

## QUESTION 43

### The Missions of the Divine Persons

Next we must consider the missions (*missiones*) of the divine persons. On this topic there are eight questions: (1) Is it fitting for a divine person to be sent on mission? (2) Is a mission eternal or only temporal? (3) In what sense is a divine person sent on mission invisibly? (4) Is it fitting for each person to be sent on mission? (5) Are both the Son and the Holy Spirit sent on mission invisibly? (6) To whom is an invisible mission made? (7) What about visible missions? (8) Does any person send Himself on a mission, be it visible or invisible?

#### Article 1

##### Is it fitting for a divine person to be sent on mission?

It seems that it is not fitting for a divine person to be sent on mission (*personae divinae non conveniat mitti*):

**Objection 1:** The one who is sent on mission is of lesser status than the one who sends him. But it is not the case that one divine person is of lesser status than another. Therefore, it is not the case that one divine person is sent on mission by another.

**Objection 2:** Everything that is sent is separated from the one who sends it, and this is why in *Super Ezechielem* Jerome says, “That which is connected and conjoined in one body cannot be sent.” But as Hilary puts it, “there is nothing separable” in the divine persons. Therefore, it is not the case that one person is sent by another.

**Objection 3:** Whoever is sent on mission leaves one place and goes anew to some other place. But this is unfitting in the case of a divine person, since He is everywhere. Therefore, it is not fitting for a divine person to be sent on mission.

**But contrary to this:** John 8:16 says, “I am not alone, but I and the Father who sent me.”

**I respond:** There are two things implied by the concept of a mission. The one is the relation that the one who is sent bears to the one by whom he is sent, and the other is the relation that the one who is sent bears to the terminus toward which he is sent.

Now someone’s being sent involves a certain procession of what is sent by what sends it, and this procession takes place either (a) by a *command*, as when a master sends his servant, or (b) by *counsel*, as when an advisor is said to send his king into war, or (c) by *origin*, as when a flower is said to be sent forth by a tree. Likewise, someone’s being sent bears a relation to the terminus toward which he is sent, so that he begins to be present there in some way—either because (a) he was previously not present in any way where he is now being sent, or because (b) he begins to be present there in some way in which he was not previously present.

Therefore, a mission can belong to a divine person insofar as this implies, on the one hand, a procession of *origin* from the one who sends Him, and, on the other hand, a *new mode of existing* in something. It is in this way that the Son is said to have been sent by the Father into the world. For He began to exist visibly in the world through His assumed flesh, and yet, as John 1:10 says, He had previously been present in the world.

**Reply to objection 1:** A mission implies a lesser status in the one who is sent when it implies a procession from the sending principle either by a command or by counsel. For one who commands is greater, and the one who counsels is wiser. However, in the case of God the only thing implied is a procession of *origin*, which—as was explained above (q. 42, a. 4 and 6)—preserves equality.

**Reply to objection 2:** That which is sent in such a way that it begins to be present where it had in

no way been previously present undergoes local motion because of its mission, and so it is necessary that it be separated from the one who sent it. However, this does not happen with the sending of a divine person, since a divine person who is sent does not begin to be present where He was not previously present, and He does not cease to be present where He was previously present. Hence, such a sending occurs without separation, but is instead characterized only by a distinction of origin.

**Reply to objection 3:** This objection goes through in the case of a mission that is accomplished by local motion—which has no place in the case of God.

## Article 2

### Can a mission be eternal?

It seems that a mission can be eternal:

**Objection 1:** Gregory says that the Son is sent on mission by the very fact that He is generated. But the generation of the Son is eternal. Therefore, so is His mission.

**Objection 2:** If someone has something temporally (*temporaliter*), then he undergoes change. But a divine person does not undergo change. Therefore, the mission of a divine person is eternal and not temporal.

**Objection 3:** ‘Mission’ implies procession. But the procession of the divine persons is eternal. Therefore, so are their missions.

**But contrary to this:** Galatians 4:4 says, “When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son.”

**I respond:** Among the names that imply the origin of the divine persons, there is a certain distinction that must be taken into account. For in their signification some of these names, e.g., ‘procession’ and ‘going forth’, imply only a relation to the principle, whereas other names specify a terminus of the procession in addition to the relation to the principle.

