

FOREWORD

THE Holy Spirit is the divine artist whose *chef d'oeuvre* in creation is the sanctified human soul. To know an artist one must seek to acquire a knowledge both of his personality and of his works. This principle has directed the distribution of matter in the present work.

The first part, comprising eight chapters, deals with the person of the Holy Spirit. The remaining chapters focus on his operations in the human soul.

An analysis of the names which are ascribed to the Third Divine Person in the Liturgy and in theology discloses to us his distinctive personal characteristics. He proceeds from the Father and the Son by way of love. His name is "*Charitas*." A study of the various modes with which the love of God clothes itself in his dealings with his creatures gives us an insight into the distinctive character of the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, as regards that which distinguishes his character from that of the Father and of the Son. The love of God, as shown forth in the creation and in the mystery of the Incarnation, is discussed in chapters one and three; the second chapter studies the Holy Spirit as the subsistent love of God.

The fourth chapter considers the purpose of the Holy Spirit in the great work of the Incarnation. He wedded the divinity of the Word to our humanity, in order that our humanity might in its turn be made participant in the divinity. Of the life that comes to us through this supernatural elevation, the Holy Spirit is the fountain. The fifth chapter is devoted to considerations on life in general and of that particular life which the soul shares with God.

The first of the gifts of the lover to the beloved is love itself. It is a prelude to all else that is given. The Holy Spirit, the love of God, is the Creator's first gift to his creature raised to the order of grace. Chapter six is a study of the Holy Spirit as gift of God most high.

Friendship is the third modality that the Creator's love assumes toward his creatures. It devolves on him who is styled in Scripture the "Spirit of the Lord Jesus" to cement the bonds of friendship between the creature and Creator. This is his *mission*: the sense of this theological term is explained in the seventh chapter. The mission of the Holy Spirit to the soul is not a passing one. He takes up his abode in a permanent manner in the souls of the just. This inhabitation, appropriated to the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, is explained in the eighth chapter. It is shown to be an inchoate form of that perfect possession of God that is enjoyed by the blessed in heaven.

The existence of the Holy Spirit in the souls in which he takes up his residence is not an inactive existence. The Divine Spirit justifies the soul and does so by imparting to it a certain divine quality by means of the

sanctifying grace which he pours forth in it. This is the theme of the ninth chapter.

Sharing in the nature of God, the Christian becomes a child of God. The adherent to Christ is born of water and of the Holy Spirit. The characteristics and privileges of the divine adoption are set forth in the tenth chapter. The child of God is destined to become a man of God. The concluding chapters deal with the principles of supernatural growth. These are the infused divine virtues, theological and moral, with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The full development of the potentialities of grace issues in that sublime and blissful condition of soul outlined in the Beatitudes, with which the Savior prefaces his Sermon on the Mount. The concluding pages, then, discuss the fruits of the Spirit and of the Beatitudes.

The work has been prompted by a desire to popularize the wonders of Catholic theology and to give the ordinary reader a working knowledge of the divine life imparted by the Holy Spirit to the souls of the just. An insight into the operations of the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity is bound to promote an enlightened and active devotion to that divine person.

INTRODUCTION

AN instinctive prompting of divine origin is moving souls to turn for a real existence to an intense interior life. They realize that hitherto their faith—the Christian faith—was not all to them that it could and should have been.

Many are beginning to understand that the faith is communicated to men by the Redeemer chiefly for this purpose: that they may be admitted to a participation of God's own divine life and helped to progress in that life. This explains the growing interest in the interior life—its laws, its manifestations and its means of progress—that has been such a characteristic of recent years. It is evidenced by the great wealth of literature dealing *ex professo* with the spiritual life that makes its appearance today. The great supply testifies to a wide demand and a very keen interest. It is characteristic of God that his answer to the challenge of the naturalism of the age should be a marked intensification of the supernatural life in those who remain faithful to him.

