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## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN PILGRIMS' ITINERARIA (4<sup>TH</sup>–7<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES)

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**Streszczenie.** *Duch Święty w itinerariach pielgrzymów (IV–VII wiek).* Praktyka nawiedzenia miejsc, gdzie dokonały się tajemnice zbawienia, wpisała się bardzo wcześniej w doświadczenie Kościoła. Szlaki pobożnych pielgrzymów wiodły również na Górę Syjon i do jerozolimskiego Wieczernika. To tam rozegrały się wydarzenia Pięćdziesiątnicy i narodziła się wspólnota nowego ludu Bożego. Wieczernik u większości autorów itinerariów był postrzegany jako miejsce narodzin Kościoła. Chociaż daje się zauważyć pewną ciągłość tradycji, jednak nie brak było napięć spowodowanych separacją grupy judeochrześcjan od Wielkiego Kościoła. Źródła wskazują jednak na fakt, że Syjon był „matką wszystkich Kościołów”, a skromny dom modlitwy, jakim był Wieczernik, wskazywano jako „kościół Apostołów”. Do praktyki pielgrzymek należała medytacja Pisma Świętego i sprawowanie liturgii. Obok tego nie brakowało także świadectw materialnych i szczegółowych opisów odwiedzających Wieczernik. Była to jednak już epoka średniowieczna.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Kościół starożytny; pielgrzymki; Syjon; Wieczernik; Jerozolima; Duch Święty.

**Abstract.** The Cenacle on Mount Sion is the traditional site of the descent of the Spirit on the Apostles at Pentecost. This place in Christian thought and piety reflects the pattern of continuity. Cenacle has become the center of the Church of Jerusalem and the Judeo-Christian house of worship. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the Christian writers consider

the Mt. Sion “cut off” from the community of believers. The sources show that the later references to this building indicate it as the “Church of the Apostles”. The Church’s theologians spoke about “Sion, Mother of all the Churches”. Mount Sion was the destination of pilgrimage. The place of the Cenacle on Mt Sion often is presented by the pilgrims and the liturgical texts. Next, to it, there was material evidence and descriptions of the visitors.

**Key words:** Ancient Church; pilgrimage; Sion (Zion); Cenacle; Jerusalem; Holy Spirit.

## PREFACE

The disciples of Jesus Christ received the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem during Pentecost (Acts 2:1–47). They go, from the Holy City, to the ends of the earth to proclaim the Gospel (Acts 1:8; 13:47). Saint Luke gives Jerusalem great significance for the early Church. For him, the new Israel has its beginnings in it but then moves beyond it. However, Christians from the ends of the earth returned to Jerusalem. They did it as pilgrims. Moreover, stories began to circulate about sanctuaries visited by them. In the case of the Cenacle in Mount Sion, there are clear and obvious proofs that would support the existence of the ancient cult in this place. Its authenticity was accepted by everybody, the Scripture gives no localizing information about where in Jerusalem the disciples received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Very often the Pilgrims’ *Itineraria* are our only source for traditions regarding events in Jerusalem. In this way, we come to possess eyewitness pilgrim accounts by those who claimed to have seen an extant Christian shrine on Mount Sion.

### 1. MOUNT SION – THE DESTINATION OF PILGRIMAGE

It’s well known that the practice of pilgrimage is a devotional symptom of every religion<sup>1</sup>. The Christians put it into practice soon and the localities increase the pilgrims travel towards. Jerusalem is the most important destination, as for the Jewish tradition, even if due to differ-

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<sup>1</sup> See M. Simon (ed.), *Les pèlerinages de l’antiquité biblique et classique à Occident Médiéval* (Études d’histoire des religions 1), Paris 1973.

ent reasons. It is always a matter of travels made by individual Christian urged by piety and biblical and theological interest. The pilgrimage was a significant part of Greco-Roman religion, from which Christianity received most of its converts, so it was almost inevitable that faithful too would adopt this practice.

There were some pilgrims who came to Jerusalem before Constantine's peace<sup>2</sup>. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, we have more informations about an increased pilgrimage flow to Jerusalem<sup>3</sup>, because of the construction of big and wonderful churches as well erected on the Redemption places. St. Helena contributed to establishing the basics of Christian pilgrimage, which placed Jerusalem on top of the Holy Places. The Holy City became a symbolic focus of the new Christian empire. In the new circumstances, it ceased to be Jewish or pagan city and became Christian. The Gentile-Christians, by the emperor's will, took over from the hands of the Jewish-Christians<sup>4</sup> most of the places sacred to the memories of Jesus. The city, metamorphosed through Christian piety and in Christian garb, made a triumphal comeback. In Palestine, Constantine's churches were designed to commemorate a specific biblical event but they functioned also as a meeting space for faithful<sup>5</sup>.

The practice of pilgrimage provided the opportunity to touch the holiness. This possibility could not be replaced by a spiritual concept of a heavenly Jerusalem<sup>6</sup>. The pilgrimages promote particular literature: the

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<sup>2</sup> Eusebius and Jerome speak about pre-Constantinian pilgrims to Jerusalem. See R.L. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy. Palestine in Christian History and Thought*, New Haven–London 1992, p. 84.

<sup>3</sup> See E. Franceschini–R. Weber (ed.), *Itineraria et alia geographica*; CCL 175, p. 29–103; D. Baldi, *Enchiridion Locorum Sanctorum Documenta S. Evangelii Loca Respicientia Collegit atque adnotavit...*, Jerusalem 1982<sup>3</sup>; B. Kötting, *Peregrinatio religiosa*, Münster–Regensburg 1950; P. Maraval, *Lieux saints et pèlerinages d'Orient. Histoire et géographie. Des origines à la conquête arabe*, Paris 1985.

<sup>4</sup> During the 4th century tradition linked the church – synagogue on Sion with the descent of the Spirit at the festival of Pentecost as related in Acts 2.

<sup>5</sup> The church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the Eleona (Mt. of Olives), the Holy Sepulcher and Mamre (Hebron).