Among these latter names, some, e.g., ‘generation’ and ‘spiration’, specify an eternal terminus. For instance, a generation is the procession of a divine person into the divine nature, and ‘spiration’, taken passively, implies the procession of the subsistent Love. However, some of these names, e.g., ‘mission’ and ‘giving’ (*datio*), imply a temporal terminus in addition to the relation to the principle. For a thing is sent on mission in order that it might be present in something, and a thing is given in order that it might be had. But for a divine person to be had by some creature—that is, for a divine person to exist in a creature with a new mode of existing—is something temporal.

Hence, ‘mission’ and ‘giving’ are predicated of God only from a given point in time, whereas ‘generation’ and ‘spiration’ are predicated of God only from eternity. On the other hand, ‘procession’ and ‘going forth’ are predicated of God both from eternity and temporally. For instance, the Son processes from eternity so as to be God, whereas He processes temporally (a) so as to be a man as well, in keeping with His visible mission, and (b) so as also to exist within men, in keeping with His invisible mission.

**Reply to objection 1:** Gregory is talking about the temporal generation of the Son from His mother, and not about the generation from His Father.

An alternative reply is that by the very fact that He was begotten from eternity, the Son has the possibility of being sent on mission (*habet quod possit mitti*).

**Reply to objection 2:** The fact that a divine person exists in a new way in something, or that He is had by someone in time, stems not from any change in the divine person, but from a change in the creature—in just the way that God is called ‘Lord’ from a given point in time because of a change

involving creatures.

**Reply to objection 3:** ‘Mission’ not only implies the procession from a principle, but also specifies the temporal terminus of the procession. Hence, a mission is exclusively temporal.

An alternative reply is that ‘mission’ includes the eternal procession and adds something else, viz., a temporal effect. For the relation of a divine person to His principle is exclusively eternal. Hence, the procession may be called a ‘twin procession’, both eternal and temporal, not because the relation to the principle is twofold, but because there is a double terminus, one temporal and one eternal.

### Article 3

#### Is a divine person sent on mission invisibly only through the gift of sanctifying grace?

It seems that it is not the case that a divine person is sent on mission invisibly only through the gift of sanctifying grace (*non sit solum secundum donum gratiae gratum facientis*):

**Objection 1:** For a divine person to be sent on mission is for Him to be given. Therefore, if a divine person is sent only through the gifts of sanctifying grace, it will not be the divine person Himself who is given, but only His gifts. But this is the error of those who claim that it is not the Holy Spirit who is given, but rather His gifts.

**Objection 2:** The preposition ‘through’ (*secundum*) denotes the character of some type of cause. But according to Romans 5:5 (“The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who is given to us”), a divine person is a cause of someone’s having sanctifying grace, and not vice versa. Therefore, it is inappropriate to say that a divine person is sent through the gifts of sanctifying grace.

**Objection 3:** In *De Trinitate* 4 Augustine says, “The Son is said to be sent on mission because He is perceived in time by the mind.” But the Son is known not only through sanctifying grace, but also through gratuitous grace (*gratia gratis data*), e.g., through faith and knowledge. Therefore, it is not the case that a divine person is sent only through sanctifying grace.

**Objection 4:** Rabanus says that the Holy Spirit was given to the Apostles for the working of miracles. But this is a gift of gratuitous grace and not of sanctifying grace. Therefore, it is not the case that a divine person is given only through sanctifying grace.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Trinitate* 15 Augustine says that the Holy Spirit proceeds temporally in order to sanctify creatures. But a mission is a temporal procession. Therefore, since the sanctification of creatures occurs only through sanctifying grace, it follows that the mission of a divine person occurs only through sanctifying grace.

**I respond:** A divine person is *sent on mission* insofar as He exists in a new way in something, and a divine person is *given* insofar as He is had by someone. Neither of these occurs except through sanctifying grace.

There is the common mode in which God exists in all things through His essence, power, and presence as a cause existing in the effects that participate in His goodness (cf. q. 8). But over and beyond this common mode, there is a special mode that belongs to rational creatures, in whom God is said to exist in the way that what is known exists in the knower and what is loved exists in the lover. And since in knowing and loving, rational creatures attain to God Himself by their own operation, God is said not only to exist in a special mode in rational creatures, but also to live in them as in His temple.

So, then, there is no effect other than sanctifying grace that can be the explanation for the fact that a divine person exists in a new way in rational creatures. Hence, it is through sanctifying grace alone that a divine person proceeds temporally and is sent on mission.

