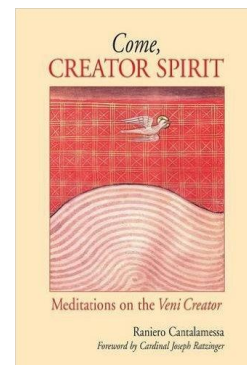


# Raniero Cantalamessa

## Come, Creator Spirit – meditations on the *Veni Creator*

Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 2003

Alison Morgan June 2005



### Introduction

*Veni creator* is a 9th century hymn by Rabanus Maurus. His sources were the same as ours: scriptures plus philosophy (to tell us about God), history (to tell us about Jesus), and experience (individuals and the collective Church, which we call Tradition). This last is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Cantalamessa's book explores the work of the Holy Spirit through the verses of the hymn.

### 1. Spirit, come!

The name 'Spirit' is just a translation; his real name is *ruach*. It was first translated as *pneuma*, the name given to him in the NT. The name *ruach*, like all Hebrew names, says something about the origin/function of the one named. We cannot understand the HS unless we understand his name. *Ruach* means:

- The space/air between heaven and earth (why we have ended up saying 'in the HS')
- Wind/breath. *Pneuma* and *Spirit* retain these linked meanings (inspire, respire). *Ghost* derives from *gast* – breath. Wind and breath are more than symbols of the HS; symbol and reality share the same name. Wherever we read 'wind' in scripture, people also understood 'spirit'. The wind gave its name to the HS – in human experience we do not know spiritual reality first, but material reality, and only then what is spiritual (1 Cor 15.46). 'so it is that we start our study of the Spirit in the open air'. Other symbols will be water, fire, oil, light. The Bible teaches us about spiritual realities by using as symbols the ordinary things found in nature; God wrote 2 books, creation (made of things and elements in themselves mute) and the Bible (made up of letters and words); these books explain one another.
  - Spirit/wind hovers over the waters, Gen 1
  - God formed man and breathed the breath of life into him, Gen 2.7; cp 1 Cor 15.45 where that breath is seen as a manifestation of the HS
  - Jesus breathed the HS on the disciples, John 20.22
  - Jesus gave up his spirit on the cross, 19.30; and this was the same moment at which he gave the HS.
  - John 3.8 the wind blows where it will; so does the Spirit

Wind and breath symbolise power and tenderness, movement and rest; and these are the characteristics of the Spirit. The word 'holy' was used in association with the Spirit more and more frequently, from Isaiah 63.10 and Psalm 51 onwards. 'Holy' isn't about morality; it speaks of the absolute otherness, it is full of the numinous; an otherness which demands adoration and brings purification.

The unstoppableness of the divine breath is brought out by its association with power; eg Acts 10.38; Luke 4.41; Luke 1.35; Luke 24.49. It is this strength and power which keeps the Church alive; Zech 4.6 (not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit); 1 Thess 1.5 (message came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the HS). It is through the HS that the Church has the power to convince and to lead; the HS is the source and secret of the courage and the daring of all believers.

- Acts 4.13,31 – 'they were filled with the HS and spoke the word of God with boldness'
- Micah 3.8, I am filled with power, with the spirit of the Lord, and with justice and might
- 2 Tim 1.17 not a spirit of cowardice, but rather of power
- Rom 8.26 Spirit helps us in our weakness

Every single thing, in the life of the Church or in the life of an individual believer, takes its power from the Spirit, or is without any power whatsoever.

In Semitic languages, the noun 'Spirit' is feminine, which led to rich development of HS as mother in the early days. Gnostics abused this theme, so it was left aside. But of the 3 divine persons, the HS is the one least characterised as masculine. Only from Isaiah onwards do the scriptures speak of the Spirit as one who enters into human beings in order to be with us in an uninterrupted way.

