

1. Perhaps you will wonder why, when I was charged to abridge and briefly to explain the letter I had written concerning the Holy Spirit, you find me, as though I had laid aside my work on that subject, writing against those who are guilty of impiety toward the Son of God and who call him a creature. But you will not blame me, I know well, when you understand the cause. Indeed, when you see how reasonable it is, your Piety will welcome it. Our Lord himself said that the Paraclete 'shall not speak from himself, but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak ... for he shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you'; and, 'having breathed on them', he gave the Spirit to the disciples out of himself, and in this way the Father poured him out 'upon all flesh', as it is written. It is natural, therefore, that I should have spoken and written first concerning the Son, that from our knowledge of the Son we may be able to have true knowledge of the Spirit. For we shall find that the Spirit has to the Son the same proper relationship as we have known the Son to have to the Father. And as the Son says, 'All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine', so we shall find that through the Son all these things are in the Spirit also. And as the Father attested the Son, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased', so the Spirit belongs to the Son; for the Apostle says: 'God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying, Abba, Father.' And, what is remarkable, as the Son said, 'What is mine belongs to the Father', so the Holy Spirit, which is said to belong to the Son, belongs to the Father. For the Son himself says: 'When the Paraclete is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me.' And Paul writes: 'No man knoweth the things of man save the spirit of man which is in him. Even so the things of God none knoweth save the Spirit of God which is in him. But we received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit which is of God, that we might see the things that are freely given to us by God.' And throughout divine Scripture you will find that the Holy Spirit, who is said to belong to the Son, is also said to belong to God. This I wrote in my previous letter. If therefore the Son, because of his proper relationship with the Father and because he is the proper offspring of his essence, is not a creature, but is one in essence with the Father: the Holy Spirit likewise, because of his proper relationship with the Son, through whom he is given to all men and whose is all that he has, cannot be a creature, and it is impious to call him so.

2. These considerations are sufficient to dissuade anyone, be he never so contentious, from continuing to call the Spirit of God a creature, who is in God and searches the deep things of God and who is given from the Father through the Son; lest from this he shall be forced to call the Son also a creature, who is Word, Wisdom, Image, and Radiance, seeing whom we see the Father; and lest finally he should hear the words: 'Whosoever denieth the Son hath not the Father.' For such a man will soon be saying with the fool: 'There is no God.' None the less, so that our reply to the impious may be more fully established, it will be well to make use of those considerations which show that the Son is not a creature, to show that the Spirit is not a creature. The creatures come from nothing and their existence has a beginning; for, 'In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth', and what is in them. The Holy Spirit

is, and is said to be, from God (so said the Apostle). But if the Son cannot be a creature because he does not come from nothing, but from God, then of necessity the Spirit is not a creature, for we have confessed that he comes from God. It is creatures that come from nothing.

3. Again, the Holy Spirit is called, and is, unction and seal. For John writes: 'And as for you, the unction which ye received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that anyone should teach you, but as his unction, his Spirit teacheth you concerning all things.' In the prophet Isaiah it is written: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me.' Paul writes: 'In whom having also believed, ye were sealed,' and again, 'Grieve not the Holy Spirit . . . in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption'. The creatures are anointed and sealed in him. But if the creatures are anointed and sealed in him, the Spirit cannot be a creature. For that which anoints is not like to those which are anointed. Moreover, this unction is a breath of the Son, so that he who has the Spirit says: 'We are a sweet savour of Christ.' The seal gives the impress of the Son, so that he who is sealed has the form of Christ; as the Apostle says: 'My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you.' But if the Spirit is the sweet savour and form of the Son, it is clear that the Spirit cannot be a creature; for the Son also, 'being in the form' 8 of the Father, is not a creature. Moreover, as he who has seen the Son sees the Father, so he who has the Holy Spirit has the Son, and, having him, is a temple of God. For Paul writes, 'Know ye not that ye are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' John says: 'Hereby know we that we abide in God and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.' But if we have confessed that the Son is not a creature, because he is in the Father and the Father in him, then the Spirit likewise cannot possibly be a creature; for the Son is in him and he is in the Son. Wherefore, he who receives the Spirit is called a temple of God. Furthermore, it will be well to look at it in the light of the following consideration. If the Son is the Word of God, he is one as the Father is one; for, 'There is one God, of whom are all things . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ'. Hence both in our speech and in the Scriptures he is called 'only begotten Son'. But creatures are many and diverse: angels, archangels, cherubim, principalities, powers, and the rest, as we have said. But if the Son is not a creature because he does not belong to the many, but is one as the Father is one: then the Spirit likewise — for we must take our knowledge of the Spirit from the Son — cannot be a creature. For he does not belong to the many but is himself one.

4 . This the Apostle knows when he says: 'All these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally, even as he will'; and a little farther on: 'In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body . . . and were all made to drink of one Spirit.'

Once more, if we must take our knowledge of the Spirit from the Son, then with propriety we may put forward proofs which derive from him. The Son is everywhere; for he is in the Father and the Father in him. He controls and contains all things; and it is written: 'In him all things consist, whether seen or unseen, and he is before all

things.' But the creatures are in the places which have been assigned to them: sun, moon, and the other lights in the firmament, angels in heaven and men upon the earth. But if the Son is not a creature, because he is not in places assigned to him, but is in the Father, and because he is everywhere even while he is outside all things; it follows that the Spirit cannot be a creature, for he is not in places assigned to him, but fills all things and yet is outside all things. Thus it is written: 'The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the world.' And David sings, 'Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?', inasmuch as he is not in any place, but outside all things and in the Son, as the Son is in the Father. Therefore, as we have proved, he is not a creature.