Similarly, the only things we are said to have are those that we can freely use and enjoy. But it is only through sanctifying grace that we have the power to enjoy a divine person, and it is precisely in the gift of sanctifying grace that the Holy Spirit is had by and inhabits a man. Hence, it is the Holy Spirit Himself who is given and sent.

**Reply to objection 1:** Through sanctifying grace rational creatures are perfected not only in order that they might use this created gift, but also in order that they might enjoy the divine person Himself. And so the invisible mission is accomplished through the gift of sanctifying grace, but it is the divine person Himself who is given.

**Reply to objection 2:** Sanctifying grace disposes the soul to have the divine person, and this is what is meant by saying that the Holy Spirit is given through the gift of grace. Yet the gift of grace itself comes from the Holy Spirit, and this is what is meant by saying that the charity of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

**Reply to objection 3:** Even though the Son can be known by us through certain effects, it is not through those effects that He inhabits us or is had by us.

**Reply to objection 4:** The working of miracles, like the gift of prophecy and all the other types of gratuitous grace, makes sanctifying grace manifest. Thus in 1 Corinthians 12:7 gratuitous grace is called a manifestation of the Spirit. So, then, the reason why the Holy Spirit is said to have been given to the apostles for the working of miracles is that sanctifying grace was given to them along with a sign that made it manifest.

However, if only the sign of sanctifying grace were given without the sanctifying grace itself, the Holy Spirit would not be said to be given absolutely speaking—unless, that is, there were some qualification according to which one might say that a prophetic spirit or a spirit of miracles is given to someone to the extent that he has from the Holy Spirit the power to prophesy or to work miracles.

#### Article 4

##### Is it fitting for the Father to be sent on mission?

It seems fitting for even the Father to be sent on mission (*etiam patri conveniat mitti*):

**Objection 1:** For a divine person to be sent on mission is for Him to be given. But the Father gives Himself, since He cannot be possessed unless He Himself gives Himself. Therefore, one can say that the Father sends Himself.

**Objection 2:** A divine person is sent through the indwelling of grace. But according to John 14:23 (“We will come to him and will make our abode with him”), the whole Trinity dwells in us through grace. Therefore, each of the divine persons is sent on mission.

**Objection 3:** Except for the notions and the persons themselves, whatever belongs to one person belongs to them all. But ‘mission’ does not signify any person in particular or even any notion, since there are just five notions, as was explained above (q. 32, a. 3). Therefore, it belongs to each divine person to be sent on mission.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Trinitate 2* Augustine says, “The Father alone is never said to have been sent on mission.”

**I respond:** The concept *mission* implies a procession from another, and as applied to the divine persons, it implies procession from another through *origin*, as was explained above (a. 1). Hence, since the Father does not proceed from another, it does not belong to Him in any way to be sent on mission. Rather, this belongs only to the Son and the Holy Spirit, to whom it belongs to proceed from another.

**Reply to objection 1:** If ‘to give’ implies someone’s generous sharing, then in that sense the Father gives Himself, because He generously communicates Himself to creatures in order that they might enjoy Him. However, if ‘to give’ implies the authorship (*auctoritas*) of the giver with respect to that which is given, then in this sense nothing in God is given—just as nothing is sent on mission—except a divine person who proceeds from another.

**Reply to objection 2:** Even though the effect of grace is also from the Father, who dwells in us through grace just as the Son and the Holy Spirit do, nonetheless, because He does not proceed from another, He is not said to be sent on mission. This is the point Augustine is making in *De Trinitate* 4 when he says, “Even though the Father is known in time by someone, He is not said to have been sent on mission, since there is no one from whom He exists or from whom He proceeds.”

**Reply to objection 3:** Insofar as ‘mission’ implies a procession from the sender, it includes a notion in its signification—not a specific notion, but a notion in general, since ‘being from another’ is common to two of the notions.

## Article 5

### Does it belong to the Son to be sent on mission invisibly?

It seems that it does not belong to the Son to be sent on mission invisibly (*filio non conveniat invisibiliter mitti*):

**Objection 1:** The invisible mission of a divine person takes place through the gifts of grace. But according to 1 Corinthians 12:11 (“But all these things, one and the same Spirit does”), all the gifts of grace pertain to the Holy Spirit. Therefore, only the Holy Spirit is sent on mission invisibly.