- Isaiah 63.10-11
- John 14.17 Spirit will be in you
- 1 Cor 3.17 temples of the HS

Basil: 'the Holy Spirit is the one who creates intimacy with God'; cp Eph 2.18-22. 1 John 4.13 we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us his Spirit. This is what intimacy with God means: God in us, and we in God, due to the presence of the HS. In every experience of human intimacy, what people are seeking is intimacy with God, intimacy that is absolute. The HS is the answer to loneliness, the greatest cause of human suffering. What overcomes loneliness? Not a crowd, but a companion. Sometimes we perceive the HS as power, sometimes as tenderness – cp Moses and Elijah (Ex 19.18-19 and 1 Kings 19.12)

*Wind is the one thing that it is utterly impossible to bridle. It cannot be bottled or canned and distributed for use at need... Wind, bottled, is no longer wind, air in free motion; it is still, confined, dead. The rationalism of our day has pretended to circumscribe, to enclose the Spirit in concepts or definitions, texts or tracts, more or less as though the Spirit can be packed in cans or sachets, like milk. But all that this achieves is that the Spirit is lost, rendered trivial and vain. 20*

We mustn't shut him up in milk bottles of an ecclesiastical kind, canons and institutions and definitions. Wind is the most eloquent symbol of the Spirit's freedom.

Breath: we need to pray, just as we need to breathe.

Ezekiel 37 is the place where all three meanings of ruach come together – wind, breath, HS : the valley of the dry bones.

## 2. Creator

Ambrose: *how could one deny that the creation of the earth was the work of the HS, if it is the Spirit's work to renew it?* And yet it was the NT that first established the link explicitly, drawing on Gen 1.2:

- the dove which descends over the Jordan recalls the Spirit who in the beginning hovered over the waters
- Jesus breathing the HS on the disciples recalls the moment when God breathed the breath of life into Adam

NT describes the intervention of the HS in the new creation, making use of the images we find in Genesis concerning the creation of the world.

Maximus the Confessor: *The HS is not absent from any creature whatever... He is present simply in every thing in that it is he who keeps every thing together and who vivifies all; he is present in a special way in those who are under the Law; he is present in all Christians in a new and different way, making them children; he is present as the author of wisdom in the saints who, through a divinely inspired tenor of life, have been worthily disposed for his indwelling. 30*

'The Christian view does not see a distinct animistic moving principle in each individual being, but only one authentic, spiritual moving principle through which every creature is taken up into that harmony and order that is the work of the Creator Spirit... In the Christian view the Spirit remains transcendent, while in the pantheistic view (eg Stoics), it is part of nature itself.'

Use of phrase 'Creator Spirit' widens our understanding of the HS, whose work transcends the salvational activities of sanctification and grace – the Spirit is active in every field, in the inspiration of poets and in every form of artistic creativity.

Gen 1.2 : the HS is the one who makes creation pass from chaos into cosmos, and makes of it something beautiful, orderly, clean (kosmos and mundus both mean clean, beautiful). We cannot say that God was Creator at a certain moment only; God is always Creator – not just in the sense that he keeps things in being, but that he continually communicates being and energy; he moves, stimulates, enlivens and renews creation. 'To create is continually to make new' – Luther, p 34.

Crucifixion – darkness came over the whole land. Jesus sent forth his spirit, and the universe became steady again, as if reanimated, enlivened, made solid. The same applies in the microcosm, for we carry within ourselves a vestige of the primordial chaos:

*I become aware, Lord, that the world of my own spirit is still formless and void and that darkness still covers the face of this abyss. It is truly in a state of confusion, a kind of dark and terrifying chaos, knowing nothing of its own end or of its own origin or of what sort of being it is. That is how my soul is, my God! That is how my soul is! A wasteland, empty and formless, and darkness is upon the face of the abyss. But the abyss that is my spirit cries out to you, Lord, asking you to make a new heaven and a new earth of me too! Guigo II (Carthusian monk, MA).*

There is a particular time of day when it is most necessary for us, when we are most ready to experience the creative power of the Spirit – when we wake in the morning. Each morning we have a reminder and symbol of the emergence of the world from the primordial chaos. The wonder is renewed.

## 3. Fill with heavenly grace the hearts that you have made

NT gives 3 words/images to express the coming of the HS to us:

- Be baptised in the HS (Mt 3.11, John 1.33, Acts 1.5)
- Be clothed with the HS (Luke 24.49)
- Be filled with the HS (Luke 4.1, Luke 1.15, 41; Acts 6.5, 7.55, and esp Acts 2.4)

HS was at work first in Creation then in Redemption. By the first we are God's creatures; by the second, his children. By the first we are human beings; by the second, Christians. What did he bring at Pentecost that was new? Grace. The distinction between the Creator Spirit and the Redeemer Spirit is not the same as the distinction between the OT and the NT. The Spirit of grace was already at work in the Law, paving the way for the gospel. The one who spoke through the prophets was the Spirit of Christ (1 Pe 1.10-11). The prophets enjoy a profound illumination by the HS, but the faithful enjoy more – that the HS himself dwells in us and remains with us. The prophets were never called temples of the HS.

