

## CURRENT THEOLOGY

### SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY: THE EUCHARIST IN RECENT LITERATURE

Much of the recent literature on the Eucharist is concerned with traditional themes: the mystery of the Real Presence, Eucharistic sacrifice, the significance of Christ's Eucharistic presence. Beyond this, among Catholic writers, the themes of ecumenical Eucharistic worship and authentic ministry of the Eucharist have received unprecedented attention. It is with all of these themes that this article is concerned. I have no intention of giving a complete survey of all the periodical literature on these subjects; I shall select material from the last five years which indicates the trends of current Catholic theological thinking.

In some areas these contributions have caused no reaction, since they are merely reflections on old truths and well within the boundaries set by orthodox theology and approved by the magisterium. In the treatment of certain themes, however, the newer writings have gone beyond the borders of what was traditionally considered orthodox terrain and so present a problem for those who do not see the possibility of a true development of dogma in these instances.

In some ways the present controversies between conservative and liberal theologians resemble the old debates between schools of Catholic theology. In the latter case the representative of another school was not always merely criticized for his method; he was often defamed as teaching doctrine which was close to heresy. Today there is such diversity in the way of thinking, method of argumentation, and personal experience which are brought to theological discussion that it is questionable whether a large number of men can be obligated to a completely uniform opinion on any subject. Nevertheless, there is still the conviction among many Catholic theologians and members of the hierarchy that there exists a unified direction and method in theology which must be followed by all. Hence, when theologians step outside the boundaries set by traditional theology and challenge what was considered secured and unchangeable, they are warned of the necessity of returning to a "truly solid theology"—a warning which in many instances betrays a concern to avoid unsettling questions. Such has been the case, to some extent, with the question of the mystery of the Eucharistic presence of Christ, the first theme we will consider.

#### TRANSUBSTANTIATION AND/OR EFFICACIOUS SIGN

The complaint was made by Pius XII in the Encyclical *Humani generis* that some Catholic theologians were modifying the traditional doctrine

of transubstantiation in such a way as to make it appear that "the consecrated species are merely efficacious signs of the spiritual presence of Christ and of His intimate union with the faithful members of His Mystical Body."<sup>1</sup> This charge was not based on published articles; commentators on the Encyclical were unable to name authors in this connection. It was based on rumors and such unpublished papers as that of Y. de Montcheuil, "La présence réelle" (1936), which was widely distributed after his death in 1944. The basic thesis of de Montcheuil was this: (1) a fundamental change of being takes place when the religious *esse* is changed; (2) in the Eucharist the anthropological reality of bread is changed and it now becomes pure sign of the presence of Christ offering Himself to man. It is this perspective which Pius XII judged to reduce "the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist . . . to a kind of symbolism,"<sup>2</sup> and which de Montcheuil labeled "transfinalization."

The reaction of Pius XII slowed down the initiative of Catholic theologians attempting to rethink the problem of transubstantiation. But within five years essays reminiscent of de Montcheuil's position began to appear. As authors became more courageous, the magisterium became more concerned, especially since the newer theories were receiving considerable publicity in the popular press. At the Eucharistic Congress of Pisa, June, 1965, Paul VI spoke of the attempts "to give evasive interpretations to the traditional doctrine."<sup>3</sup> This address was the harbinger of the Encyclical *Mysterium fidei*, issued on the eve of the last session of the Second Vatican Council, September 3, 1965.

In this Encyclical Paul VI denies that the Eucharistic presence is explainable merely in terms of symbolism and the implications of the glorification of Christ, i.e., in virtue of which He can be present where and when He wills. He insists on the "incarnational dimension" of the Eucharistic presence, the self-binding of the Kyrios to earthly realities, and rejects the view that it suffices to say that the change of bread and wine is merely a change of meaning. As the Encyclical explains it, sign and presence are juxtaposed. Christ's presence is said to come about by an "ontological change" of the bread and wine. As a result of this change, the bread and wine have a new finality: they are signs of spiritual food. Paul VI is opposed to the attempt to approach the problem of Christ's Eucharistic presence merely from an analysis of the function of sign in causing *presencē*. It does not seem to him to take into account the concept of "substantial change" demanded by the Council of Trent.