**Objection 2:** The mission of a divine person is accomplished through sanctifying grace. But gifts that pertain to the perfection of the intellect are not gifts of sanctifying grace, since they can be had without charity—this according to 1 Corinthians 13:2 (“If I should have prophecy and should know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing”). Therefore, since the Son proceeds from the Father as the Word of the intellect, it seems that it does not belong to Him to be sent on mission invisibly.

**Objection 3:** As has been explained (aa. 1 and 4), the mission of a divine person is a certain sort of procession. But the procession of the Son is different from the procession of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, their missions would be different if both of them were sent. And so one of these missions would be superfluous, since a single mission is sufficient to sanctify creatures.

**But contrary to this:** Wisdom 9:10 says of divine Wisdom, “Send her out of Your holy heaven, and from the throne of Your majesty.”

**I respond:** According to John 14:23 (“We will come to him and will make our abode with him”), it is the whole Trinity that dwells in the mind through sanctifying grace. But a divine person’s being sent to someone through invisible grace implies (a) a new mode of dwelling for that divine person and (b) His origin from another. Hence, since it belongs to both the Son and the Holy Spirit to dwell in someone through grace and to proceed from another, it belongs to both of them to be sent on mission invisibly. By contrast, even though it belongs to the Father to dwell in someone through grace, it does not belong to Him to proceed from another and, as a result, it does not belong to Him to be sent on mission.

**Reply to objection 1:** All the gifts *qua* gifts are attributed to the Holy Spirit, since, as was explained above (q. 38, a. 2), He has the character of being the first Gift insofar as He is the Love. Nonetheless, because of their specific character, some gifts, viz., those pertaining to the intellect, are

attributed by a certain appropriation to the Son, and the Son's mission involves those gifts. Hence, in *De Trinitate* 4 Augustine says, "The Son is sent invisibly to someone when He is known and perceived by that person."

**Reply to objection 2:** Through grace the soul is conformed to God. Hence, in order for a divine person to be sent to someone through grace, there must be an assimilation on his part to the divine person who is sent through the gift of grace.

Since the Holy Spirit is the Love, it is through the gift of charity that the soul is assimilated to the Holy Spirit, and so the mission of the Holy Spirit involves the gift of charity. The Son, on the other hand, is the Word—not just any sort of word, but the Word who spirates the Love. Thus, in *De Trinitate* 9 Augustine says, "The Word which we have in mind is knowledge with love." Therefore, the Son is sent not through every perfection of the intellect, but through the sort of formation (*instructio*) of the intellect by which one breaks forth into the affection of love. Thus, John 6:45 says, "Everyone who has listened to the Father and learned, come to me," and Psalm 38:4 says, "In my meditation a fire shall flame out." And this is why Augustine says in plain words that the Son is sent whenever He is known and perceived by someone; for 'perceive' signifies a sort of experiential knowledge. And according to Ecclesiasticus 6:23 ("The wisdom of doctrine is according to her name"), this is properly called wisdom (*sapientia*) or, so to speak, wise knowledge (*sapida scientia*).

**Reply to objection 3:** As was explained above (aa. 1 and 3), 'mission' implies (a) the origin of the person who is sent, along with (b) indwelling through grace.

So if we are speaking of the missions as far as *origin* is concerned, then the mission of the Son is distinguished from the mission of the Holy Spirit in the same way that the Generation is distinguished from the Procession.

On the other hand, if we are speaking of the missions as far as the effect of *grace* is concerned, then the two missions share the fact that they are both rooted in grace, but they are distinguished in the effects of grace, viz., the illumination of the intellect and the inflaming of the affections. And in this sense it is clear that the one effect cannot exist without the other, since neither occurs without sanctifying grace, and the one person is not separated from the other.

## Article 6

### Is an invisible mission made to everyone who participates in grace?

It seems that an invisible mission is not made to everyone who participates in grace:

**Objection 1:** The patriarchs of the Old Testament participated in grace. But the invisible missions do not seem to have been made to them. For John 7:39 says, "For as yet the Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." Therefore, the invisible missions are not made to everyone who participates in grace.

**Objection 2:** Progress in virtue occurs only through grace. But an invisible mission does not seem to seem to have anything to do with progress in virtue. For progress in virtue seems to be continuous, since charity is always either increasing or decreasing, and so the mission would be continuous in the same way. Therefore, an invisible mission is not made to everyone who participates in grace.