The soul is in us the fundamental principle of our life of nutrition, of movement, of sensation, of understanding and of willing. The soul is that through which, ultimately, we are able to nourish ourselves, have sensations, exercise thought and frame decisions.¹ Were there no such thing as the realm of divine grace, the life and the activities of our soul would be circumscribed within these limits. But when the soul is raised by grace to a supernatural condition—that is, to a condition superior to its natural one—then the field of its activities is immeasurably enlarged. It begins to have a new life proper to this new condition—a life with its own peculiar ideals, outlook, needs and aspirations. To this life, too, belongs its own hunger and thirst. Under the pressure of the imperious demands of this supernatural life, the soul must seek the wherewithal to satisfy this hunger and this thirst. Nothing found in the whole realm of nature, that is, nothing to be found throughout the whole length and breadth and depth of creation, can fulfill this function. Nothing created can appease the soul's hunger.

It is true that the supernatural life does not eclipse or destroy the natural life with its needs, its demands and its activities. The soul can therefore find exercise, as if it were not in a supernatural state at all, in the play of imagination and of thought and in the operations of the faculties of nutrition and sensation. And this life of sense and intellect can make it, at least for a time, insensible to the cravings of the appetites proper to the higher life. But this insensibility will not endure always. Sooner or later a distinct malaise is experienced—a sense of something being wrong. It is an

¹ It is thus defined by Aristotle: "The soul is that by which ultimately (that is, the remote principle by which) we live, we have sensations, we exercise local movement, and we think" (Aristotle, *On the Soul*, bk. II, chap. 2).

experience of emptiness, of want, of a need of something not to be found among all the objects which up to then were satisfying enough. This characteristic symptom points to the soul's being hungry: it is the soul's cry for its food. That food is nothing other than God himself. It is only God that can give supernatural life to the soul. It is only with God that life can be nourished, developed and brought to its maturity.

Our divine Savior, embracing in his universal vision all generations of men, felt his heart profoundly moved at the sadness and weariness that met his gaze on every side. Knowing his own power to relieve it and stirred by pity, he issued the loving invitation: "Come to me all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you."² The heavy-hearted are not solely, or chiefly, those who are enduring actual misery and want, nor those only who are a prey to positive grief and sorrow, but also and perhaps, above all others, that great multitude who are crushed beneath the burden of life itself because of its weariness, emptiness, fruitlessness and futility. The dissatisfaction which consumes the hearts of men is found not only in those whose material necessities make them so clamorous. It exists, and even to a greater depth, in those who are freed from these harassing material cares. To those for whom, through present want of means and opportunity, earthly existence holds as yet unexplored possibilities, the resources of a worldly existence can offer the illusion of ultimate satisfaction. But what of those by whom all these possibilities have been exhausted? There never has been a period in which such a wealth of material comforts and advantages has been at the disposal of such a wide number as the present period. And yet not since Christianity began has dissatisfaction been so profound and universal.

The reason, perhaps, lies in this. Owing to the degree in which life has been accelerated due chiefly to the extreme rapidity which science has made possible in the means of communication, men can now, in a very short time, explore all the possibilities of new, hitherto untried, and therefore possibly pleasurable, experiences. When men move slowly there are always distant horizons rising one upon another to lure them on by pleasant anticipations. But when, because of the manner in which distances are swallowed up and space annihilated and years compressed into days, all the horizons in succession have been approached and there is no longer any distant vista to attract, what can result but a sense of blankness and disappointment?³ When earth has still something to yield to men, men may, at least in some small measure, be content with earth. But when it has nothing more to give, and to many nowadays it has nothing more to give, men must turn elsewhere for an object, which, holding out hope, will stimulate effort.

The interior, supernatural life of the soul, as revealed to us in the lives of the saints of the Church of Christ, presents us with this very object. In that life of the soul there are inexhaustible possibilities and ever new

² Mt 11: 28.

³ To take a simple instance: a journey which less than a century ago took months can now be accomplished in a few days or, perhaps, a few hours.