### Baptism of the Spirit

Aquinas: *There is an invisible sending of the Spirit every time any progress in virtue or increase in grace takes place... when someone enters upon a new activity or into a new state of grace: for example, when a person receives the grace to work miracles, or the gift of prophecy, or when spurred by the fervour of love a person risks martyrdom or gives up possessions or undertakes some difficult or exacting task.*

A modern testimony: 'I was in an aeroplane, on a journey, and I was reading the last chapter of a book on the HS. Suddenly it was as if the Spirit came out of the page and entered into my body. Tears began to stream from my eyes. I began to pray. I was overcome by a Power much greater than I.' 55

Description of the experience which lay at the beginning of the charismatic renewal in the Catholic Church, p 55-56.

Bonaventure: 'to whom does the Spirit come? He comes to the ones who love him, who invite him, who eagerly await him'.

## 4. You whom we name the Paraclete

In the Bible 2 lines of action emerge concerning the manifestation of the Spirit:

1. The charismatic line – the one that presents the Spirit as a power that on certain occasions breaks in on special people, giving them the ability to do things and to explain reality in a way that is not humanly possible – Ex 31.3, 35.31; Mic 3.8; Jdg 13.25
2. The line of sanctification; seen in the prophets and the psalms after the exile; Ez 26.26-27; Ps 51.12

The main difference is that the charismatic action of the Spirit passes through, without remaining in, the person who receives it; its aim is the good not of the person but of the community as a whole; the sanctifying action of the Spirit remains within the person who receives it, is renewed by it and transformed from within.

The first line comes to the fore in the NT – gifts of the Spirit. The second finds its apex in new life in the Spirit and particularly in charity.

John calls HS the paraclete (Jn 14-16). (Luke calls him the finger of God.)

Did John have the name from Jesus? It is a name about consolation, comfort, Is 66.13, as a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you. It must lie also in John's experience of the HS. This is what they felt. The Paraclete carries out, point by point, what Jesus said he would do.

It can also mean intercessor/advocate (1 Jn 21.)

John gives him 2 roles: he has a teaching role, his domain is that of knowledge – truth. The Paraclete is the Spirit of truth. And yet he is also Jesus; his role is to bring us to accept, to interiorize, to comprehend, to live all that is revealed to us in the Son.

It is not enough to study the meaning of the word Paraclete; we need to become paracletes ourselves – if a Christian should be another Christ, he should equally be another paraclete. In a sense, the HS needs us – he wants to console, defend, exhort, encourage, but does not have lips or hands or eyes to 'embody' consolation. Or at least, the only ones he has are ours.

**Without the Holy Spirit:**  
*God is far away,  
 Christ stays in the past,  
 the Gospel is a dead letter,  
 the Church is simply an organisation,  
 authority a matter of domination,  
 mission a matter of propaganda,  
 liturgy no more than an evocation,  
 Christian living a slave morality.*

**But with the Holy Spirit:**  
*the cosmos is resurrected and groans with the  
 birth-pangs of the Kingdom,  
 the risen Christ is there,  
 the Gospel is the power of life,  
 the Church shows forth the life of the  
 Trinity,  
 authority is a liberating service,  
 mission is a Pentecost,  
 the liturgy is both memorial and anticipation,  
 human action is deified.*

Ignatius of Latakia, 1968 (bishop of an Eastern rite), p 59

## 5. Most High gift of God

In many passages of the NT, the HS is presented as the gift of God. Eg John 4.10; Acts 2.38, 8.20, 10.45. Augustine actually uses the term 'gift of God' as a title for the HS.