**Objection 3:** Christ and the blessed in heaven have grace to the fullest extent. But a mission does not seem to be made to them, since a mission is made to something distant, whereas Christ, insofar as he is a man, and all the blessed are perfectly united to God. Therefore, it is not the case that an invisible mission is made to all who participate in grace.

**Objection 4:** The sacraments of the New Law contain grace, and yet an invisible mission is not said to be made to them. Therefore, it is not the case that an invisible mission is made to all things that have grace.

**But contrary to this:** According to Augustine, an invisible mission is made in order to sanctify creatures. But every creature who has grace is sanctified. Therefore, an invisible mission is made to every creature of this sort.

**I respond:** As was explained above (a. 1), the concept *mission* implies that the one who is sent either (a) begins to exist where he previously did not exist, as happens with created things, or (b) begins to exist, but in a new mode, where he previously existed—and it is in this latter sense that missions are attributed to the divine persons. So there are two elements to consider in the one to whom the mission is made, viz., the indwelling of grace and a certain renewal through grace. Therefore, an invisible mission is made to everyone in whom these two elements are found.

**Reply to objection 1:** An invisible mission was made to the patriarchs of the Old Testament, and this is why in *De Trinitate* 4 Augustine says that insofar as the Son is sent invisibly, “He comes to exist in men or with men; however, this had been done beforehand in the patriarchs and prophets.” Therefore, the statement that the Spirit had not yet come has to do with the giving of the Spirit along with a visible sign, which was done on the day of Pentecost.

**Reply to objection 2:** An invisible mission is also accomplished through progress in virtue or an increase in grace. Hence, in *De Trinitate* 4 Augustine says, “The Son is sent to someone when He is known or perceived by someone to the extent that He can be known or perceived through the understanding of a rational soul that is either progressing toward God or already perfected in God.”

However, an invisible mission involves an increase of grace especially when someone progresses to a new sort of act or to a new state of grace—as, for instance, when someone progresses to the grace of miracles or prophecy, or when someone, out of the fervor of charity, progresses to the point of exposing himself to martyrdom or of renouncing his possessions or of undertaking some arduous task.

**Reply to objection 3:** An invisible mission was made to the blessed in heaven at the very beginning of their beatitude. Afterwards, an invisible mission is made to them not through the intensification of grace, but by the fact that more and more mysteries are revealed to them, right up to judgment day. This increase constitutes an extension of grace as it reaches more and more things.

However, an invisible mission was made to Christ at the very beginning of His conception, but not afterwards. For from the beginning of His conception He was full of all wisdom and grace.

**Reply to objection 4:** Grace exists instrumentally in the sacraments of the New Law, in the way that the form of an artifact exists in the craftsman’s tools as the action proceeds from the agent to the patient. A mission, however, is said to be made only with respect to its terminus. Hence, the mission of a divine person is made not to the sacraments, but rather to those who receive grace through the sacraments.

## Article 7

### Does it belong to the Holy Spirit to be sent on mission visibly?

It seems that it does not belong to the Holy Spirit to be sent on mission visibly:

**Objection 1:** Insofar as the Son was sent visibly into the world, He is said to be less than the Father. But we never read that the Holy Spirit is less than the Father. Therefore, it does not belong to the Holy Spirit to be sent on mission visibly.

**Objection 2:** A visible mission involves the assumption of some visible creature, like the mission of the Son according to the flesh. But the Holy Spirit has not assumed any visible creature. Hence, it cannot be said that He exists in some visible creatures differently from the way He exists in other visible creatures—except, perhaps, in the manner of a sign, in the way He exists in the sacraments or in all the figures of the Old Law (*figurae legales*). Therefore, either the Holy Spirit is not sent visibly, or else one must claim that His mission is visible through *all* the things just mentioned.

**Objection 3:** Every creature is a visible effect that shows forth the whole Trinity. Therefore, it is not the case that the Holy Spirit is sent through visible creatures more than the other divine persons are.

**Objection 4:** The Son is sent on mission visibly through the most worthy of visible creatures, viz., a human nature. Therefore, if the Holy Spirit is sent on mission visibly, He ought to be sent through rational creatures.

**Objection 5:** As Augustine says in *De Trinitate* 3, things that are done visibly by God are dispensed through the ministry of the angels. Therefore, if there have been any visible appearances, then this has been done through the angels. And so it is the angels themselves who are sent on mission, and not the Holy Spirit.