After *Mysterium fidei*, Paul VI had occasion to mention the subject of

<sup>1</sup> DS 2318.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Osservatore romano*, June 12, 1965, p. 1.

the Eucharistic presence of Christ in his "Credo of the People of God," which was proclaimed in the course of the solemn liturgy marking the close of the Year of Faith (June 30, 1968). While repeating the teaching of the Encyclical, he adds two new proposals. (1) He takes the position that at the Last Supper the bread and wine were changed into the historical Jesus, and that in the Eucharist of the Church they are changed into the glorified Christ. Thus he refers directly to the problem of the relationship of Jesus to the bread and wine at the Last Supper and seems to approve the theological position which maintains that there is no essential difference between the change of bread and wine at the Last Supper and in the Eucharist of the Church, apart from the fact that the latter case involves the glorified Christ. This view removes the implications of the glorification of Christ from the center of the explanation of how Christ can be present under forms of bread and wine, and affirms that for the bread and wine to be *sacrament* at the Last Supper required an ontological change of the bread and wine. This position was generally held by theologians in the past but never received formal treatment; it was accepted without reflection. At the present time, however, the question has been raised whether a distinction should be made between the relationship of Christ to the bread and wine at the Last Supper and in the Eucharist of the Church, in view of the implications of the historical presence of Jesus to His disciples at the Last Supper. (2) Paul reiterates the teaching of the Catechism of the Council of Trent which states that the unique way Christ can be present in the Eucharistic elements is by transubstantiation: "Christ cannot be present in this sacrament except by the change of the reality itself of bread into His body . . ." This view is a theological opinion commonly held by Catholic theologians in the past but never considered an article of the faith.

What clearly emerges as the kernel of Paul VI's teaching on the mystery of the Eucharistic presence is that only by an ontological change of the being of bread and wine can they become sacrament of Christ's Eucharistic presence. The sign cannot be sacrament without an objective change of being of bread and wine.

Since *Mysterium fidei*, certain general characteristics have surfaced in the writings of Catholic theologians on the Eucharistic presence:

1) There is a good deal of sympathy for the view of change, conformed to the dynamic way of thinking of modern philosophers, wherein the deepest changes involve keeping all previous perfections. Thus the Eucharistic change is viewed as analogous to the Incarnation, wherein the humanity was assumed by the person of the Word without losing any of its perfections. Such a concept is close to that of the Fathers of the Church, who express the Eucharistic change in terms of identification and trans-

figuration. The elements are transfigured: losing nothing of their creatural substance, they are taken up into the fulness of Christ through the activity of the Spirit and hence made capable of being "bread of life."

2) There is a certain dissatisfaction with an essential aspect of the doctrine of transubstantiation: the proposal that Christ exercises a double causality, supporting the appearances in existence and using them as sign of His personal offer of grace. At the same time there is manifested a certain attraction to the concept of sign causing presence. Hence the question is asked: Does tradition require more than a change as deep as the change into Christ's human nature as extended in history? For the extension of a person through a sign *is the person as extended*.

3) There is dissatisfaction with the unverifiable concept of "being" bound up with the doctrine of transubstantiation. To explain how the Kyrios can exercise causality, and so be present in space and time, the traditional Catholic doctrine states that the Lord takes up the function of supporting the accidents of bread and wine. This theory is based on a concept of *accidentia* as *entia entis*. Substance, ontologically prior, gives rise to the accidents, which it supports in existence. In the Eucharistic change Christ's created humanity takes over the ontological support of the accidents. The created humanity of Christ, which as being signifies no boundaries, possesses the *potentia obedientialis* which can be activated by God so that it now places the accidents of bread and wine. This theory of "suspended accidents" is judged too tortuous and makes too many concessions to an ancient philosophy.

4) There is a preference for beginning the approach to the Eucharistic presence by reversing the perspective of *Mysterium fidei*, which argued that "because the species contain a new reality, they obtain a new meaning." The approach more conformed to the biblical viewpoint is seen to be this: because the elements have a new meaning given by Christ, they contain a new reality.