## 6. Living water

*Let your book be the divine page to which you ought to listen; let your book be the universe that you ought to observe. Only those who know how to read and write can read the pages of Scripture, while everyone, including the unlettered, can read out of the book of the universe'.*

In the voice of Creation we have a kind of primordial and universal sacrament. 'Join the word to the element and you have a sacrament' – Augustine. Eg join formula of baptism to the pouring of water and you have the sacrament. Certain elements of creation have become sacramental signs of the HS – water in baptism and a sign of rebirth in the HS; oil and chrism in confirmation as signs of the Spirit anointing. Water is more than a symbol of the Spirit; it is an efficacious sign of the Spirit – not only calls him to mind, but makes him present and active.

Key text John 7.37-39. The association between water and life is universal; remember Isaiah 44.3. The association water/Spirit is found in every text about pouring, eg Joel 3.1, Zech 12.10), flowing, washing, and others. It finds its culmination in John. Then at a certain point in the NT the symbolism disappears, and only the reality remains – which is life. 'The Spirit gives life' – John 6.63, Rm 8.2; 2 Cor 3.6. And so to the Nicene Creed, 'the Holy Spirit, Lord and giver of life.'

Water always runs down, never up; it seeks the lowest place. So with the HS, who loves to fill the lowly, the humble, those who know their own emptiness.

## 7. Fire

Water engenders life, fire destroys it. The Spirit creates new life, but does it by putting the old life to death. Properties of fire:

- Fire purifies; water washes the surface, fire cleanses through and through (Num 31.22; Ps 26.2, 1 Pet 1.7; Is 1.25)
- Drs used to use fire to cauterize, treating a wound by burning it with a red-hot iron; HS is a spiritual 'cure' of the same kind – Is 6.6-7. Stages of the work of the HS in us:
  - remorse,
  - confession,
  - repentance,
  - absolution,
  - justification,
  - fervour.

Remorse is caused by something which is evil in the sight of God; false guilt by things considered evil only by social convention or in the worldly view.

*Augustine: the fact that you are not pleased with what you have done is the result of a gift of the HS... Though you are still pleading for pardon, nevertheless because you yourself do not like the evil you have done, you are already united to God, because you have come to dislike what displeases him. You are both at work to cure your fever; yourself, and the doctor too.*

From the point of repentance onwards, the Spirit continues to work as fire, not as one that purifies/melts down, but as one that warms and sets aflame. These are usually mentioned together in spiritual writings.

## 8. Love

The HS leads us to experience the love of God. He is love in the Trinity, insofar as he is the bond of unity between Father and Son; he is love in the Church, insofar as he is the bond of the Church's unity, and he is love in each believer, insofar as he brings the believer to a living experience of the love of God.

Augustine was struck by 3 things the NT says about the HS; that he is gift; fellowship; and joy.

In the Trinity, the Father is the one who loves, the principle and source of all; the Son is the one who is loved; and the HS is the love with which they love.

'The Son is Truth, the Spirit is Love, and the Father is Power' – this became a classical proposition of the Church. In the Eastern churches, there is almost no theology of the Spirit as love; they prefer to relate to him as the 'breath' that accompanies the 'word', and even more as 'illumination'.

The Spirit is to the Church what the human soul is to the human body; the Spirit is the principle that moves and inspires the whole. Augustine: you have the HS when you adhere to the unity (of the church) by the sincerity of your love.

From Vatican II, Catholics began to speak of the church as 'they mystery of the HS in Christ and in Christians'. On the Catholic side we had had the Church without the HS, but on the Reform side we'd had the HS without the Church. Where the Spirit is, the Church is; where the Church is, the Spirit is.

A testimony: 'all my life long, I had felt unloved. The next day, that feeling vanished entirely. I felt myself immersed in a new experience of the love of God, and from that day it has never left me.' *This is the most beautiful moment of any creature's life: to know that one is loved, personally, by God, to feel oneself lifted to the bosom of the Trinity and to find oneself in the flood of love that flows between Father and Son, enfolded in their love, sharing their passionate love for the world. And all of this in one instant, without any need to think about it or for words to say it.* P145.

## 9. Anointing for the soul

2 Cor 1.21-2 – *it is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us, by putting his seal on us and giving us his Spirit in our hearts as a first instalment.*

As an anointing, the HS is the one who makes us 'smell right', causing us to share the odour of sanctity arising from the holiness of Christ.

Anointing is present in the OT in figure, in the NT as event, and in the time of the Church as sacrament. The figure anticipates and prepares for the event, the sacrament celebrates it and renders it present and actual.

