

SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

CYCLES 1 and 2

First Reading. Rm. 8: 5-27

Those who are lead by the Spirit of God, these are children of God.

A reading from the Letter to the Romans of St. Paul, apostle.

[Rom 8:5] For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

[Rom 8:6] To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

[Rom 8:7] For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot;

[Rom 8:8] and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

[Rom 8:9] But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

[Rom 8:10] But if Christ is in you, although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness.

[Rom 8:11] If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you.

[Rom 8:12] So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh --

[Rom 8:13] for if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live.

[Rom 8:14] For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

[Rom 8:15] For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, "Abba! Father!"

[Rom 8:16] it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

[Rom 8:17] and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

[Rom 8:18] I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

[Rom 8:19] For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God;

[Rom 8:20] for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope;

[Rom 8:21] because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God.

[Rom 8:22] We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now;

[Rom 8:23] and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

[Rom 8:24] For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?

[Rom 8:25] But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

[Rom 8:26] Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words.

[Rom 8:27] And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Responsorial. *Gal. 3: 26; 4: 6; 2 Tm. 1: 7*

R: All of you are children of God through the faith in Christ Jesus: * God, in fact, has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts which cries: Abba, Father, alleluia.

V: He has not given us a Spirit of timidity, but of strength, of love and of wisdom.

R: God, in fact, has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts that cries: Abba, Father, alleluia.

Or

Responsorial. *Rm. 8: 15; Gal. 4: 6*

R: You have not received a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. * You have received a spirit of adopted sons, alleluia.

V: That you are sons is proved by the fact that God has sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts.

R: You have received a spirit of adopted sons, alleluia.

Second Reading. *Book 3, 17, 1-3*

The mission of the Holy Spirit.

A reading from the treatise “Against the heresies” of St. Irenaeus, bishop.

When the Lord gave to the disciples power to confer rebirth into the life of God, he said: ‘Go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit’.

He promised through his prophets that he would pour out his Spirit in the last times on his servants and handmaidens so that they would prophesy. And so the Spirit came down on the Son of God, who became the Son of man, and with him became accustomed to dwell in the human race and to abide in God’s creation, within men, working the Father’s will among them and making their old natures new with the newness of Christ.

Luke says that at Pentecost, after the ascension of the Lord, the Spirit came down on the disciples with power to grant all nations entry into life, and to open the New Testament. And so in every language they sang a hymn to God in unison; for the Spirit brought the scattered races together in unity, and offered to the Father the first fruits of all the nations.

Therefore the Lord promised to send us the Holy Spirit to make us fit for God’s purposes. Just as dry flour cannot coalesce into a lump of dough, still less a loaf, without moisture, so too we, being many, could not become one in Christ Jesus without the water that comes from heaven. And just as dry soil cannot bear fruit unless it receives moisture, so we, who to begin with are dry wood, can never bear the fruit of life unless the rain from heaven falls upon our wills.

For our bodies through the water of baptism have received the unity that leads to freedom from corruption; but our souls have received it through the Spirit.

The Spirit of God came down on the Lord, ‘the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and devotion, the Spirit of the fear of the Lord’. He gave the same Spirit again to the Church, sending the Paraclete to every nation from heaven, from

which the Lord said ‘the devil was cast down like lightning. Accordingly we need God’s dew, so as not to be burnt up and made unfruitful but rather to have a Paraclete when we have an accuser. For the Lord entrusts to the Holy Spirit his man who had fallen among thieves. Taking pity on him he has bound up his wounds, and given two imperial coins, stamped with the image of the Spirit and the inscription of the Father and the Son. We are to accept them, and make the coin entrusted to us bear fruit and multiply for the Lord.

Responsorial. Acts 2: 1-2

R: When the day of Pentecost had come, the disciples were all together in one place, and suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, * and it filled the entire house, alleluia.

V: While they were all together in one place, suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind,

R: and it filled the entire house, alleluia.

Or.

Second Reading.

To our nature is given a perfect food, in which is life: the Holy Spirit.