<sup>6</sup> See M.C. Paczkowski, *Rzeczywistość, symbol i tajemnica. Jerozolima w starożytnej literaturze chrześcijańskiej okresu przedchalcedońskiego* (Biblioteka Ziemi Świętej – Seria Naukowa), Wrocław 2003, passim.

“Guide-Books” and the trip diary, that arouse great interest for the history of the Paleo-Christian topography. This literature flourished until the depths of the Middle Ages and ranges from purely geographic descriptions to devotional works. Christian pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Jerusalem did not wane even after the Muslims took control of Palestine. They allowed Christians to come on pilgrimage but they had to pay a special tax for the privilege. The Arabs monitored Christian pilgrimage with great caution.

Several early pilgrims left behind diaries containing not only their itineraries but also their emotions on seeing Holy Places. The oldest itinerary of an anonymous pilgrim from Bordeaux who travelled from Gaul to Palestine in 333<sup>7</sup>. He visited Jerusalem and there “by the command of emperor Constantine (*iussu Constantini*), has been built a basilica, that is to say, a church of wondrous beauty”<sup>8</sup>.

A Spanish woman named Egeria left a remarkable account of her pilgrimage<sup>9</sup>. The longest section of her diary deals with Jerusalem. When writing about her experiences in the Holy City, Egeria does more than describe her impressions, writes extensively about the liturgy celebrated in the churches of Jerusalem<sup>10</sup>. She notes that the liturgy celebrated at the shrine was always relevant to the event commemorated there. The liturgy of Jerusalem is to be considered the mother of all liturgies. And the most influential liturgy was that celebrated around the Anastasis, as attested in the sources from the 4th century on. It is mainly the *Diary of Egeria* to present the daily liturgy and the liturgical feasts in Jerusalem. Egeria and the other pilgrims testify to the Christianization of Sion and Jerusalem but the important traditions of the history of the early Jerusalem Christian community are entirely omitted from traveller’s account.

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<sup>7</sup> The pilgrim wrote it a little more than a decade after Constantine began his transformation of the Palestine to the “Holy Land”.

<sup>8</sup> *Itinerarium Burdigalense*, transl. A. Stewart; *Palestine Pilgrims Text Society*, vol. 1, London 1887, p. 63.

<sup>9</sup> Egeria (Etheria or Silvia) made her journey around the year 380 A.D; see B. Bagatti, *Ancora sulla data di Egeria*, “*Bibbia e Oriente*” 10 (1968), p. 73.

<sup>10</sup> See *Egeria’s Travels*, ed. J. Wilkinson, London 1971; *Egérie. Journal de voyage*, SCh 296, ed. P. Maraval, Paris 1982.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> century Gregory of Nyssa through it necessary to remind Christians that pilgrimage to Jerusalem was not a requirement for salvation<sup>11</sup>. Many important personages set out to Palestine during this period and remain there often a long time. The pilgrimage not only extends but sometimes is transformed into a real residence. Paulinus of Nola will call this great pilgrims' flow "*religiosa cupiditas*"<sup>12</sup>. Such "*cupiditas*" involves famous people also like Jerome, Alipius, Palladius and promotes the construction of monasteries in different Holy Places to receive the pilgrims: in Bethlehem, on Mount of Olives, in the whole Holy City. They experienced the atmosphere of a renewed Pentecost. However, the 4<sup>th</sup> century was the time of a deep meditation about the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is seen, on the one hand, as a gift from God and on the other, as a Divine Person. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century was evident a particular focus on the Spirit in relation to the doctrine of the Trinity. The authors of this period were Athanasius firstly and Didymus, Basile the Great, Ambrosius of Milan and other also. The results of the pneumatological discussion were useful: doctrinal investigations were reached.

The main scope of the Christian pilgrimage was to reach the localities of the "event" for reliving and assimilating its spiritual charge. The pilgrimage keeps "the places where it was announced and fulfilled what said by Holy Bible"<sup>13</sup> as aim and, as per statement of Alexander, bishop of Cappadocia during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, people trip to Holy Places for "preying and visiting Holy Places"<sup>14</sup>. Anonymous of Piacenza follows "the Christians traces" and undertakes "the visit to the wonders of the Holy Prophets"<sup>15</sup>.

Even if the voice of some authors, among the Fathers of Church, rises against such custom sometimes, it really hits the mark of the over-indulgences or degenerations or wrong motivations supporting it<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> See *Epistula* II.

<sup>12</sup> See *Epistula* 49,14.

<sup>13</sup> *Historia Ecclesiastica* IV, 24, 14; [www.newadvent.org/fathers/2501.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2501.htm) [11.03.2019].

<sup>14</sup> *Historia Ecclesiastica* VI, 11, 2; see also Jerome, *De viris illustribus* 62.

<sup>15</sup> *Itinerarium Antonini Placentini* 1,1, ed. CCL 175, p. 157.

<sup>16</sup> In a letter to presbyter Paulinus, St. Jerome surprises us with an argument against the pilgrimage to the city of Jerusalem. He has in mind those who did not visit

According to Cyril, the bishop of the Holy City (384/5–386), Jerusalem enjoyed a legitimate priority within the Church (primacy of place) and was the true center of the entire world<sup>17</sup>. He was convinced that indeed the “prerogative of all good things was in Jerusalem”<sup>18</sup>. He also claimed that “the Apostles spoke every tongue to those of Gentile extraction; for not in our time have multitudes of strangers first begun to assemble here from all quarters but they have done so since that time”<sup>19</sup>. In this manner, Cyril introduced the possibility of a reference to the physical Jerusalem – Sion.

Understandably, the Holy Sepulcher became the center of the Gentile Church while the Jewish-Christian community continued its separate life on Mount Sion<sup>20</sup>. The pilgrimage to Christian Sion in the 4th century became problematic. The cause was that it “was cut out”<sup>21</sup>, as Epiphanius attests. The reason for this attitude is perfectly explained, and it is because the shrines were not in the hands of Gentile-Christians but in those of the Judaeo-Christians<sup>22</sup>. The same silence was kept in regard to many important Holy Places in Jerusalem.