- Figure: anointing in the OT – kings, prophets, priests; each shows the anticipation of an awaited king, priest and prophet who would in fact be the Anointed One, the Messiah. The anointing conferred a real inward power in bringing about a transformation that came from God, and that was more and more identified with the HS (1 Sam 10.1,6 – Saul; 1 Sam 16.13 – David; Is 61.1 – Isaiah)
- Event: Christ as the Anointed One, to whom these figures were pointing as their fulfilment; Acts 10.38 *God anointed Jesus of N with the HS and with power.* The event is his baptism; Lk 4.18 *the Spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me.* This anointing achieves a sp purpose in the life of Jesus – it defines the moment in which he receives the fulness of the Spirit as head of the church and as messiah. Previously he was filled with the HS, but as personal grace, not as office. Ps 45.8 – Jesus was 'anointed with the oil of exaltation' – ie the HS
- Sacramental signs make use of an anointing either as the rite of principal significance or as a complementary rite. Christ wasn't anointed with oil (apart from his feet), and he never anointed anyone else. In him, the symbol was replaced by the reality. The practice of anointing with oil comes from 2 Cor 1.21-2 and 1 Jn 2.27 - *you have not lost the anointing that he gave you, and you do not need anyone to teach you; the anointing he gave teaches you everything.*

Anointing in the Spirit also came to be seen as a way of life – Bernard, Bonaventure. Bonaventure says it not enough to read the scriptures and pray, for without the anointing, there will be study without admiration, knowledge without love, zeal without grace. And the anointing depends on the HS.

In Pentecostal and charismatic tradition it has come to have a third meaning – it's used to describe the character or someone's ministry. It comes back to signifying an act rather than a habit – cp Acts 10.38, *anointed with the HS and with power.*

Macarius (attrib), C4-5: *those who come to be anointed in mind and in the inner man with the heavenly and spiritual oil of gladness, that sanctifies and fills with joy, are receiving a sign of the incorruptible Kingdom and of the eternal power, that is, the assurance of the Spirit, and thus, they are receiving the HS, the Paraclete himself.* 165.

Anointing confers clarity that enables us to do what has to be done with ease and mastery. It's like being in form for an athlete, or inspiration for a poet. But it's more than we can tell in words.

How do we get it? From being baptised and confirmed (1 Jn 2.20; 2 Cor 1.21-2). But this anointing will remain inert and inactive within us, unless we 'set it free'. As long as perfume is sealed in the bottle, no one can enjoy its scent – cp Mark 14.3; the jar must be broken. Jesus himself was broken on the cross so that the HS within him could be poured out, to fill the church and the world with the Spirit's fragrance.

There are times when we feel almost physically the anointing coming upon us – feelings are moved, the soul enjoys clarity, assurance; nerves disappear, fear goes. We experience sth of the tranquillity and authority of God himself. Certain songs are helpful in disposing us to be open to this anointing – the Veni Creator itself, or such as 'Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me'. We all depend on this, even the ordained; ordination provides authorization, but not of itself authority.

## 10. Sevenfold in your gifts

What is a charism?

- 'A gift given for the common good' – 1 Cor 12.7; it's 'for the service of others' – 1 Pet 4.10
- a gift given to 'one' or 'some', but not to all in the same way

Different from sacraments, sanctifying grace, virtues of faith, hope, charity, which are for all Marriage and virginity are charisms (1 Cor 7.7), but don't quite fit this twofold distinction

The Fathers include wisdom, prophecy, power to drive out demons, clarity of insight in interpreting the scriptures, voluntary continence – ie they speak of both aspects, the common good and the personal aspect.

NT doesn't use the word charism to denote an enhance/transformed natural ability; it's always a manifestation of supernatural power. It may be that a charism is supported by a natural talent, but it's not the same. Maximus the Confessor:

*The grace of the most HS does not confer wisdom on the saints without their natural intellect as capacity to receive it; nor does he give the gift of knowledge where there is not a natural rational ability to receive it; nor does he give faith without total certainty of intellect and reason regarding future realities; nor does he give charisms and healings where there is no natural love for our neighbour, nor any one of the other charisms where the conditions are not right and there is no matching ability to receive them. In any case, no one will ever come to possess any of the gifts we have mentioned through any natural ability whatever, but only through the divine power that confers them.*<sup>175</sup>

7 gifts – concept comes from Isaiah 11.1-3:

wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, fear of the Lord; plus piety (added in Septuagint as trans of the second instance of fear)

Often seen in relation to the 7 spirits of the Apocalypse and to the 8 beatitudes.

