

## [photocopie]

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improbable when applied to a particular case. For this, the gift of the Holy Spirit is necessary, which the Apostle Paul calls the discernment of spirits. Through this gift the mind becomes so conditioned that it not only knows how to test spirits to see if they are of God in its own case, but also the spirits that are in others, or are influencing them. This is the third method for testing spirits, and it differs from those that have been previously discussed. The first method is academic, the second is empirical; but the third method, conferred through an ecclesiastical office by means of special interior grace, is official.

6 Moreover, just as no one can recognize that which is of the spirit unless he be of the spirit, so also no one can know with infallible certainty that which takes place in the soul of another unless it be through knowledge gained by personal experience, or by means of an inner feeling and insight. Therefore, just as no one can easily give a general norm which infallibly distinguishes between a vision which takes place when awake and that which takes place when asleep (because of the various similarities in these two kinds of visions), so it is all the more difficult in this case of attempting to distinguish spirits.

7 Nevertheless, a man who is awake knows certainly and personally that he himself sees, although he is not unaware that he has had visions in his sleep which clearly resemble those which he had when he was awake; so much so that sometimes he seems to be telling his own dreams while dreaming. However, Seneca says that this is an indication of one's being awake when he tells his dreams. Similarly, a spiritual man, having been made aware of the true divine light, recognizes that he truly feels, perceives, and experiences divine things which he sees. Why? Because he is awake.

8 Yet, one can recall from one's own recollections, or from those of others, that sometimes while dreaming about something natural or diabolic and being unconscious of divine things, one imagines being conscious of divine things, and

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