A reading from the “Discourses on the Holy Spirit” of St. Gregory of Nyssa, bishop

David always renders more splendid the content of every solemnity, tuning his sweet zither with the mystery that is being dealt with. Thus, striking the chords of the Spirit of wisdom and raising up the song, the same prophet illustrates to us also the great solemnity of Pentecost and with its divine harmony he repeats to us the psalm that answers to the divine gift of today: “Come, ring out our joy to the Lord” (Ps. 94: 1).

First of all we must know this benefit of God, in order to adapt then the words of the prophet to the argument of the discourse. Allow me to explain it to you, according to my possibilities.

At the beginning men were far away from the knowledge of God and, having abandoned the Lord of the entire universe, some of them adored the forces of nature, others believed that it was good to venerate demons; to the

majority the images of simulacrum made by the hands of men seemed to be divinities, for which they dedicated altars, temples, sacrifices, victims, sanctuaries and sacred enclosures and other such things to them.

The Lord of nature turned his kindly glance on the corrupt nature of men and called the human life gradually back from error to a certain knowledge of the truth.

As in fact those who according to the prescriptions of the doctor restore the one who is weak after a long hunger and, taking account of his weakness, do not immediately give him as much food as he wants, but when with a moderate meal he has recovered his strength, they then allow him to satisfy himself to his pleasure; so also to the humanity worn out by a horrible hunger, the divine Providence distributes the food of the divine mysteries in a way that day by day, progressing with order, it can finally reach the apex of perfection.

That which gives us salvation is that vital power, in which we believe in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Now when men, because of the weakness of their souls caused by that hunger, were not suitable any more to perceive the sacrament of salvation, they were recalled from polytheism by the prophets and by the law, in order to accustom themselves to distinguish the unique divinity and to recognise in it the only power of the Father, not being suitable as we have said to receive a more solid food. Later on, to those who the law had prepared for a fuller knowledge of the divinity, the Only Begotten Son was revealed through the gospel. Finally, to you is given the perfect food for our nature, in which is the life: the Holy Spirit.

This is the content of today's solemnity. Therefore it is just that, reunited with the choirs that celebrate the solemnity of the Holy Spirit, we listen to David, the prince of this spiritual choir, who sings: "Come, ring out your joy to the Lord" (Ps. 94: 1) that, as the Apostle says: "The Lord is Spirit giver of life" (1 Cor. 15: 45).

Let us quench ourselves, brothers, with the sweetness of piety, and enjoying with the choirs of the apostles and prophets, let us exult for the gifts of the Holy Spirit and let us rejoice in this day that the Lord has made, in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory forever and ever.

Responsorial.

R: The divine fire came, not to burn but to illuminate, not to consume, but to shine out and it found the hearts of the disciples like pure vases. * And distributed gifts and charisms, alleluia, alleluia.

V: It found them unanimous in love and the divine grace invaded them and illuminated them.

R: And distributed gifts and charisms to them, alleluia, alleluia.

CYCLE 2

Second Reading. *Disc. 8, 1-3*

The unity of the Church speaks in all the languages.

A reading from the “Discourses” of an African author of the VI century.

The apostles spoke in all the languages. It was in this way that God then wanted to manifest the presence of the Holy Spirit, in a way that he who had received it, could speak in all the languages. It is necessary in fact, to understand well, dearest brothers, that is exactly thanks to the Holy Spirit that the love of God is found in our hearts.

And since it was love that had to gather the Church of God from all parts of the world, one man only, receiving the Holy Spirit, could then speak all the languages. Thus now the Church, assembled through the work of the Holy Spirit, expresses its unity in all the languages.

Therefore if someone will say to one of you. You have received the Holy Spirit, for what reason do you not speak in all the languages? You must answer: Certainly I speak in all languages, in fact I am inserted in that body of Christ that is in the Church, which speaks all the languages. What else in reality did God want to signify through the presence of the Holy Spirit, if not that his Church would have spoken in all the languages?