From Vatican 2, attention shifted to 1 Cor 12 and Paul's list of the charisms, which overlaps with the OT one. The spiritual gifts were reclaimed as active in the church amongst the faithful of every rank. They had never been lost, in that gifted individuals minister through them throughout Church history, and in that history is full of 'charismatic awakenings'. But they had been progressively removed from their proper sphere which is the community, the common good and the organisation of the Church, and confined more and more to the sphere of the purely private and personal. Charism and office got out of balance, and charism had been seen as sth conferred along with ordination, to be exercised by the ordained ministry. Irenaeus speaks of the gifts of the Spirit as in use by many; but gradually they faded.

Pentecost is today! The 2 lungs of the church, charism and sacrament, are once again working together. The HS breathes into the Church from above (through sacrament) and from below (through charism). But we mustn't fall into the opp error of expecting charisms to manifest selves in the Church always, or always in the same way.

### Exercising the charisms

A charism is not given because of holiness; but it won't be exercised in a healthy way if it is not planted in the healthy ground of personal holiness. In particular, it depends on *obedience* (Jesus did not turn, at his extreme moment, to angels or charisms or power, but to obedience). Then it depends on *humility*; Gregory the Great wrote that 'when the charisms and humility are in perfect harmony, it is a sure sign that the HS is present'. Humility is like the insulator on a wire carrying electricity; it prevents shorts. Thirdly, it depends on *love*. Augustine:

*If you love, it is no small thing that you possess. If you love the unity, all that is in it and everything that belongs to any one is your possession too! Cast out envy, and all that is mine becomes yours, and if I cast out envy, all that is yours is mine. Envy causes division but love unites. Of all the organs of the body, only the eye can see. but does the eye see for itself alone? Not at all, it sees for the hand and for the foot and for all the members... Of all the body, only the hand can work at things. but obviously it does not work for itself alone, but also for the eye. If a blow is aimed at your face, does your hand say, "I am not moving, because the blow is not aimed at me"?*

## 11. Finger of God's right hand

Jesus: *if it is by the finger of God that I cast out the demons, then the Kingdom of God has come to you* – Mt 12.28. Exodus 31.18, tablets written likewise by the finger of God. Jer 31.33, God would write his law in our hearts; Ezekiel 36.26-7 this wd take place when he put his Spirit in our hearts; Paul 2 Cor 3.3 says the community of the New Covenant is a letter of Christ, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, on tablets of human hearts.

Speculum virginum, C9:

*The Spirit is Paraclete when he comforts the timid,  
living fountain when he refreshes those who are thirsty,*



love when he unites in faith and practice people of various cultures,  
fire when he inflames with love,  
soul's anointing when by anointing them with heavenly chrism he makes believers fervent,  
finger of God when he distributes the gifts that shine forth among the faithful.

The title finger of God opens up a perspective on the particular manifestation of the Spirit which is the working of signs and wonders. Miracles have to happen afresh in each generation, for a miracle not seen becomes an matter of faith, just like the text which describes them; they don't prove anything, they just themselves become something else which needs proof. Acts 4.30 – *Grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.*

## 12. The Father's solemn promise

Lk 24.49 – *I am sending upon you what my Father promised.* Luke and Paul both speak of HS as a promise: Acts 1.4-5; Acts 2.33; Acts 2.38-9; Gal 3.14; Eph 1.13. The whole of the OT is a promise of the HS. The promise is for us – Acts 2.39.

Pentecost was initially the festival of the first fruits, the day when people came to offer to the Lord the first-fruits of their harvest. Today, it is still the feast of the first fruits, but they are the first fruits of what God is offering to humankind in the Spirit.

## 13. Gifting lips with the Word to say

Spirit and Word together create the world and keep it in motion – ruach and dabhar; Ps 33.6 *by the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their hosts by the breath of his mouth*'.

Easter – the Word made flesh, from the cross, poured out the HS on the Church. Pentecost was the moment when the HS put the word on human lips.