**Objection 6:** If the Holy Spirit were sent on mission visibly, this would be done only in order to make His invisible mission manifest, since invisible things are made manifest through visible things. Therefore, a visible mission should not have been made to anyone to whom an invisible mission had not been made; and a visible mission should have been made to anyone—whether in the New Testament or the Old Testament—to whom an invisible mission had been made. But this is clearly false. Therefore, it is not the case that the Holy Spirit is sent on mission visibly.

**But contrary to this:** Matthew 3:16 says that when the Lord was baptized, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him under the appearance of a dove.

**I respond:** God provides for everything according to its mode. But as is clear from what was said above (q. 12, a. 12), the mode that is connatural to men is led to invisible things through visible things, and so the invisible things of God had to be made manifest to men through visible things. Therefore, just as God in some sense revealed (*demonstravit*) to men His own self, along with the eternal processions of the divine persons, through visible creatures according to certain intimations, so too it was fitting that the invisible missions of the divine persons should be made manifest through certain visible creatures.

However, the Son and the Holy Spirit were made manifest in different ways. For it belongs to the Holy Spirit, insofar as He proceeds as the Love, to be the gift of sanctification, whereas it belongs to the Son, insofar as He is a principle of the Holy Spirit, to be the author of this sanctification. And so the Son was sent visibly as the author of sanctification, whereas the Holy Spirit was sent visibly as the sign of sanctification.

**Reply to objection 1:** The visible creature in which the Son appeared is such that He assumed it into the unity of His person, so that what is said of that creature can be said of the Son of God. And so it is by reason of His assumed nature that the Son is said to be less than the Father. By contrast, the Holy Spirit did not assume any visible creature in which He appeared into the unity of His person in such a way that whatever belongs to that creature is predicated of Him. Hence, the Holy Spirit cannot be called less than the Father because of a visible creature.

**Reply to objection 2:** The visible mission of the Holy Spirit does not involve imaginative visions, i.e., prophetic visions. For as Augustine says in *De Trinitate* 2, “A prophetic vision is not exhibited to bodily eyes through corporeal forms, but is instead exhibited in the spirit through spiritual images of bodies. Yet everyone who was looking saw the dove and the fire with their own eyes. Again, the Holy Spirit was not related to any appearance in the way that the Son was related to the rock—for it is written, ‘The rock was Christ’ (1 Corinthians 10:4). For that rock had already existed as a creature, and because

of its mode of acting was given the name of Christ, whom it typified, whereas the dove and the fire came into existence suddenly just in order to signify the things in question. Rather, the dove and the fire seem to be like the flames that appeared to Moses in the bush, or the column that the people followed in the desert, or the lightning and thunder that occurred while the Law was being given on the mountain. For the corporeal appearance of these things came into existence in order to signify something and then disappeared.”

So, then, it is clear that the visible mission involves neither prophetic visions, which existed in the imagination and were not corporeal, nor the sacramental signs of the Old and New Testaments, in which certain preexisting things are taken up in order to signify something. Rather, the Holy Spirit is said to be sent on mission visibly insofar as He showed Himself—as in signs—in certain creatures that were made specifically for this purpose.

**Reply to objection 3:** Even though the whole Trinity operated through these visible creatures, they were nonetheless specifically made in order to reveal this or that person. For just as the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are signified by diverse names, so also they were able to be signified by diverse things—even though there is no separation or diversity among the persons themselves.

**Reply to objection 4:** As has been explained, the Son had to be made known as the author of sanctification, and so the Son’s visible mission had to be accomplished through a rational nature, whose function it is to act and to which the act of sanctifying can belong. By contrast, any other creature whatsoever could have served as a *sign* of sanctification. Nor did a visible creature made for this purpose have to be assumed by the Holy Spirit into the unity of His person. For such a creature was assumed not in order to do anything, but only in order to be a sign. Because of this, the creature in question did not need to last any longer than the time during which it played its role.

**Reply to objection 5:** The visible creatures in question were formed by the ministry of the angels, but they were formed in order to signify the person of the Holy Spirit and not in order to signify the person of an angel. Therefore, since the Holy Spirit existed in those visible creatures in the way that the thing signified exists in a sign, it follows that it was the Holy Spirit—and not an angel—who was visibly sent on mission through those things.