In this way is fulfilled that which the Lord had promised: No one puts new wine in old wineskins, but new wine is put in new wineskins and thus both are conserved (cfr. Lk. 5: 37-38). Therefore when they were heard to speak in all the languages, some of them with reason said: “They are drunk with the new wine” (Act. 2: 13). In fact they had become new wineskins renewed by the grace of holiness, in a way that full of the new wine, that is of the Holy Spirit, speaking all the languages, they were fervent, and

represented with that most evident miracle the fact that the Church would have become catholic by means of the languages of all the nations.

Celebrate therefore this day, as a member of the unique body of Christ. In fact you do not celebrate it uselessly if you are that which you celebrate. If that is you are incorporated in that Church, which the Lord full of the Holy Spirit, extends with his strength in the whole world, recognises as his own, being recognised by it.

The Bridegroom has not abandoned his Bride, therefore no one can give him a different one.

Only to you, in fact, who are formed by the union of all the nations, that is to you Church of Christ, body of Christ, bride of Christ, the Apostle says: “ Bear with one another with love trying to conserve the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Ep. 4: 2). You see that where he commands you to bear with each other, he places love. Where he establishes the hope of unity, there he shows the bond of peace.

This is the house of God, built on living stones, in which he is pleased to dwell and where his eyes must not be offended by any wicked division.

Responsorial. *Cfr. Act. 15: 8-9; 11: 18*

R: God who knows man, has given the Holy Spirit to the pagans as well, as he gave it to you, purifying their hearts with the faith, * and he has not made any difference between you and them, alleluia.

V: Therefore to the pagans also God has granted the possibility to convert in order to have life;

R: and he has not made any difference between you and them, alleluia.

Or.

Second Reading. *Disc. 77, 1-3*

God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts that cries: Abba Father.

A reading from the “Discourses” of St. Leo the Great, pope.

Dearly beloved, today’s festivity, celebrated in the whole world, was consecrated by the coming of the Holy Spirit, that descended, as they had hoped, on the Apostles and on the people of the believers fifty days after the Resurrection of the Lord.

It was awaited because the Lord Jesus had promised it, not as if it was to begin then for the first time to dwell in the saints, but in order to inflame with greater fervour the hearts consecrated to him and to flood them more copiously making his gifts increase; not beginning therefore a new work by the fact of being more generous in giving himself.

The majesty of the Holy Spirit is never distinct from the omnipotence of the Father and of the Son, and that which the divine government disposes in the administration of all things, comes from the providence of the whole Trinity. One is the clemency of mercy, one is the severity of justice; there is no division of activity there where there is no difference of will. The things that illumine the Father, illumine the Son, illumine the Holy Spirit; and since one is the Person sent, another the Person of he who sends and another that of he who promises, simultaneously is manifested to us the Unity and the Trinity, in order to make us understand that the essence is equal but is not alone, and that the identity of the substance does not signify the identity of the Persons.

If then some actions, saving always the cooperation of the inseparable divinity, some the Father works, others the Son and others belong to the Holy Spirit, they depend on the plan of our redemption, on the reason of our salvation. If man, created in the image and likeness of God had remained in the dignity given to his nature, nor, deceived by the traps of the devil and pushed by the concupiscence had deviated from the law imposed on him, the Creator of the world would not have become a creature, the Eternal would not have subjected himself to temporality, nor would the Son of God equal to the Father have assumed the condition of a servant “in a flesh similar to that of sin” (Rm. 8: 3). But since “death had entered into the world because of the jealousy of the devil” (Ws. 2: 24), and our slavery could not be annulled without him having to take in his hand our cause, becoming, without harming his majesty, true man, the only one who did not suffer the contamination of sin, the merciful Trinity divide the works of our redemption, in a way that the Father was propitiated, the Son propitiated and the Holy Spirit inflamed.