Charisms linked with the Word: tongues and singing in tongues, prophecy, discernment of spirits, teaching. In all of these the breath of God mysteriously enters human language, giving it a new quality. The Spirit continues to do what he did when he inspired the scriptures (though no longer in a normative way); cp 2 Pet 1.21, *when men spoke for God, it was the HS that moved them*'.

So it is that preachers become aware of an intervention, a signal on another wavelength coming through his voice; he feels stirred, his words acquire strength and conviction, an authority which is not his own but which all recognised when they heard Jesus speaking. Paul describes this in 1 Cor 2.4-5 and 1 Thess 1.5.

It follows that we need to allow the fire of the HS to enter into every word that we speak; otherwise they may make sense but they will be without power. The word of God carries energy. Without the HS there can be no authentic proclamation or mission.

## 14. Kindle your light in our minds

HS is like light. To read the Bible without the HS is like opening a book in the dark. The HS makes scripture come alive.

## 15. Pour love into our hearts

The HS draws us from love of self to love of God.

Jesus emphasizes the 'spirit of truth' and Paul the 'spirit of love'. Orthodox teaching has cast Spirit as light into stronger relief, and Latin teaching has given greater emphasis to spirit as love. Basil the Great, in his *On the HS*, gives no role to Spirit as love, while Spirit as light is pivotal. Augustine in his *On the Trinity* makes no ref to the theme of Spirit as light, but gives the pivotal place to Spirit as love. Same difference found within the 2 Latin traditions. The Thomist school is characterised by the search for truth, the Augustinian/Franciscan by the importance of love. Thomists develop the mysticism of light, Franciscans the mysticism of fire. Bonaventure summarises: 'the one is interested primarily in speculation and sees the anointing as secondary, and the other is interested primarily in the anointing and sees speculation as secondary'. Cp Dante.

At the time Luke was writing Acts, the Jewish feast of Pentecost was understood as a commemoration of the giving of the Law and the Convenatn on Sinai. It had come to be seen not so much as a feast linked to the cycle of nature (harvest and first-fruits) but more as linked to the history of salvation. There are deep biblical roots for seeing Sinai and Pentecost as linked in this way. Jer 31, promise that God will make a new covenant, writing his law on people's hearts; Ex 36.27 'I will put my spirit within you'; 2 Cor 3.3. written not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts..

Augustine notes that Passover/Exodus+50 days = law given on Sinai. And Passover/cross+50days = Pentecost. Meaning : **the HS is the new law.**

Relevance for us, who live in a computer and technological age – we have a great need to rediscover our heart, if we want to avoid moving into a kind of ice-age of humanity. No one has yet suggested developing a computer that can love or experience emotions or be affectionate; can you imagine using a computer to help you to love? We use atomic clocks whose margin of error is 1 second every 2m years. Is technology outpacing life? *We know very well that the happiness we enjoy or the misery we suffer here on earth does not depend on what we know or do not know, but rather on whether we love, and on whether we are loved.* **Why do we concentrate so much on knowledge not love? Because knowledge translates into power, but love translates into service...**

## 16. Infirmity in this body of ours overcoming with strength secure..

This verse is about how the HS relates to our body. A human being does not have a body – a human being is a body. Charism of healings. We need to be healed not only of our sicknesses, but of our attachment to our sicknesses ('do you want to be made well?').

We are free to ask the HS at any time to heal us. If he does not, it isn't because we have no faith, or God doesn't love us, or is punishing us. It means he's offering us a gift more precious than healing – to bear suffering with patience. That will last; healing won't.

## 17. The enemy drive from us away

Jesus casts out demons 'by the finger of God' (Luke 11.20); 'by the Spirit of God' (Matt 12.28) – where the HS comes in, evil spirits have to go out. The more the devil is left out of the ambit of faith, the more prevalent he becomes in the ambit of superstition. Origen and Aquinas were the 2 writers who did the most to build up a 'theology' of the devil – and the periods they represent were relatively free of 'demonism'.

Three phases in the history of treatment of the devil:

1. Represented as ugly, grotesque – eg Dante
2. Represented as beautiful – eg Milton
3. Not represented at all. Bultmann: 'it is not possible to use an electric light or listen to the radio, nor is it possible to go to a doctor or make use of clinical remedies when you are sick, and at the same time believe in the world of spirits'.

