his work regarding the man. The Comforter is however the most appropriate because it highlights the soteriological work accomplished by the Holy Spirit. St. Cyril of Jerusalem says that the Spirit "comes to save, to heal, to teach, to exhort, to strengthen, to console, to shine". The emphasis is always on the support of the Spirit given to the man, to his salvation. St. Paul says that the Spirit comes to help with our weakness when we pray, for we know not how to pray, so the Spirit Himself prays for us with sighs too deep for words (Rom. 8, 26). It is a testimony of a capital importance, which highlights the dominant feature of the work of the Paraclete.

Leon Bloy, in one of his admirable insights, called the Holy Spirit "Lord of Tears", both because tears are a sign of his presence, and because he has the gift to wipe away tears, to comfort us when we are grieving.

The name "defender" or "lawyer" also fits the Spirit, which has the mission to protect us from the evil spirit and to defend us at the supreme moment of Judgement.

It is significant that Jesus speaks of "another Comforter," which meant that he himself is called the Comforter. St. John the Evangelist calls Jesus "Comforter" in his first letter (John 2: 1). The work of the Son is inseparable from that of the Spirit, with which it is convergent. Therefore, the mission of Comforter and defender, appropriate to the Holy Spirit, can also be assigned to Christ.

Searching for his farewell words, Jesus goes further and finds the divine origin of the Paraclete: "And when the Comforter, whom I will send unto you from the Father shall come, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he shall testify of me" ( John 15, 26). The Lord's words are formal: one should not be confuse the procession of the Son, that takes place in eternity and which finds its origin in the Father with the sending, fulfilled over time, work in which he takes part, the Father, given that the works or energies of the Trinity are common to all divine Persons.

The Holy Spirit will be sent by the Son, but he will also come from his own impetus. He will answer to Jesus' prayer "I shall ask the Father," which will give another Comforter,

but only after the exaltation. Bulgakov believed that from resurrection until Pentecost, Jesus never ceased to pray for the Spirit to descend upon the faithful and thus crowning his soteriological work. The Holy Spirit will remain forever with them, Christ promised His disciples, and this promise will be fulfilled, starting with the Pentecost.

Jesus also names the Holy Spirit, the "Spirit of Truth", which also involves an entire doctrine. Since Christ is the hypostasized truth, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" (John 14: 6), the Spirit, who is the image of the Son, will possess the full truth which he will share to the faithful, through the intercession of the divine energies. The Lord says in the same speech: "The Spirit of Truth will guide you to full truth" (John 16, 13). The truth, revealed by the grace of the Holy Spirit helps people to get in divine mysteries, prevents them from falling into error and shows them the way to salvation. The one who is guided by the Holy Spirit has a fair understanding of the meaning of life and proves a fair trial, dispassionate from the weaknesses of his neighbor. His attitude emits balance and serenity. The spiritual truth can be achieved in its fullness only by grace. The philosophical and moral crisis in which the man of today lies, indicates the distance that separates him from the Spirit of Truth. "Without the Spirit all are full of darkness and empty of truth," said the Patriarch Callistus in XIV-th century.

Jesus did not just talk about the coming of the Paraclete, but broadly sketched what would his mission be. The work of the Holy Spirit will take place in three directions. First, it will focus on Christ, to whom it shall answer and glorify. After the ascension at Pentecost believers will know Christ through the Holy Spirit who rests, like a light over Jesus, emphasizing his divinity. The Holy Spirit is the spiritual light that shows Christ.

Secondly, the Paraclete's work will consider the disciples and all those who will believe in Christ, and ultimately the world hostile to God. In what concerns the disciples, the Holy Spirit will teach them everything and will remind them about their all Jesus said to them (John 14, 26), will guide them into all truth and will announce the future to them (16, 13). The Spirit will also have the gift to open minds and hearts, to prepare them to receive Christ's call. Without changing anything in the teachings of Jesus, He will deepen and adapt it to different eras and reception possibilities of every believer.

The work of the Spirit also has a prophetic character, for he will show people the way of historical evolution, as well as the close coming of Parusia.