**Reply to objection 6:** As it says in 1 Corinthians 12:7 (“And the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man for its usefulness [*read: to the Church*]”), it is not necessary that an invisible mission should always be manifested through some visible exterior sign. This usefulness consists in the fact that the Faith is confirmed and propagated through visible signs of the sort in question. According to Hebrews 2:3 (“Which, having begun to be declared by the Lord, was confirmed to us by them that heard Him”), this has been done mainly through Christ and the Apostles. And so the visible mission of the Holy Spirit had to be made especially to Christ and the apostles and certain early saints, on whom the Church was in one way or another founded. And yet a visible mission made to Christ was to reveal the invisible mission that had been made to Him not at that time, but at the very beginning of His conception.

Now a visible mission was made to Christ at His Baptism—under the appearance of a dove, which is a fertile animal—in order to show forth in Christ His authority to give grace through spiritual regeneration. Hence, the voice of the Father said, “This is my beloved Son” (Matthew 3:17), in order that others might be regenerated in the likeness of the Only-begotten.

A visible mission was made to Christ at His Transfiguration—under the appearance of a bright cloud—in order to show the abundance of His teaching. Hence, the voice said, “Listen to Him” (Matthew 17:5).

A visible mission was made to the Apostles under the appearance of breathing in order to show forth the power of the ministry under the dispensation of the sacraments. Hence, they were told, “Whose sins you will remit, they are remitted them” (John 20:23).

Again, a visible mission was made to the Apostles under the tongues of fire in order to show forth

the office of teaching. Hence, it is said, “They began to speak in various tongues” (Acts 2:4).

On the other hand, it was not proper for a visible mission of the Holy Spirit to be made to the Patriarchs of the Old Testament, since the visible mission of the Son had to be made before the visible mission of the Holy Spirit. For the Holy Spirit made the Son known in just that way that the Son made the Father known. Still, visible appearances of the divine persons were made to the patriarchs of the Old Testament. But these cannot be called visible *missions*, because, according to Augustine, they were made not to designate the indwelling of a divine person through grace, but instead to make something else manifest.

### Article 8

#### Is a divine person sent on mission only by a person from whom He eternally proceeds?

It seems that a divine person is sent on mission only by a person from whom He eternally proceeds:

**Objection 1:** As Augustine says in *De Trinitate* 4, “The Father is sent on mission by no one because He proceeds from no one.” Therefore, if one divine person is sent on mission by another, He must proceed from that person.

**Objection 2:** The one who sends has authority over the one who is sent. But authority cannot be had over a divine person except because of origin. Therefore, a divine person who is sent must proceed from the person who sends Him.

**Objection 3:** If a divine person could be sent on mission by a person He does not proceed from, then nothing would prevent the Holy Spirit from being given by a man, even though He does not proceed from that man. But this is contrary to what Augustine says in *De Trinitate* 15. Therefore, a divine person can be sent on mission only by a person that He proceeds from.

**But contrary to this:** According to Isaiah 48:16 (“And now the Lord God and His Spirit have sent me”), the Son is sent by the Holy Spirit. But the Son does not proceed from the Holy Spirit. Therefore, a divine person is sent by a person He does not proceed from.

**I respond:** Authors have talked in different ways about this topic.

According to some, a divine person is sent on mission only by a person from whom He proceeds eternally. According to this view, when the Son of God is said to be sent on mission by the Holy Spirit, this should be taken to refer to His human nature, according to which He was sent to preach by the Holy Spirit.

On the other hand, in *De Trinitate* 2 Augustine says that the Son is sent on mission both by Himself and by the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit is likewise sent on mission both by Himself and by the Son, with the result that, in God, *being sent on mission* does not belong to every person, but instead belongs only to a person who proceeds from another, whereas *sending on mission* belongs to every person.

Both of these positions are in some sense true. For when a person is said to be sent on mission, what is being designated are both (a) the person Himself who proceeds from another and (b) the visible or invisible effect that the divine person’s mission involves.

Therefore, if the one who sends a person on mission is designated as the principle of the person who is sent, then it is not the case that each person sends another on mission; instead, this belongs only to Him who is a principle of the person sent. In this sense, the Son is sent on mission only by the Father, and the Holy Spirit is sent on mission by the Father and the Son.

However, if ‘person who sends’ is taken to mean the principle of the effect that the mission

involves, then the whole Trinity sends the person who is sent. However, this does not mean that a man might give the Holy Spirit, since a man cannot cause the effect of grace.

**Reply to objection 1 and objection 2 and objection 3:** The replies to the objections are clear from what has been said.