The importance of the Upper Room to Christians arises in its crucial events of Christian history<sup>23</sup>. It is the acknowledged site of the

the Holy Places: “So that you do not think that something is missing in your faith because you did not see Jerusalem, neither should you think us to be your betters because we enjoy living in this place... Not to be in Jerusalem but to have lived rightly in Jerusalem is praiseworthy”; *Epistula* 58,2; [www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001058.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001058.htm) [08.03.2019].

<sup>17</sup> P.W.L. Walker, *Holy City, Holy Places? Christian Attitudes to Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Fourth Century* (Oxford Early Christian Studies 2), Oxford 1990, p. 314.

<sup>18</sup> *Catechesis* III,7, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/310103.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310103.htm) [09.03.2019].

<sup>19</sup> *Catechesis* XVII, 16; [www.newadvent.org/fathers/310117.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310117.htm) [09.03.2019].

<sup>20</sup> The Judaeo-Christian community did not follow the directives of the official Church, it was obstinate in living in an independent way, observing the Jewish customs. Also after the Council of Nicaea, there were among the Christians of Gentile origin those who regarded as “heretic” all the faithful who did not wish to conform to the conciliar decisions.

<sup>21</sup> *Panarion (Adversus haereses)* 45; [www.newadvent.org/fathers/](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/) [10.03.2019].

<sup>22</sup> See B. Bagatti, *The Church from the Circumcision. History and Archaeology of the Judeo-Christians* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum – Collectio Minor 2), Jerusalem 1984 [reprint], p. 14.

<sup>23</sup> See D.Ch. Clausen, *The Upper Room and Tomb of David. The History, Art and Archaeology of the Cenacle on Mount Zion*, Jefferson 2016.

institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper and the Priesthood<sup>24</sup>. The Cenacle has an association with the place where Jesus' disciples resided awaiting the Feast of Pentecost and where the Holy Spirit descended on them, creating the Church of God.

For the Upper Room, the New Testament's text employs ἀνάγαιον (i.e. the place of the Supper; see Mark 14:15; Luke 22:12)<sup>25</sup>. The writer of the Acts of the Apostles uses a variant for Upper Room (Acts 1:13). The first word refers to the venue of the Last Supper. So ὑπερῶον (i.e. the upper room) indicates the place where the disciples resided at the time after Resurrection and at Pentecost<sup>26</sup>. The words are not synonymous but the writers of the 4<sup>th</sup> century considered them as such, giving to both the same meaning. Jerome rendered these two Greek words by the single Latin word *coenaculum* (*cenaculum*)<sup>27</sup>, meaning "dining room" which was customarily located on a second floor in Greco-Roman houses<sup>28</sup>.

In Jerusalem, the center of the early Church was in Sion<sup>29</sup>. This small Shrine was the seat of the Judeo-Christian community. Its history fits in with the vicissitudes of early Christianity<sup>30</sup>. When citing Acts 1:12, Eusebius of Caesarea wrote about the building of Cenacle and he called it the "Holy Church of God"<sup>31</sup>. It became the seat of the "Mother Church"

<sup>24</sup> In Mark 14:14 and Luke 22:11 κατάλυμα; G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexikon*, Oxford 1976<sup>4</sup>, p. 711.

<sup>25</sup> The Gospels report that the last meal of Jesus and his disciples was held in a "large upper room, furnished and ready" in Jerusalem (Mark 14:15).

<sup>26</sup> See W.H. Mare, *The Archaeology of the Jerusalem Area*, Grand Rapids 1987, p. 233–234. At that stage, this was an affluent quarter, and a wealthy follower of Jesus may have turned his house into a place of assembly (Acts 2:44–455). In early Christian tradition, the location of the Upper Room was the home of Mary the mother of John Mark (Acts 12:12).

<sup>27</sup> See D. Baldi, *Enchiridion*, p. 473.

<sup>28</sup> See G.R. Storey, *Regionaries – Type Insulae 2: Architectural/Residential Units at Rome*, "American Journal of Archaeology" 106 (2002), nr 3, p. 411–434; see Vitruvius, *De Architectura* II, 17.

<sup>29</sup> See E. Alliaia [et alii], *Monte Sion e S. Cenacolo* (Supplemento del Bollettino "Eco della Custodia di Terra Santa"), Milano – Jerusalem 1994, p. 14–15.

<sup>30</sup> See B. Pixner, *Nazoreans on Mount Zion (Jerusalem)*, in: *Le judeo-christianisme dans tous ses états. Actes du colloque de Jérusalem (6–10 Juillet 1998)*, Paris 2001, p. 289–316.

<sup>31</sup> *Demonstratio evangelica* VI, 18, [http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/eusebius\\_de\\_08\\_book6.htm](http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/eusebius_de_08_book6.htm) [09.03.2019].

under the leadership of the bishops of Jewish stock from the beginning until the reign of Constantine<sup>32</sup>.

An account of the pilgrim from Bordeaux (333 A.D.) referred to the legend of seven synagogues on Mount Sion. He wrote: "Inside Sion, within the wall, you can see where David had his palace. Seven synagogues were there but only one is left – the rest have been «ploughed and sown» as was said by the prophet Isaiah"<sup>33</sup>. The reference to Isa 1:8 is repeated by the ancient writers<sup>34</sup>.

Egeria usually referred to it as "on Sion"<sup>35</sup>. Cyril of Jerusalem explained:

We know the Holy Ghost, who spoke in the Prophets, and who on the day of Pentecost descended on the Apostles in the form of fiery tongues, here, in Jerusalem, in the Upper Church of the Apostles<sup>36</sup>; for in all things the choicest privileges are with us. Here Christ came down from heaven; here the Holy Ghost came down from heaven. And in truth, it was most fitting, that as we discourse concerning Christ and Golgotha. Here, in Golgotha, so also we should speak concerning the Holy Ghost in the Upper Church; yet since He who descended there jointly partakes of the glory of Him who was crucified here, we here speak concerning Him also who descended there: for their worship is indivisible<sup>37</sup>.