It was necessary in fact that they also who had to be saved did something in their own favour, and that the hearts converted to the Redeemer drew themselves away from the domination of the enemy; therefore, as the Apostle says: “God has sent the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, which cries: Abba, Father” (Gal. 4: 6). And “where there is the Spirit

there is freedom” (2 Cor.3: 17). Moreover “no one can say: Jesus is the Lord if not under the action of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 12: 3).

If therefore, guided by grace, we wisely know through faith that that which in our redemption belongs to the Father, that which is appropriate to the Son or to the Holy Spirit, and that instead which is common to them, then we welcome without the minimum doubt all that which has been accomplished for us in the humiliation of the body without attributing anything unworthy to the glory of the unique and identical Trinity. It is true, no mind is capable of understanding God, no language is capable of speaking of him; that little above all that the human intelligence can grasp on the essence of the divinity of the Father, without thinking the same thing of the Only begotten and of the Holy Spirit, does not have the knowledge of the faith, but is obscured by the flesh; and that which it seems to feel suitably with regard to the Father, in reality it loses, because it makes itself a stranger to the whole Trinity which in it does not conserve the unity. A reality that is diversified by some inequality is not truly one.

Responsorial. *Gal. 4: 6; 2 Tm. 1: 7*

R: That you are children of God is proved by the fact that God has sent * the Spirit of his Son into your hearts that cries out: Abba, Father! Alleluia.

V: God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of strength, love and wisdom;

R: the Spirit of his Son into your hearts which cries out: Abba, Father! Alleluia.

Or.

Second Reading. *Disc. 30*

The Church of Christ is there where the incarnation of Christ from the Virgin is preached.

A reading from the “Works” of St. Cromazio of Aquilea, bishop.

After our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ had died, risen again and ascended into heaven, his Church formed by about a hundred persons, gathered together in the cenacle in the upper floor, with Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brothers. It is not possible to speak of the Church where Mary the mother of Jesus is not present with his brothers. The Church of Christ in fact is where the incarnation of Christ from the Virgin is preached. And where the apostles, the brothers of the Lord preach, the gospel is listened to.

In the beginning, after the ascension of the Lord into heaven, the Church numbered only hundred and twenty men, it then increased so much as to fill the whole world in countless nations. That this would have come about is manifested by the Lord himself in the gospel, when he says to his apostles: "If the grain of wheat does not fall to the ground and die, it remains alone; if instead it dies, it produces much fruit" (Jn. 12: 23).

The resurrection of the Lord, after his passion for the salvation of humanity has truly brought about abundant fruit. In the grain of wheat our Saviour wants to indicate his body. After his burial he will bear countless fruits, because with the resurrection of the Lord sheaves of virtue and harvests of believing nations have sprung up in the whole world. The death of only one has become the life of all.

With reason, in another passage of the gospel, he makes this comparison: "The kingdom of heaven can be compared to a mustard seed, that a man takes and plants in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds but, once it has grown, it is greater than other pulses and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches" (Mt. 13: 31-32). To the mustard seed the Lord has compared himself who, though being the Lord of glory, of an eternal majesty, made himself the smallest of all, deigning to be born as a small baby of the Virgin.

He is planted in the ground when his body is delivered to the sepulchre. But after he has risen, through the glory of the resurrection he is raised up from the earth, in order to become a tree in whose branches the birds of heaven dwell. In this tree was represented the Church, which after the death of Christ has risen in glory. Its branches are none other than the apostles, since as the branches with naturalness adorn the tree, so also the apostles with the splendour of their grace adorn the Church of Christ.

In the branches the birds of heaven are seen to dwell. In these birds of heaven we are allegorically portrayed, we who entering into the Church of

Christ repose in the doctrine of the apostles as in its branches.

At the beginning therefore, after the ascension of the Lord, the Church numbered only few men, but then it grew so much that it filled the whole world, not only the cities, but also the different nations. The Persians believe, the Indies believe, the whole world believes. The nations are led in peace to the homage of Christ not by the terror of the sword or out of fear of the emperor, but by the only faith in Christ. And if it is necessary, they are ready to give their lives for their King rather than lose the faith. And justly, because this King for whom we fight rewards his soldiers also after death. The kings of the world cannot give anything after the death to the soldier who has let himself be killed for him, because he also is subject to death; but Christ- king will reward with immortality his soldiers who have let themselves be killed for him. The soldier of the world, if he is killed for the king, is overcome. The soldier of Christ, instead, wins in a much greater way when he deserves to be killed for Christ.

