



Holy Trinity. Theology

Theology establishes seven gifts of the Holy Spirit

The spiritual and theological tradition understands that there are seven gifts of the Holy Spirit which are found in the Sacred Scripture: Fear of the Lord, Fortitude, Piety, Counsel, Knowledge, Wisdom, and Understanding.

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit

Seven gifts

The spiritual and theological tradition understands that there are seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, and finds the root of its conviction in the Sacred Scriptures, especially in some major passages.

In Is. 11. 2-3, specifically, it is ensured that in the expected Messiah there will be a total fullness of the Holy Spirit's gifts. These gifts will not be given to him partially; as Solomon is given wisdom or Samson is given strength, but upon him will rest the Spirit of Yahweh with absolute plenitude.

I will not talk here about whether the gifts are six or seven, according to the original text, the septuagint version, and the Vulgata, because we would have to analyze exegetical subjects too specialized for our attempt.

The ancient Fathers also saw the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit alluded in those Apocalypse septenaries which speak of seven God's spirits (1,4; 5,6), seven golden candlesticks (1,12), seven stars (1,16), seven torches (4,5), seven seals (5, 1,5), seven eyes and seven horns of the Lamb (5,6).

These and other passages of the Scripture have encouraged, since long time ago, in the history of theology and spirituality, a systematic doctrine of the seven gifts

of the Holy Spirit, which reaches its maturity in the theology of St. Thomas, which we have already studied before, in a very brief way.

Correspondence

St. Thomas teaches that all the gifts of the Holy Spirit are linked to one another, in such a way that they empower each other: the gift of Fortitude, for example, helps Counsel, which opens the way to the gift of Knowledge, etc. At the same time, all the gifts are linked with the theological charity (STh I-II, 68.5).

To doctrine, the Doctor firmly adds other more worthy explanations, in which he points out that there is also a special correspondence between each of the virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, who come to perfect them in their exercise (STh I-II, 68-69, II-II, 8. 9. 19. 45. 52. 121. 139.141 ad3m).

Theological Virtues --- Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Charity --- Wisdom

Faith --- Knowledge, and Understanding

Hope --- Fear of the Lord

Moral Virtues --- Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Prudence --- Counsel

Justice --- Piety

Strength --- Fortitude

Temperance --- Fear of the Lord

Each one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is perfect. However, the theological and spiritual tradition tends to see in them an ascending scale towards excellence: at the base, it places the Fear of the Lord and at the summit the gift of Wisdom.

Before examining one by one the different gifts of the Holy Spirit, let us notice, finally, that all of them, although being different infused habits, are participations in the same and only Spirit, who works in man in a divine way. The apostle Paul expresses this in very brief, but very exact words: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1Cor 12, 4).