The bishop of the Holy City alludes to a Church of the Apostles where the disciples were assembled on the day of Pentecost. St. Cyril wrote in Jerusalem were two opposing churches. The lower church, usu-

<sup>32</sup> See M.C. Paczkowski, *Od "tronu świętego Jakuba" do Patriarchatu Jerozolimskiego*, "Vox Patrum" 32 (2012), t. 58, p. 9–33.

<sup>33</sup> *Itinerarium Burdigalense*, transl. A. Stewart; *Palestine Pilgrims Text Society*, vol. 1, p. 23. This tradition recalls Optatus of Mileve, see *De schismate donatistarum* III, 2. The Bordeaux Pilgrim had seen on Sion, apparently outside the city walls, the place where the house of Caiaphas stood, and he remarked that the column of the flagellation was still there.

<sup>34</sup> Epiphanius of Salamis affirms that in the 4th century there was still a synagogue on Mount Sion and that its perduring character had been foretold by an Isaian prophecy.

<sup>35</sup> J. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades*, Warminster 1977, p. 294.

<sup>36</sup> There is no attestation of this name in a formal sense of a proper noun in the ancient literature. Cyril of Jerusalem was not using the words "upper church of the Apostles" as a proper name.

<sup>37</sup> *Catechesis XVI*, 4, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/310116.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310116.htm) [09.03.2019].

ally referred to as the *Anastasis* and the place of Golgotha, and the upper church, in reference to the Judeo-Christian place of prayer up on the hill. The church on Mount Sion was of apostolic origin<sup>38</sup>.

Epiphanius of Salamis said that at the time of the emperor Hadrian “the temple of God trodden down and the whole city devastated, save for a few houses and the very small church of God, where the disciples, when they had returned after the Savior had ascended from the Mount of Olives, went to the Upper Room. For there it had been built, that is, in the part of Sion that was kept from the destruction, and the blocks of houses around Sion itself, and seven synagogues, which stood alone like huts, one of which remained until the time of Maximus the bishop and Constantine the king, “like a booth in a vineyard” (Isa 1:8)<sup>39</sup>, as it is written”<sup>40</sup>.

Epiphanius called the meeting place of the Judeo-Christians on Mount Sion the “Church of God”, distinguishing this place from the seven synagogues of the Jews, believing this was the particular synagogue where Judeo-Christians assembled in Hadrian’s day until its confiscation by the Byzantines following the Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381). The bishop of Salamis no longer considered the Judeo-Christian synagogue as a Christian meeting place but rather a seat of the suspected group. This place turned over to the control of orthodox bishops<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> See B. Pixner, *Church of the Apostles Found on Mount Zion*, “Biblical Archaeology Review” 16 (1990), nr 3, p. 16–35; idem, *Die apostolische Synagoge auf dem Zion*, in: *Wege des Messias und Stätten der Urkirche: Jesus und das Judenchristentum im Lict neuer archaologischer Erkenntnisse*, herausgegeben von R. Riesner. Giessen–Basel 1991, p. 287–326.

<sup>39</sup> “Jerusalem, which began with David..., come to an end with the coming of the New Covenant. Coming into the world, Christ has emptied out all that belonged to the Law. Thus Jerusalem also had to disappear, not bearing fruits and being transformed into a cucumber field (see Isa 1:8)”; Irenaeus of Lyon, *Adversus haereses* IV,4,2, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0103.htm> [09.03.2019].

<sup>40</sup> Epiphanius, *De mensuris et ponderibus* 14; see J. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places. The Myth of Jewish-Christian Origins*, Oxford 1993, p. 211.

<sup>41</sup> See B. Pixner – R. Riesner, *Paths of the Messiah and sites of the early Church from Galilee to Jerusalem. Jesus and Jewish Christianity in light of archaeological discoveries*, San Francisco 2010, p. 344; 398–407.

Instead, Eucherius of Lyon (440 A.D.) writes:

Mount Sion on one side, that which faces north, is set apart for the dwellings of priests and monks. The level ground on its summit is covered by the cells of monks surrounding a church, which, it is said, was built there by the Apostles out of reverence for the place of our Lord's Resurrection, because, as promised before by the Lord, they were filled with the Holy Ghost<sup>42</sup>.

We must remember that some pilgrims neglect the memory of Sion. Gregory of Nyssa does not visit it during his pilgrimage<sup>43</sup>. He reported that the very place that was the first to receive the Holy Spirit was now in turmoil and that a counter – altar had been set up. The faithful of the Holy City commemorated Holy Thursday and Pentecost not in the “Upper Room”, which would have been convenient but in the sumptuous buildings of the Anastasis. Cyril of Jerusalem did not preach in the Church of the Apostles, although he acknowledges that that would be the more appropriate place to talk about the Holy Spirit. This church was a synagogue in the hands of Judeo-Christians, at this time already separated from the Great Church.

Then, in the 5th century the “little church of God” became the “Mother of all the Churches”. The Great Church finally took possession of the ancient Judeo-Christian sanctuary. The construction of the basilica of Hagia Sion (Holy Sion) was ordered by Theodosius I (379–395 A.D.)<sup>44</sup>. In bishop John's of Jerusalem own words: “[It] was the dedication of the Holy and Glorious Zion, which is the Mother of all Churches, that had been founded by the Apostles, which emperor Theodosius the Great has built, enlarged, and glorified, and in which the Holy Spirit had come down on the holy day of Pentecost”<sup>45</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> *De locis sanctis*, D. Baldi, *Enchiridion*, p. 479, no. 735, transl. A. Stewart; *Palestine Pilgrims Text Society*, vol. 2, p. 8.

<sup>43</sup> The bishop of Nyssa describes the poor impression made by the Christians of the Holy Land. See. I. Grego, *San Gregorio di Nissa pellegrino in Terra Santa*, “Salesianum” 38 (1976), p. 124.

<sup>44</sup> See J. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades*, Jerusalem 1977, p. 171.

<sup>45</sup> M. van Esbroeck, *Les plus anciens homiliaires Georgiens*, Louvain 1975, . 314–315.