Responsorial. *2 Cor. 4: 11; Ps. 43: 23*

R: We are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, * so that the life of Jesus may be revealed in our mortal body, alleluia.

V: For you everyday we are put to death, we are considered as sheep for the slaughter;

R: so that the life of Jesus may be revealed in our mortal body, alleluia.

GOSPEL OF THE VIGIL. *Jn. 7: 37-39*

Rivers of living water will spring forth.

A reading from the Gospel of St. John.

[John 7:37] On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink.

[John 7:38] He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'"

[John 7:39] Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

GOSPEL OF THE DAY. *Jn. 20: 19-23*

As the Father has sent me, so also I send you, receive the Holy Spirit.

A reading from the Gospel of St. John.

[John 20:19] On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

[John 20:20] When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

[John 20:21] Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you."

[John 20:22] And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

[John 20:23] If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Third Reading. Disc. 271

*In you will be realised that which was pre-announced
in the days of the coming of the Holy Spirit.*

A reading from the "Discourses" of St. Augustine, bishop.

Brothers, the joyful day in which the holy Church shines in the eyes of the believers and burns in their hearts has risen for us. We celebrate exactly that day in which the Lord Jesus Christ, glorified with the ascension after the resurrection, sent the Holy Spirit. In the gospel it is written in fact that he said: "He who is thirsty let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, rivers of living water will gush out from his breast" and the evangelist explains: "This he said referring to the Spirit that those who believed in him would receive: in fact there was not yet the Spirit, because Jesus had not yet been glorified" (Jn. 7: 37-39). It remained therefore that Jesus, once glorified with his resurrection from the dead and the ascension into heaven, would gift the Holy Spirit, sent by him who had promised it; and so it happened.

After having passed forty days with his disciples, the risen Lord ascended into heaven, and on the fiftieth day, that today we celebrate, he sent the Holy Spirit, as it is written: "Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came

to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them” (Act. 2: 2-4).

That wind purified the hearts from the carnal chaff; that fire consumed the hay of the old concupiscence. The tongues that they spoke, full of the Holy Spirit, pre-announced the future Church with the languages of all the nations. In fact, after the flood, the wicked human pride had constructed a high tower against the Lord and humanity had merited the division into different languages, in a way that every people spoke their own language so as not to be understood by another.

Now instead the humble piety of the faithful has gathered the divergence of these languages in the unity of the Church, where that which discord had dissipated, could be reunited by charity: thus the dispersed members of the human race, like the members of one unique body, return to be united to the unique head who is Christ, melted by the fire of love into the unity of his holy body.

For this those who hate the grace of peace, and do not conserve the unity and communion are completely alien to the gift of the Holy Spirit. Even if today they are here solemnly united, even if they listen to these readings that speak of the promise and of the coming of the Holy Spirit, they listen to their condemnation, not to their reward.

What use is it to welcome with the ears that which the heart repels? To celebrate his coming when they hate the light?

But you, my brothers, members of the body of Christ, shoot of unity, children of peace, celebrate this day with joy and without fear. In you in fact, is fulfilled that which was pre-announced in those days, when the Holy Spirit came.

As then he who received the Holy Spirit even though being only one man spoke the languages, so also now speak to all the people in all the languages of this same unity, in which you have been constituted, you who have the Holy Spirit: if all the same you do not separate yourselves with any discord from the Church of Christ, which speaks in all languages.

Responsorial. *Jn. 7: 37, 38, 39*

R: On the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus exclaimed: He who is thirsty let him come to me, and he who believes in me let him drink; * rivers of living water will gush out from his breast, alleluia.

