

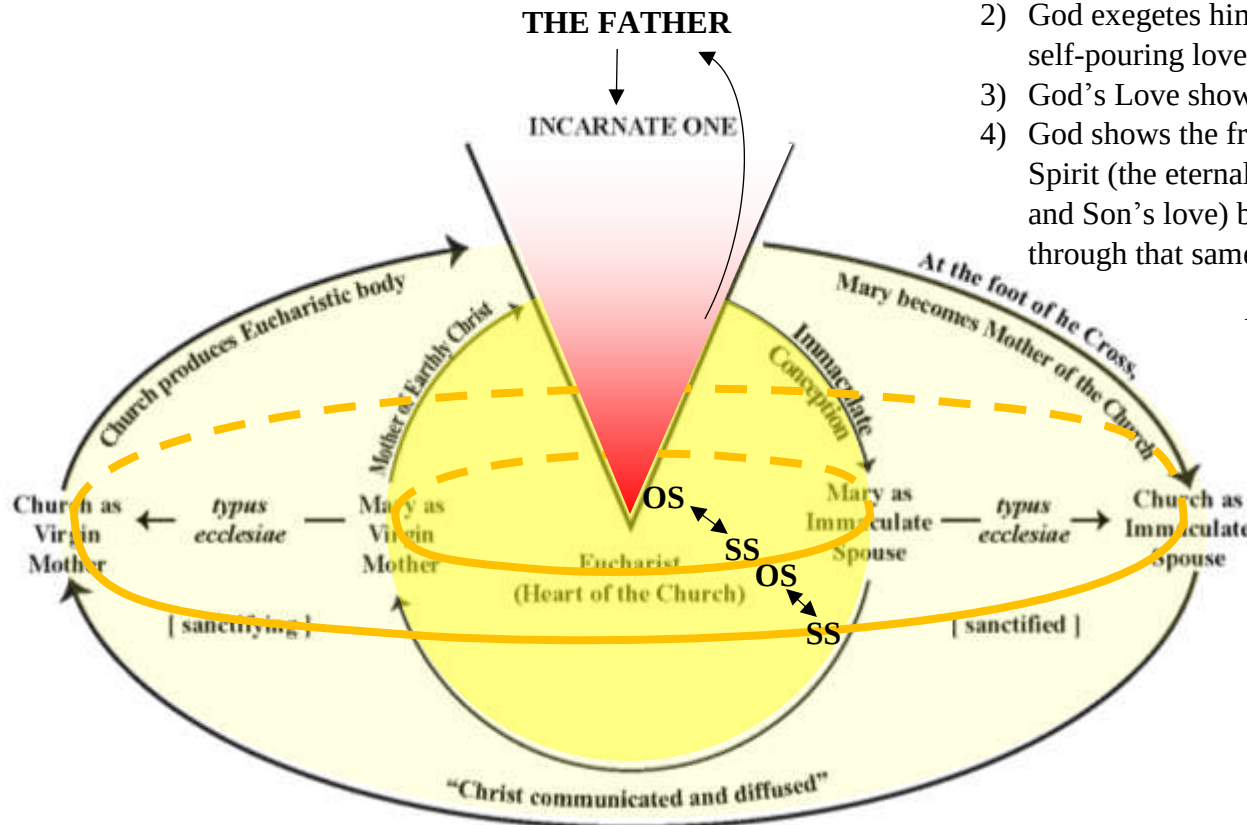
IN GOD'S TOTAL SELF-GIFT TO US, WE FIND THAT:

LOVE MUST BE PERCEIVED (PP. 75-82)

- 1) The Father manifests his Love for the world
- 2) God exegeses himself as Love. God's glory consists in his self-pouring love.
- 3) God's Love shows us our own lack of love, and thus our sin.
- 4) God shows the fruitfulness of Love, not only by sending his Spirit (the eternal 'witness,' 'gift,' and 'fruit' of the Father and Son's love) but by calling us to share in that fruitfulness through that same Spirit.

Note two things:

- 1) Our encounter with the Love of God offered in Christ is always already within Mary's *Fiat*. It is her *fiat* that makes it truly *given*; it makes it truly a Love that has loved me while I was yet God's enemy (cf. Rom 5:10).
- 2) Scripture is not the Word of God. Jesus Christ is the Word of God. Jesus could not write a book about himself. Why? Because then he would not be total self-gift, he would be pointing to himself. He gives himself fully, while effacing himself, pointing only to the Father. Scripture is *the Spirit's witness to the Son*, which includes the response of faith elicited by that Love. Thus, Scripture is inconceivable without Mary's *Yes*, and thus, the Church as *response* (which nonetheless comes forth from that gift).



“Objective Spirit” (OS): the Spirit’s objective testimony to the Love of the Crucified One

- Tradition
- Scripture
- Ministry
 - Preaching & Liturgy
 - Sacraments
 - Canon Law
 - Theology

“Subjective Spirit” (SS): the Spirit, poured into our hearts as the love of God (Rom 5:5), interpreting to us the Love of the Crucified One. (*remember the meaning of ‘aesthetics’):

- Prayer
- Forgiveness
- Direct experience of the Holy Spirit
- Discernment of Spirit

Love is not the final word of the world about itself; it is *God’s* final word about himself and the world. Here, by distinguishing between “objective spirit” and “subjective spirit,” Balthasar is trying to show: (1) that the objective mediations of the Church (“objective spirit”) derive from the very love of the Crucified One and bear witness to it; they are conditions for us to perceive that very love; (2) that it is God who interprets himself as love.