The church of Sion became one of the glories of Jerusalem. On Pentecost the people gathered in this newly built church of Theodosius, while the presbyters went also to another church, apparently the ancient Judeo-Christian synagogue. In the dedication sermon, the bishop John II exhorts the builders, priests and architects to go to the Upper Room. He was a great preacher who succeeded in integrating the Judeo-Christians into the Great Church<sup>46</sup>.

The Church of Hagia Sion was burnt during the Persian invasion of 614 A.D., where churches were plundered and burned. The emperor Heraclius attempted to restore the City's stature in the third decade of the 7th century. The Basilica of Holy Sion was rebuilt by patriarch Modest and partially destroyed again in 1009 A.D. by Hakim, an eccentric and cruel sultan of Egypt. In Christianity, the Cenacle has always been considered the first church.

## 2. HOLY BIBLE AND LITURGY

The itineraries, even if different for what concerns ways and motivations, have always spiritual genesis. Every story of pious pilgrimage has his own centre in the Holy Bible which represents the real explanatory key to see the spirit of it. According to pilgrims' itineraries, the scriptural readings constituted an integral part of the liturgy and ritual prayer. They marked each visit of pilgrims to a religiously significant site.

So Egeria specifies to make his pilgrimage to the Holy Places for reliving the salvation history: "It was our special custom that, when we had arrived at those places which I had desired to visit, the appropriate passage from the book should always be read"<sup>47</sup>. It is exactly this spirit of every itinerary allows realizing that it's neither a question of a simple diary of trip nor a description of eastern countries. Every pilgrim runs again along the most important stages of the salvation history, even if without following its chronological sequence but with the Holy Bible in his hands.

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<sup>46</sup> His sermon was full of Judeo-Christian symbolism; see M. van Esbroeck, *Jean II de Jerusalem*, "Analecta Bollandiana" 102 (1984), p. 99–133.

<sup>47</sup> *Itinerarium Egeriae* 4, 2, M.L. McClure, C.L. Feltoe (ed. and transl.), *The Pilgrimage of Etheria* (Translations of Christian Literature. Series III – Liturgical Texts), London–New York 1919, p. 7.

Every itinerary is inspired “corporally (*carnaliter*) and spiritually (*spiritaliter*)”, according to the terms of the *Itinerarium Egeriae*, by biblical world and message, which allow to note down and impart the real experiences and the daily seen things<sup>48</sup>. People know that the Holy Bible was daily bread for the Christians since the oldest times. The pilgrimage means a deeper understanding of the Scriptures. The texts written by Egeria describe journeys that use the Bible as a guide. She reads the Bible in a historical, literal sense.

The quotations of New Testament are not many in *Itinerarium* of Egeria and are included in the second part of the story only, and namely in the description of the liturgy said in the relevant Holy Places of Jerusalem. Allusions to the feast of the Pentecost are run down in the Biblical event quoted by the author.

From Easter to the fiftieth day, that is, to Pentecost, no one fasts here, not even those who are *apotactitae*. During these days, as throughout the whole year, the customary things are done at the Anastasis from the first cockcrow until morning, and at the sixth hour and at *lucernare* likewise. But on the Lord's Days, the procession is always to the *Martyrium*, that is, to the great church... On the fourth and sixth weekdays, as no one fasts during those days, the procession is to Sion but in the morning; the dismissal is made in its due order<sup>49</sup>.

This Spanish pilgrim preserves invaluable information on the places of worship. The services were essentially stationary in character<sup>50</sup>.

All the people, to a man, escort the bishop with hymns to Sion, [so that] they are in Sion when the third hour has fully come. And on their arrival there the passage from the Acts of the Apostles is read where the Spirit came down so that all tongues [were heard and all men] understood the things that were being spoken... The priests read there from the Acts of

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<sup>48</sup> See E.D. Hunt, *The Itinerary of Egeria. Reliving the Bible in Fourth-Century Palestine*, in: R.N. Swanson (ed.), *The Holy Land, Holy Lands and Christian History* (Studies in Church History 36), Cambridge 2000, p. 34–54.

<sup>49</sup> *Itinerarium Egeriae* 41, M.L. McClure, C.L. Feltoe, *The Pilgrimage of Etheria*, p. 84.

<sup>50</sup> See E. Bermejo Cabrera, *L'influsso della liturgia di Gerusalemme sulle altre Chiese*, G. Bissoli (ed.), *Gerusalemme. Realtà sogni speranze*, Jerusalem 1996, p. 42–56.

the Apostles concerning the selfsame thing (Acts 2,12), because that is the place in Sion – there is another church there now – where once, after the Lord's Passion, the multitude was gathered together with the Apostles<sup>51</sup>.

In the story of the Spanish pilgrim are not really the literal quotations making reference to the event of the Pentecost<sup>52</sup> but the story of Acts 2 represents a very significant reason and a sort of summary gathered from the Holy Bible. It cannot be in a different way because the Holy Spirit descent during the Pentecost is the first and most important of the memories connected to Sion and the "Upper Room".

Jerome's *Letter 46* to Marcella (attributed to Paula and Eustochium), is a kind of compact treatise on the holy places, complete with a catalogue of prefigurations from the OT. It is St. Jerome's battle cry in the defense of the Holy Places in general and of Jerusalem in particular. Having enumerated some momentous events of the Old Testament and their "deeper" meaning, he argues: "All the holiness of Judaea and its nearness to God was transferred by the Apostles among the nations"<sup>53</sup>. With this intent, he mentioned the descent of the Holy Spirit<sup>54</sup>. The Latin exegete looked for allegorical interpretations and for etymological meanings but for him, the pilgrimage to the Holy Land was a pilgrimage to the Land of the Bible.

Egeria's diary contains an accurate description of her travels as well as a detailed account of the Jerusalem liturgy. She, for instance, lets herself be carried away by the external brightness of the ceremony in the Pentecost feast description, as many other times, and almost put the biblical important events happened in the places where it was celebrated the liturgy described by her, in the background. The Holy Spirit descent celebration is one of the situations getting the hang that Egeria concentrated on the ceremonies only and exclusively and that this should be the main scope for her. She describes the Pentecost rites in the following way: "Thus very great fatigue is endured on that day, for vigil is kept at

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<sup>51</sup> *Itinerarium Egeriae* 43, 2–3, M.L. McClure, C.L. Feltoe, *The Pilgrimage of Etheria*, p. 86.