It is difficult to understand the position of the Spirit to the world. We must, first, determine what Jesus meant by the term "world" when it states that the world can not receive the Spirit, for "it does not see it, neither knows him" (John 14, 17). The notion of "world" in

the New Testament has an ambiguous character, which is most evident at St. John the Evangelist. At the beginning of his Gospel, he states: "God so loved the world, that His Son begotten he gave, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved "(John 3, 16, 17). And the same apostle writes in his first letter: "We know that we are of God and the whole world lies under the power of the evil one" (John 5, 19).

Between these two contradictory statements a way to conciliation must be found. The world as such, can not be bad, for it is the work of God, which will be saved and doomed to the final transfiguration, because of Christ's sacrifice. However, in the course of the historical evolution of everything that went away from God and agreed to gravitate in areas without grace, therefore emptied of spirit and under the influence of demonic forces, was, temporarily, the domain of the evil one.

This world is opaque to the influence of the Paraclete and is this world of which Jesus says the the Holy Spirit "seeing, shall clear the world of sin, righteousness and judgement. Of sin, because they believe not in me; of righteousness, because I'll go to my Father, and you will see me no more; and judgment, because lord of this world was judged ". (John 16, 8-11).

The sin is therefore in not recognizing the divinity of Christ. It's a sin that will not stop to arise until the end of history, putting on different forms. The Paraclete appears here in the position of defender of the faith and the conqueror of the evil spirit. He who has the task to discover the Son of God to people, works toward the annihilation of any action that tends to denying His divinity and His redemptive work. It is a combative action that will continue throughout history. It proves that the same Spirit that comforts and strengthens, burns with spiritual flames any attempt of rebellion against God and His Son. St. Paul speaks of the sword of the Spirit, which, through God's word is the most important weapon in fighting. the evil one (Eph. 6, 17). Here is where the intransigent character, hostile to any compromise appears, proper to the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit will blame the world of injustice, because it is going to condemn Jesus unfairly through her commissioners who believed him guilty, as He, by His death, regained the glory which he had from the Father in eternity.

Finally, the Holy Spirit will proclaim the beginning of judgement, for with the death and resurrection of Jesus begins judgment of the world. From the crucifixion we entered the eschatological period which opens with the defeat of Satan. On the day of his solemn entry into Jerusalem, Jesus said: "Now is the judgment of this world. Now the prince of this world will be cast out. " (John 12, 31). It can be said, as Grelot states, that the judgment is

coextensive with history, for it embraces all of history to culminate in the solemn moment of Parusia.

The priestly prayer, which Jesus ends with his farewell speech, refers to the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, granting them the gift of seeing his glory, which he had since before the world, as underlined by St. Cyril of Alexandria. At Gethsemane, where Jesus gave the ultimate battle against fear caused by the proximity of the Passions and death, a battle he won by strengthening the human will, he was again assisted by the Paraclete. The Spirit that comes to help in our weakness and prays for us with sighs too deep for words (Rom. 8, 26, 27) was with him and prayed for the strength to face the terrible test. His presence brought a ray of light in the troubled soul of Jesus and assures him of the love of the Father, to whom he was about to offer himself as a sacrifice for the salvation of men.

Jesus dies for love of the fallen man, and to show the Father His infinite love, which takes the form of the perfect humble obedience. The Holy Spirit could not be absent when the Son died on the cross to fulfill the Father's will. In the Epistle to Hebrew, St. Paul says that Christ "through the eternal Spirit of God has brought on himself, blameless sacrifice" (Heb. 9, 14). So the Holy Spirit took part in a mysterious way, at the sacrifice of the Son. In total obedience to the work of the heavenly Father, Jesus was supported by the Paraclete.

Bulgakov, however, speaks of emptying the Spirit, which had occurred during the Passions, so not to influence Christ's human will. It is assumed that although the Paraclete was found next to Jesus in the moment of the supreme sacrifice, his presence was felt with less intensity, by the man Jesus, during this painful attempt to allow human will to fight alone and win. The descent of the Lord into Hell accomplished before the resurrection, was aimed to enable the divine energies to enter into a world without God and subjected to the devil. Deleting, by dying on the cross, the original sin, Christ came to clear the way things are, since the fall of Adam until now, accordint to which the dead wondered away from God and were subjected to bad spirits.