V: This he said of the Spirit that those who believed in him would have received;

R: rivers of living water will gush out from his breast, alleluia.

Or.

Third Reading. *Disc. 77, 4-6*

I have become the Son of man, so that you can become children of God.

A reading from the “Discourses” of St. Leo the Great, pope.

When we apply the attention of the mind to the confession of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit we must repel far away from the soul the forms of the visible things, the transience of the temporal natures, the materiality of the places and the localization of the bodies. Outside of the mind all that exists that is extended in space, encloses inside limits, that which is not always and all everywhere. The concept that we make around the divinity of the Trinity does not contain anything that is arrived at through the distances, does not search for anything along the scale of the differences; and if it has conceived something worthy of God, it does not dare deny it of any of the Persons, almost attributing to the Father things that are more honorary than to the Son or to the Holy Spirit. It is not devotion to prefer the Parent to the First born, because the abuse of the Son causes insult to the Father, and that which is taken away from one is subtracted from both. Since in them the eternity and divinity is common, the Father is not believed to be omnipotent and unchanging if it is thought that he has generated one who is less than himself, or that he has perfected himself by generating the Son that before he did not have.

It is true that the Lord Jesus Christ said to his disciples, as we have heard read in the gospel: “If you loved me you would rejoice that I go to the Father, because the Father is greater than me” (Jn. 14: 28). But those same ones who had often heard him say: “I and the Father are only one thing” (Jn. 10: 30) and “He who has seen me has seen the Father” (Jn. 14: 28) receive that expression not as difference on the level of divinity, nor do they understand it as referred to that essence which they know to be coeternal with the Father and of the same nature as him. The incarnation of the Word is thus indicated by the apostles as the promotion of man: they had remained troubled by the announcement of the departure of the Lord, and

he recalls them to the eternal joy pointing to the growth of his own glory. “If you loved me, he says, you would rejoice that I was going to the Father”, that is, if you were to see with full knowledge what glory you would derive from the fact that I, generated by the Father, have also been born from a human mother; The Lord of eternity would have wanted to be one of the mortals; invisible as I am, I have shown myself visible and have accepted the nature of servant though being God, “you would rejoice that I go to the Father”. This ascension is advantageous for you, because your humility is raised up in me above all the heavens in order to be placed at the right hand of the Father. I, who together with the Father am that which is the Father, remain inseparable from the one who has generated me, therefore I do not go far away from him by coming to you, as I do not leave you by returning to him.

Enjoy therefore “that I go to the Father, because the Father is greater than me” (Jn. 14: 28). I have united you to me by becoming the Son of man, so that you can be sons of God. For this, though being only one in both natures, I am less than the Father in as much as I am similar to you; in as much instead as I am not divided from the Father, I am also greater than me. Therefore, that nature that is inferior to the Father, rises to the Father so that the flesh can be there where the Word always is; and the unique faith of the Catholic Church believes that he who though being recognised as lesser according to the humanity is equal according to the divinity. Therefore, dearly beloved, despise the vain and blind astuteness of the sacrilegious heresy, that deceives itself in the wrong interpretation of that phrase: “All that the Father possesses is mine” (Jn. 16: 15), without understanding that they take away from the Father that which they dare to deny to the Son. In that way the heresy errs because it stops at the humanity, believing that to the Only begotten is missing that which belongs to the Father because of the fact that he has assumed that which is ours. Instead the mercy does not diminish in God the power, nor does the reconciliation offered to the creature constitute a defect of the eternal glory. That which the Father has the Son also has, and that which the Father and the Son have the Holy Spirit also possesses, because the whole Trinity is only one God.

The earthy wisdom has not known this faith, nor has human arguments demonstrated it, but the Only begotten himself has taught it and the Holy Spirit has established it, of whom nothing different must be believed from that which is believed of the Father and of the Son. Though he is not the

Father, or the Son, yet he is not divided from the Father and from the Son; he who is a distinct person in the Trinity, he possesses also in the divinity of the Father and of the Son the unique nature that fills everything, contains everything and that together with the Father and the Son governs all things.