<sup>52</sup> The *Armenian Lectionary* indicates: Ps 133:10, Acts 2: 1–21, John 14: 15–24; 14:25–29, Ps 143:10.

<sup>53</sup> *Epistula* 46,4, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001046.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001046.htm) [09.03.2019].

<sup>54</sup> See *Epistula* 53, 19–27, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001053.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001053.htm) [09.03.2019].

the *Anastasis* from the first cockcrow<sup>55</sup>, and there is no pause from that time onward throughout the whole day but the whole celebration [of the Feast] lasts so long that it is midnight when everyone returns home after the dismissal has taken place at Sion<sup>56</sup>. The Pentecost feast demanded to the Christians of Jerusalem and to the pilgrims staying there an engagement extending from early in the morning to midnight. As happened on many other occasions, the memorial service of certain events happens just in the places and at the same time the events happened at the origin; this happens for the Holy Spirit descend on Apostles.

Cyril of Jerusalem vouches it:

When the day of Pentecost was fully come, here, in this city of Jerusalem – (for this honour also belongs to us; and we speak not of the good things which have happened among others but of those which have been vouchsafed among ourselves) – on the day of Pentecost, I say, they were sitting, and the Comforter came down from heaven, the Guardian and Sanctifier of the Church, the Ruler of souls..., who leads the wanderers to the light, and presides over the combatants, and crowns the victors<sup>57</sup>.

The pilgrims follow the liturgical cycles with a continuous reference to the most important events of Jesus life. The ancient liturgical sources confirm the recurrent form of the celebration. It is worthy of note the St. James liturgy which the people pray with: “the blessing of the Father and the bounty of the Son and the gift of the Holy Ghost who came down upon the Apostles in the Upper Room of Holy Sion, in like sort come down and be multiplied upon us”<sup>58</sup>. The Eucharist has a sanctification role which clearly elaborated in the early literature. The action of the Holy Spirit purifies the recipients through its effectiveness by our sins.

<sup>55</sup> For example “on that day [i.e. Good Friday] no announcement is made of a vigil at the *Anastasis* because it is known that the people are tired; nevertheless, it is the custom to watch there. So all of the people who are willing, or rather, who are able, keep watch, and they who are unable do not watch there until the morning”; *Itinerarium Egeriae* 36, 9, M.L. McClure, C.L. Feltoe, *The Pilgrimage of Etheria*, p. 78.

<sup>56</sup> *Itinerarium Egeriae* 43,9, M.L. McClure, C.L. Feltoe, *The Pilgrimage of Etheria*, p. 89.

<sup>57</sup> *Catechesis* XVII, 14, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/310117.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310117.htm) [09.03.2019].

<sup>58</sup> F.E. Brightman (ed.), *Liturgies Eastern and Western being the Texts Original or Translated of the Principal Liturgies of the Church*, I, Oxford 1967, p. 213.

Speaking about the action of the Holy Spirit in Eucharistic sacrifice, the Armenian *Anaphora* says: “O chalice of rain of fire that was poured on the Apostles in the holy Upper Room, o Holy Ghost, pour thy wisdom on us also along with the vestment”<sup>59</sup>. The Armenian liturgy was undoubtedly under the influence of the rites of Jerusalem.

The making mention of Pentecost is the opportunity of pointing out the quotation of the prophet Joel, as pre-announcement of this event. So does St. Jerome according to whom the prophet Joel “predicts that after the overthrow of the former people the Holy Spirit shall be poured out upon God’s servants and handmaids (see Joel 2:29) the same spirit, that is, which was to be poured out in the upper chamber at Zion upon the one hundred and twenty believers”<sup>60</sup>.

This shows, with full evidence, that the Old Testament was integrated and live part of the religious education of the Christian pilgrims going to the Holy Land. Starting from the 5th century the sending of the Holy Spirit was celebrated at the Hagia Sion and nowhere else. Also, the medieval pilgrims give credit to it. The scriptural data are often repeated by the medieval pilgrims. Some of the itineraries of this period summarize biblical data and it is their characteristic<sup>61</sup>.

In the stories of the pilgrims, the Holy Spirit is mentioned on the occasion of the commemoration of the baptism made to the Jordan. Western but also oriental texts attest it. “Jordan, wherein the Saviour by His baptism instituted the rite of human salvation, where the Holy Ghost was seen in the likeness of a dove, and the Father’s voice was heard”<sup>62</sup>.

The Cenacle as a place of Pentecost was lived as a liturgical and doctrinal sphere. Instead, the most personal experience of the presence of the Holy Spirit was noted in the ceremony of renewal of baptismal promises. It was emphasized that Jesus received the baptism of repentance, though He did not need it, to give an example. Heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit appeared over Christ in the likeness of a dove. That was when the

<sup>59</sup> F.E. Brightman, *Liturgies*, I, p. 413.

<sup>60</sup> *Epistula* 53, 19–27, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001053.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001053.htm) [19.03.2019]. This is the number of steps mystically included in the Psalter.

<sup>61</sup> “On Mount Sion is the place where the Holy Ghost appeared on the Apostles in fiery tongues and enlightened their hearts”; Anonymus II, 4, transl. A. Stewart; *Palestine Pilgrims Text Society*, vol. 6, p. 8. See also *ibidem* III, p. 18; VIII, p. 76.

<sup>62</sup> Anonymus V, 19, transl. A. Stewart; *Palestine Pilgrims Text Society*, vol. 6, p. 32.