Over and above these things, the following considerations will confirm the condemnation of the Arian heresy, and once more make plain from the Son what we know concerning the Spirit. The Son, like the Father, is creator; for he says: 'What things I see the Father doing, these things I also do.' 'All things', indeed, 'were made through him, and without him was not anything made.' But if the Son, being, like the Father, creator, is not a creature; and if, because all things were created through him, he does not belong to things created: then, clearly, neither is the Spirit a creature. For it is written concerning him in the one hundred and third Psalm: 'Thou shalt take away their spirit, and they shall die and return to their dust. Thou shalt put forth thy Spirit, and they shall be created, and thou shalt renew the face of the earth.' u

5. As it is thus written, it is clear that the Spirit is not a creature, but takes part in the act of creation. The Father creates all things through the Word in the Spirit; for where the Word is, there is the Spirit also, and the things which are created through the Word have their vital strength out of the Spirit from the Word. Thus it is written in the thirty-second Psalm: 'By the Word of the Lord the heavens were established, and by the Spirit of his mouth is all their power.' So clearly is the Spirit indivisible from the Son that what is now to be said leaves no room for doubt. When the Word came upon the prophet, it was in the Spirit that the prophet used to speak the things he received from the Word. Thus it is written in the Acts, when Peter says: 'Brethren, it was needful that the Scripture should be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spake before.' In Zechariah it is written, when the Word comes upon him: 'But receive my words and my statutes, which I charge in my Spirit to the prophets.' And when, a little farther on, he rebuked the people, he said: 'They made their hearts to be disobedient, lest they should hear my law and the words which the Lord of hosts has sent by his Spirit in the hands of the prophets of old.' And when Christ spoke in Paul — as Paul himself said, 'Seeing that ye seek a proof of Christ that speaketh in me' — it was, none the less, the Spirit that he had bestowing upon him the power of speech. For he writes: 'according to the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ upon me.' Again, when Christ spoke in him, he said: 'Save that the Holy Spirit testifieth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.' The Spirit is not outside the Word, but, being in the Word, through him is in God. And so the spiritual gifts are given in the Triad. For, as he writes to the Corinthians, in their distribution there is the same

Spirit and the same Lord and the same God, 'Who worketh all things in all'. For the Father himself through the Word in the Spirit works and gives all things.

6. Assuredly, when he prayed for the Corinthians, he prayed in the Triad, saying : 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.' For inasmuch as we partake of the Spirit, we have the grace of the Word and, in the Word, the love of the Father. And as the grace of the Triad is one, so also the Triad is indivisible. We can see this in regard to Saint Mary herself. The archangel Gabriel, when sent to announce the coming of the Word upon her, said, 'The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee', knowing that the Spirit was in the Word. Wherefore he straightway added: 'and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.' For Christ is 'the Power of God and the Wisdom of God'. But if the Spirit was in the Word, then it must be clear that the Spirit through the Word was also in God. Likewise, when the Spirit comes to us, the Son will come and the Father, and they will make their abode in us. For the Triad is indivisible, and its Godhead is one; and there is one God, 'over all and through all and in all'. This is the faith of the Catholic Church. For the Lord grounded and rooted it in the Triad, when he said to his disciples: 'Go ye and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' Were the Spirit a creature, he would not have ranked him with the Father; lest, by reason of something strange and foreign being ranked therewith, the Triad should not be consistent. For what was lacking to God, that he should take to himself something foreign in essence and share his glory with it? God forbid! It is not so! He himself said: 'I am full.' Therefore the Lord ranked the Spirit with the name of the Father, to show that the Triad is not composed of diverse elements, I mean of creator and creature, but its Godhead is one. It was because he had learned this that Paul taught the oneness of the grace given in the Triad, saying: 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism'. As there is one baptism, so there is one faith. For he who believes in the Father, in the Father knows the Son; and it is not apart from the Son that he knows the Spirit. Therefore he believes also in the Son and in the Holy Spirit. For the Godhead of the Triad is one, as it is made known from one, even from the Father.

7. In these terms the Catholic faith is expressed. But as for those who speak evil of the Spirit and call him a creature, if what we have said does not make them repent, then may what we are about to say overwhelm them with shame. If there is a Triad, and if the faith is faith in a Triad, let them tell us whether it was always a Triad, or whether there was once when it was not a Triad. If the Triad is eternal, the Spirit is not a creature, for he coexists eternally with the Word and is in him. As for the creatures, there was a time when they were not. If he is a creature, and the creatures are from nothing, it is clear that there was once when the Triad was not a Triad but a dyad. What greater impiety can man utter ? They are saying that the Triad owes its existence to alteration and progress; that it was a dyad, and waited for the birth of a creature which should be ranked with the Father and the Son, and with them become the Triad. God forbid that such a notion should so much as enter the minds of Christian people ! As the Son, because he always exists, is not

a creature; so, because the Triad always exists, there is no creature in it. Therefore the Spirit is not a creature. As it always was, so it now is; as it now is, so it always was. It is the Triad, and therein Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And God is one, the Father, who is 'over all and through all and in all', who is 'blessed for ever. Amen'.

I have written this in brief, as you directed, and am sending it. If anything is lacking therein, as a man of understanding, be kind enough to supply it. Read it 'to them that are of the household of faith', and refute those who love contention and evil speech. Perhaps, even by a late repentance, they may wash away from their souls the perversity which formerly was in them. It were well for them, as it is written, 'to turn aside and not to tarry'; lest, by delaying, they should hear that which was spoken by the Lord: 'Whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age, nor in the age to come.'