The Lord makes light and life go where "darkness, death, loneliness" ruled. It humiliates himself by going to the foundation of creation and proclaims to the dead that the law universal punishment under which they groaned helplessly, was abolished and that he is foundeing a new way of eternal existence.

One can say that the Holy Spirit is found with Christ during this test. By his breath, he helped crushing the gates of hell and he shared to the righteous the divine energies, meant to purify and to free them from the dominion of the Evil One.

The Resurrection also took place in the shadow of the Spirit, which prevented the natural process of decay, as long as his body was found in the tomb, and contributed to the transfiguration of the body naturally, called in a spiritualized way to defeat death. In fact, at the victory against death helped all three divine Persons. St. Peter, in his first address given after Pentecost, said that God resurrected Jesus (Acts. 2, 24), and St. Paul says the same thing in the Epistle to the Romans (10, 9), while Cyril of Alexandria writes that the Holy Spirit and the Word have given the body of Jesus the power to overcome death. Energies shared by the Logos and the Holy Spirit, had the gift to deify the body and human nature of Christ. Through the resurrection, the Son entered into the fullness of His pneumatic power, receiving the gift from the Father to send the Holy Spirit. All of the Resurrection and Pentecost period has therefore pneumatic character, dominated by the expectation of the Spirit.

Since the evening of Easter, when Jesus appeared to the disciples gathered together, he breathed on them and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. To whom you forgive the sins, they are forgiven and to those you retain them they are retained" ( John 20, 22, 23). The fact of sending the Spirit is the most obvious sign that Christ was glorified. However, it is still not the hypostatic descent of the Paraclete, which will take place after fifty days, but a gift of the Holy Apostles to which it gives the Apostles the priesthood.

The breath of the Lord is preparing the Apostles to receive the strong wind at Pentecost. There is a perfect continuity between the breath on Easter day and the one at Pentecost. We have to approach Jesus to receive the Holy Spirit from His lips, which he shares with us.

Only after fulfilling the calling as a high priest, offering his own life as sacrifice, Jesus was able to establish new priesthood, whose origin is in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. By His redeeming death, the Savior established a new alliance and a new priesthood, but the Church, based on his sacrifice will be brought to life by the coming of the Spirit. The Grace, which is the origin of the sacraments and all gifts, is shared by the Holy Spirit, whose mission is to communicate the uncreated divine energies.

Therefore Jesus exhorts his disciples to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, before conferring them the priesthood, which entails the power to forgive sins. Adam's sin was forgiven thanks to the sacrifice of the cross, but for every man to be purified of the original sin and enjoy the forgiveness of their mistakes, they must personally be baptised, and after a new relapse, the baptism of repentance in the sacrament of confession, with the help of the priest, consecrated by the Holy Spirit. The forgiveness of sins is therefore achieved by the grace of the Holy Spirit. The co-work of Christ and the Holy Spirit appears again, for when

Christ forgives us, the grace sent by the Holy Spirit descends upon us. The breath on Easter day was the prelude to the founding of the Church. The apostles received then, as St. John Chrysostom states, the gift of the priesthood and the power to forgive sins, but not other more special gifts, such as that of healing or resurrection of the dead, which shall be granted to them at Pentecost.

Only after the exaltation, when Christ returned with his deified body into Trinity, he received the power to send the Holy Spirit in person. The Ascension is the last stage of worship of Jesus, fulfilled also the shade of the Spirit, which was flowing in plenary way on His human nature. At the ascension, as well as at resurrection all three divine Persons took part. The Father raised Christ from the dead and seated him to his right in all heavenly (Eph. 1, 20). The Son, however, went up to heaven, and by His own power, for the divine nature in him bestowed sanctifying energies upon the human nature, thus enabling worship, which granted him entry into heaven

The presence of human nature in the Trinity meant the final reconciliation between man and God, whose result was the descent of the Holy Spirit in the world. Evdokimov thinks that the Lord's ascension was a perfect epiclesis, which is a invocation of the Holy Spirit called to sanctify both man and all creation.

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