Spirit of God anointed Him. On those who have come to the holy river of Jordan, was for them the descend of the Holy Spirit. This moment is clearly distinguished from Pentecost, commemorated on Sion. The testimony of this is the Eastern liturgical text: “Spake (sic!) in the law and the prophets and thy New Testament, who descended in the likeness of a dove upon our Lord Jesus Christ in the river Jordan, who descended upon the holy Apostles in the likeness of fiery tongues”<sup>63</sup>. On the occasion of the visit to the river Jordan, many pilgrims remember the presence of the Holy Spirit they received during the rites of Christian initiation. For them, the reliving of these facts constituted a privileged moment of the action of the Paraclete. We have some testimonials. The Russian pilgrim Daniel<sup>64</sup> tells that “there is the baptism of water” at Jordan during the Epiphany feast. “Then the Holy Spirit reaches Jordan’s waters and the Good and Worthy people see [how the Holy Spirit descends], while the rest of the people doesn’t see anything but there are joy and cheerful only in the heart of all the Christians nevertheless, when they say: «In the Jordan you were baptized, o Lord»<sup>65</sup>.

### 3. MATERIAL EVIDENCES

The most important scope of each itinerary is made up by the visit to Holy Places branded by God presence<sup>66</sup>, by the discovery of ruins connected to biblical events and by the mentioning of holy buildings. This is

<sup>63</sup> F.E. Brightman, *Liturgies*, I, p. 88.

<sup>64</sup> From Jerusalem, Daniel made two excursions: the first to the Jordan and Dead Sea, during which he visited Jericho, and the Greek monasteries in the Jordan Valley, and the Desert of Judea.

<sup>65</sup> “Хождение” игумена Даниила 31; polish transl. K. Pietkiewicz, *Ihumena Daniela z ziemi ruskiej pielgrzymka do Ziemi Świętej*, Poznań 2003, p. 103. It is a very significant fact that the Holy Spirit’s descent repeats itself with the baptism renewal. This fact is perceived by the worthy men only. The singularity of this fact comes from the consideration of the special importance of God’s baptism feast still said “Jordan” by the Russian People, which consecrate the waters of the rivers on this day.

<sup>66</sup> In the apocryphal *Odes of Solomon* we can find the condemnation of the builders of the Judeo-Christian synagogue on Mt. Sion by the Ebionites for removing ashlar from the demolished Herodian Temple with the intent of transferring some of its symbolic elements, for construction of their synagogue on the “new Sion”; see *ibidem* VI, 9.

made regularly with regard to Sion also. The first Christian generations continued to frequent this site which was to be of great importance in the following centuries. The reconstruction of the church, known as the “Mother of all the Churches”, is based on very slight evidence. In addition to few and scattered archaeological remains we have only a sketch by Arculf (670 A.D.)<sup>67</sup> and medieval estimates of the dimensions.

The pilgrims knew very well that Sion was the mountain of God’s temple. After the fall of Jerusalem, some Christians interpreted this event as divine judgment and the Jewish-Christians who lived in this place were convinced of being the “survivors” graciously left by the Lord according to Isa 1:9<sup>68</sup>. Eusebius of Caesarea wrote that the purpose of Christian pilgrimage in Jerusalem was to see firsthand the devastation of the city that was foretold by prophets<sup>69</sup>. Jerusalem, according to him, had lost not only its temple but also its glory<sup>70</sup>. For the first time in history, the Christian Church had religious control over Jerusalem, which now “worshipped Christ”<sup>71</sup>. After the destruction of the Temple, new places of worship were found by the Jewish-Christians. Thus, in the course of time, the Jerusalem’s southwestern hill inherited the name of Sion – the Christian Sion. It was a transfer of the name after that from the City of David to the Temple Mount.

In Egeria’s opinion, the Sion Church is the place where the Apostles stay after Christ’s death<sup>72</sup>. Her annotation that “there is a different Church”<sup>73</sup> should show that the pilgrim was acquainted about the ancient

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<sup>67</sup> This is the first of pilgrimage accounts that were written after the Arab conquest of the Holy Land. The itinerary is the outcome of cooperation between the traveller and the writer to whom the story was told. Arculf “diligently” described that he saw “with his own eyes”.

<sup>68</sup> See B. Bagatti–E. Testa (ed.), *Corpus Scriptorum de Ecclesia Matre*, IV: *Gerusalemme* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum – Collectio Maior 26), Jerusalem 1982, p. 55–56; 57, nos. 83, 85.

<sup>69</sup> See *Demonstratio evangelica* VI, 18.

<sup>70</sup> Eusebius called Jerusalem “the former city”; *Demonstratio evangelica* VI, 18; 23.

<sup>71</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* XIII, 7, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/310113.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310113.htm) [10.03.2019].

<sup>72</sup> See *Itinerarium Egeriae* 39, 4–5.

<sup>73</sup> *Alia modo ecclesia est*; see *Itinerarium Egeriae* 43, 3, ed. H. Pétré, SCh 21, Paris 1948, p. 246.

tradition saying that the building where the Apostles stay at the Holy Spirit descent should have been transformed into a church since the origins.

In *Letter* 108 of Jerome, which is really a funeral prayer in St. Paula's honour, it is pointed out a symbolic description of the pilgrimages to the holy places. He describes the visit of the dead matron in the Holy Places and he identifies the Sion Church: "Going out thence [the Holy Sepulcher] she made the ascent of Zion; a name which signifies either «citadel» or «watchtower»<sup>74</sup>... There was shown to her also the spot where the Holy Spirit came down upon the souls of the one hundred and twenty believers, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Joel (see Acts 2:16–21)"<sup>75</sup>.

The Gentile-Christian Church encroached upon all Apostles Church's rights, by means of big church construction, so said St. Sion, thanks to John II, maintaining that the Holy Spirit descended inside its walls. Therefore this church, not the Judaic-Christian Sion, was entitled to the title of Mother of all the Churches<sup>76</sup>. "It was in this high hall that the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples in the shape of fire-tongue during the Pentecost feast; nowadays the great Holy Sion, Mother of all Churches"<sup>77</sup>.

Anonymous of Piacenza tells that in Sion Church "there are many wonders"<sup>78</sup>. In his Sion description, it is pointed out how much the author was interested in the relics<sup>79</sup>, many of them strange or fabulous objects, enough easy to be found in Sion. So he ignores the Holy Bible quoted in a scant way, giving mnemonical and rough citations. On the contrary, Theodosius marks the house of John Marc and the centre of the Christian

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<sup>74</sup> Jerome recalls the following biblical texts: 2 Sam 5:7; Ps 87:2; Matthew 16:18 and Rev 22:14.