In the lives of the saints it's very different; the devil is forced to stand out against the light. Temptation of Jesus. Francis of Assisi: 'if the brothers knew how many trials and how great are the afflictions the demons cause me, there would be not one of them who would not be moved to pity and compassion for me'.

Augustine: *the devil delights in being blamed for something. In fact he actually wants you to blame him. He is more than willing to listen to all your recriminations, as long as they keep you from making your own confession!*

Satan today is behind the fear and anxiety which dominates our age. The saints suffered fear at his coming – he gives present reality to the possibility that they too might, if they so willed, rebel as he did : and to lose God is to lose everything.

Caesarius of Arles: 'the devil is bound, like a dog on a chain. He cannot bite anyone unless, having no concern about the danger, they go too close.. He can bark, he can whine and entice, but he can bite only those who go close and let him.' Conversely, the HS frees us from all fear.

## 18. Peace then give without delay

The HS gives the peace of God. Peace for the Christian occupies the same place as nirvana for the Buddhist – it points to the ultimate outcome of all things, the supreme achievement of the adventure of life and time. Peace is a fruit of the Spirit – Rom 8.6; Rom 14.17; Gal 5.22.

Augustine: 'peace is the tranquillity of order'

Scripture speaks also of the 'peace of God' – eg Phil 4.7; Rom 15.33. Peace is not sth that God does, but sth that he is.

Peace in the fullest sense is that which reigns in God.

Dante – *in his will is our peace.*

Peace comes down on a soul in the presence of the Spirit as quiet comes down on the field of battle after the enemy has fled.

## 19. With you as guide we avoid all cause of harm

The Spirit functions as guide

- Pillar of cloud/fire
- Jesus was 'led' by the Spirit into the wilderness
- We are 'led by the Spirit', Gal 5.18
- Luke wrote Acts to show that the same Spirit who guided Jesus is now guiding the church
- Peter went to Cornelius and the pagans because guided by the Spirit to do so, Acts 10-11

The Holy Spirit guides us:



- Through conscience – cp Rom 9.1, ‘my conscience confirms it by the HS’
  - He teaches us; 1 Jn 2.27
  - Through inspiration/illumination
- Through the Church – eg the Spirit guiding the churches in Revelation
  - The Spirit helps us discern the signs of the times; between spirits, 1 Cor 12.10/1 John 4.1.
  - He guides the church sometimes directly, through revelations and prophetic inspirations; and sometimes in a collegial way, through discussion to a point of agreement – eg Acts 15.28, ‘it has been decided by the HS and by ourselves’.
  - He helps us distinguish the Spirit of God from the spirit of the world.

Ignatius Loyola suggested that in decision making we should settle on one choice and rest with it as if made, for a day or more, to test it.

## 20. Through you may we the Father know

The HS leads us to know God as the Father of his son Jesus Christ.

The best way to judge a theology of the Spirit is to ask, is it open or closed to a Trinitarian perspective?

The first thing the HS does in us is to make us see God in a different way. He leads us to discover:

- God is on our side
- God is suffering too

What should we ask of the Spirit – that he should make us know the Father’s love.

## 21. Through you may we know the Son as well

The HS in scripture never puts himself forward proclaiming his own name; he’s always telling of the Father or of the Son. *The Holy Spirit is God behind the scenes*, 353.

There is no need for new theologies of the Spirit; if we lack the support of a lived experience of the Spirit (as they had in the C4th when the theology of the HS was first developed) then we won’t be able to write about him.

Charismatic movement – reveals that Jesus is Lord above all else. Demons called Jesus ‘Son of God’ or ‘Holy One of God’ – but never ‘Lord’.

Simeon the New Theologian was a great poet of the HS. He said, if a rich man gave a penny to a beggar and the beggar ran off to tell all the others so that they too came crowding to the rich man clamouring for a penny, the rich man would surely be irritated – but the Lord would be irritated if the beggar did not run off and tell all the others, so that they too should come to receive from him.

## 22. And you, the Spirit of them both, may we always believe

381 filioque controversy. Questions asked which are answered in the definition ‘the HS who is Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, and who has spoken through the prophets’:

- Who is the HS? – Lord, who proceeds from the Father and is to be adored as Father and Son are adored
- What does he do? – gives life

Irenaeus – the Father anoints, the Son is anointed, and the HS is the anointing.