Responsorial. *Jn. 14: 16-17; 16: 7*

R: I will pray to the Father and he will give you another Consoler, * the Spirit of truth who will remain with you forever, alleluia.

V: If I do not go, the Consoler will not come to you; but when I have gone, I will send him to you,

R: the Spirit of truth who will remain with you forever, alleluia.

Or.

Third Reading. *Disc. 75, 1-3*

The Spirit of truth will lead you to the complete truth.

A reading from the “Discourses” of St. Leo the Great, pope.

As to the Hebrew people freed from Egypt, fifty days after the immolation of the lamb the law was given on Mount Sinai, so also after the passion of Christ in which the true Lamb of God was killed, fifty days after his resurrection, the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles and on the group of believers. In this way, the Christian recognizes that the beginning of the Old Covenant laid the base of the gospel and that the second pact was inaugurated by the same Spirit that had instituted the first.

Thus does the Acts of the Apostles attest: “When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them” (Act. 2: 1-4).

How fast is the word of wisdom! And where the master is God, how quickly that which is taught is learnt! There was no need of an interpreter to listen, nor of training, nor of time to study, but for that Spirit of truth that “Blew where it wanted” (Jn. 3: 8) the tongues were transformed in that which was appropriate to each people and from this day the preaching of

the gospel resounded throughout the world. The rain of charisms and the rivers of blessings irrigate every desert and every arid place, because “the Spirit of God hovered over the waters” (Gen. 1: 2) to “create and renew the face of the earth” (cfr. Ps. 103: 30). And in the end to cast out the ancient darkness, there flashed the brightness of the new light, with the splendour of enflamed tongues that spread the word of the Lord clear and incandescent and efficacious, capable of infusing light to the intelligence and burning with fire to destroy sin.

Dearly beloved, the manner itself in which the event took place was truly wonderful and without doubt the majesty of the Holy Spirit was present in that exultant harmony of all the human voices; but let no one think that in the facts that were seen with the eyes that his divine substance appeared. In fact, the invisible nature, that he has in common with the Father and with the Son, shows the quality of the gift and of his work with the signs that he wants, but contains in his divinity that which is characteristic of his essence: because, like the Father and the Son cannot be seen by the human eye, in the same way neither can the Holy Spirit. In the divine Trinity, nothing is dissimilar or unequal, and all the attributes that can be thought of his substance is not distinguished in anything, neither through the power, or through glory, or through the eternity. In the property of the persons, one is the Father, another is the Son, and another is the Holy Spirit; yet the divinity is not divided, and neither is the nature. From the Father is the Only begotten Son; and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, not like every other creature that belongs to the Father and to the Son, but as He who is the living and the powerful together with one and the other, and he is in eternity because he is the subsisting Love of the Father and of the Son.

For this the Lord, on the day preceding his passion, promising to his disciples the coming of the Holy Spirit, said: “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when He, the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak of his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said that the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you” (Jn. 16: 12-13, 15). It is not therefore that some things are of the Father, others of the Son, others of the Holy Spirit, but that which the Father has, the Son has, and the Holy Spirit has; nor is there ever lacking in that Unity this communion, because there

always exists the fullness of everything. It does not insinuate into the mind any idea of time, no one dares to affirm of him that which he is not. It is much better to keep quiet about the ineffable nature rather than to attribute to him things that are contrary to him.

And thus, all that the pious hearts can conceive of the eternal and unchangeable glory of the Father, they must think also to be inseparably and without difference to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Therefore we proclaim that this blessed Trinity is one unique God, because in the three Persons there is no diversity, either in the substance, or in the power, or in the will, and neither in the action.

Responsorial.

R: The Holy Spirit, proceeding from the royal throne, penetrated invisibly into the hearts of the apostles with a new sign of sanctification * So that from their mouths could be born every type of language, alleluia.

V: The divine fire came, not to burn but to illuminate, and to distribute the gifts of the charisms to them,

R: so that from their mouths could be born every type of language, alleluia.