<sup>75</sup> *Epistula* 108, 9, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001108.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001108.htm) [10.03.2019]. St. Paula saw on Sion a column, supporting the portico of a church, to which the Lord was bound when He was scourged.

<sup>76</sup> "The Holy Sion, the Mother of all Churches of God, most blessed Church which is in all the world: grant her, o Lord, the rich gifts of thine Holy Spirit", F. E. Brightman, *Liturgies*, I, p. 90.

<sup>77</sup> *Acta S. Barnabae Apostoli*, in: *Acta Sanctorum*, VI, Brussels 1867, p. 434.

<sup>78</sup> *Itinerarium Antonini Placentini* 22.

<sup>79</sup> He says that the Basilica of St. Sion was formerly the house of St. James. He was shown in the church the corner-stone which the builders rejected.

community on Sion<sup>80</sup>. He indicates that “two hundred paces from Golgotha was Holy Sion, the Mother of all Churches, which was founded by Christ and His Apostles, and was once the house of St. Mark”<sup>81</sup>. He distinguishes between the Church of St. Sion, which was once the house of St. Mark, and the house of Caiaphas, which was then the Church of St. Peter<sup>82</sup>.

The Arculf's description is a treasure of information about traditions and sacred buildings<sup>83</sup>. It informs about the place of the Last Supper and where the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles on the Pentecost. “[Arculf] says that a great church has been constructed on the top of Mount Sion, which is called the Apostles' Church... This Apostolical Church, as is said above, was built of stone on a level surface in the higher ground of Mount Sion”<sup>84</sup>.

Some details are given by the description of Theodoricus (12<sup>th</sup> century):

The sanctuary of Sion is well fortified with walls, towers, and battlements against the assaults of the infidels, wherein regular monks serve God under an abbot... [Inside the church], by about thirty steps on the right hand, one mounts into the upper chamber, which is situated in the extremity of the apse... In [the] upper chamber, at a distance of more than 30 feet to the southward of that place, there stands an altar in the place where the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles”<sup>85</sup>.

<sup>80</sup> See *De situ Terrae Sanctae* 7.

<sup>81</sup> *De situ Terrae Sanctae* 7, D. Baldi, *Enchiridion*, p. 483, no. 739.

<sup>82</sup> The same distinction is made in the *Breviarium de Hierosolyma* (530 A.D.). This document distinguishes a large basilica on Sion and the church of St. Peter which was the house of Caiaphas. Sophronius of Jerusalem (636 A.D.) mentions on Sion the place where the Holy Spirit descended, the scene of the Last Supper, the spot where Christ washed the feet of His disciples, and the place where He was scourged. Willibald (723 A.D.) described that the Church of St. Sion was in the middle of Jerusalem and that the Virgin died there.

<sup>83</sup> He had not made the trip but heard of it from the returned pilgrim – the abbot Arculf. He drew plans of the church of the Holy Sepulcher and the Cenacle on the Mount Sion, of the Ascension and of Jacob's Well at Sichem.

<sup>84</sup> *De locis sanctis* XIX, transl. A. Stewart; *Palestine Pilgrims Text Society*, vol. 3, p. 20.

<sup>85</sup> *Libellus de Locis Sanctis* XXII, 1; 2, transl. A. Stewart; *Palestine Pilgrims Text Society*, vol. 5, p. 36. “Above, near the choir, is the place where the Holy Ghost came

John of Würzburg describes the churches' decorations in its itinerary, one of the most interesting of the 12th century.

[The descent of the Comforter Spirit] took place on the tenth day after the Lord's ascension..., when the disciples were abiding in a certain chamber (*caenaculum*) of the aforesaid building on Mount Sion... to this day is shown in the same place in a mosaic picture in the sanctuary, in the apse of the aforesaid church; for therein, in the likeness of a picture, are the twelve Apostles with their portraits, and the Holy Ghost descending upon each of their heads in the form of fiery tongues, with the inscription: «Suddenly there came a sound from heaven»<sup>86</sup>.

John of Würzburg brings back a catechetical nature of this epigram.

The sobriety of pilgrim's stories shouldn't make people forget that their authors were used to the contemplation and sensitive to the Holy Spirit's presence and action. "His coming is gentle; the perception of Him is fragrant; His burden most light; beams of light and knowledge gleam forth before His coming"<sup>87</sup>. As St. Cyril of Jerusalem remind, who goes on saying: "[He] comes with the bowels of a true guardian: for He comes to save, and to heal, to teach, to admonish, to strengthen, to exhort, to enlighten the mind"<sup>88</sup>.

The tradition that located on Mount Sion the descent of the Spirit on the Apostles at Pentecost appears to be the better supported one. However, it had its many resonances of a theological and spiritual character that attested the stories of the pilgrims and liturgical memories.

## CONCLUSION

The matter concerning the Holy Spirit in pilgrim's records has not been really disregarded but has not just stimulated particular interest.

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down upon the Apostles, and in that same church there is the table whereon Christ supped, when He said: «Take, eat, this is My body»"; Anonymous (Pseudo Beda) *De Locis Sanctis* 7, A. Stewart; *Palestine Pilgrims Text Society*, vol. 6, p. 73.

<sup>86</sup> *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae* XIV, A. Stewart; *Palestine Pilgrims Text Society*, vol. 5, p. 42.

<sup>87</sup> *Catechesis* XVI, 16, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/310116.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310116.htm) [10.03.2019]. The fragrant oil was a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>88</sup> *Catechesis* XVI, 16, [www.newadvent.org/fathers/310116.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310116.htm) [10.03.2019].

Besides, it is not correct to expect the pilgrims to write pneumatology treatises. Nevertheless, some themes arise from those rediscovered and charged to herself by the Great Church in an organic way in the course of time. It has been not only theological speculation to be incited to take up the Holy Spirit at a certain time. The brief references made to Holy Spirit in "Itineraria" and in others sources quoted in this exposition testify that the dispute on arduous dogmatic themes has not been kept within the restricted circle of specialists but also promoted the lively participation of those going the way of pilgrimage.

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