5) There has been a general disinclination to analyze in any precise way the basis of the dialectical link between symbol and the presence of Christ in the Eucharistic mystery.

6) There has been a good deal of emphasis placed on the importance of including, as a key element in the explanation of the Eucharistic presence, the implications of the glorification of Christ.

To be sure, not all articles on this subject manifest the characteristics just outlined. Notably, the literature originating in Latin countries shows little sympathy for the modern approaches to the Eucharistic presence. Some articles are content with reporting trends in an objective way.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> E. Ruffini offers an excellent coverage of writings of the last twenty years; cf. "Note per lo studio di una recente controversia teologica sul l'Eucaristia (I)," *Scuola cattolica* 96 (1968) suppl. bibl. 115-38; "(II)," *ibid.* 97 (1969) 3-36. J. Castellano surveys the contributions of

Others are quite positive in their condemnation of what they see as a threat to the integral faith of the Catholic Church. A. Huergo, for example, refers with approval to Paul VI not remaining silent over "the existence of fallacious doctrines, extravagant opinions, and dangerous theological snobbishness."<sup>5</sup> A very conservative spirit seems to have marked the study sessions of the Seventh National Eucharistic Congress of Spain (1968), judging from the report made by F. de B. Vizmanos of the papers which were presented.<sup>6</sup> In this connection, the remarks made by Cardinal Parente, papal representative, at the closing Eucharistic liturgy are instructive. He refers to the Pope's concern "for the modern designs to falsify the doctrine of the Church concerning the Eucharistic mystery" and congratulates the participants of the sessions for offering "a work of great theological solidity in which are exposed the dangers of certain modern opinions concerning the explanation of the Eucharistic mystery—opinions originating in a false spirit of ecumenism not based on truth and love, a vain fear of the charge of magic in the matter of sacramental efficacy, or in an undue stress on symbolism over reality."<sup>7</sup>

Many of the more traditionally minded Catholic theologians are not content with the unilateral application to the mystery of Christ's Eucharistic presence of the existentialist view of symbolic activity in which sign causes the Real Presence since it is the extension of Christ's person in history. B. Kelly addresses himself to this problem beginning with the question: In saying that Christ is present in the sacramental sign of His self-giving to us, have we said all about the mode of His presence?<sup>8</sup> The author distinguishes four kinds of signs in relation to the object signified. He finds that sacraments belong to the category in which the reality signified is in the sign both in so far as it is signified and also in its physical reality. Sacraments belong to this category because they signify and cause as well. But, he adds, since grace is in the sacraments as "cause," it is apparent that Christ's presence in the Eucharist cannot be understood only within the specifically sacramental category. He concludes: some kind of real presence is characteristic of the seven sacraments. In six, what is present is

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the last forty years and concludes by accepting a position akin to that of E. Schillebeeckx; cf. "Transubstanciación: Traectoria ideológica de una reciente controversia," *Revista española de teología* 29 (1969) 305-54.

<sup>5</sup> "La Eucaristía en la iglesia: Estudio sobre el tema eucarístico en el magisterio pastoral del Vaticano II," *Communio* 2 (1969) 228.

<sup>6</sup> "Congreso eucarístico nacional: Sesiones de estudio," *Estudios eclesiásticos* 43 (1968) 439-47. E.g., J. Espeja's contribution, published the following year, contains a solemn profession of faith in the Real Presence and insists that "reality" and "symbol" are aspects equally essential to the sacramental presence of Christ and must be clearly distinguished; cf. "Para una teología de la permanencia eucarística," *Salmanticenses* 16 (1969) 131-54.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted from Vizmanos, *art. cit.*, p. 446.

<sup>8</sup> "Sacramental Presence: Real Presence," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 37 (1970) 71-79.

grace, efficacy of the Passion, sanctifying action of the Spirit. In the Eucharist, however, Christ Himself and not only His power is really present (present in objective reality).

Regarding Kelly's argument, it ought to be stated that the reality signified by the sacrament is in the sacrament only by extrinsic denomination: God has established a real relation of dependence of grace-being-given on the sacramental sign. *Gratia in fieri* is in the recipient, not in the sacramental sign except by extrinsic denomination. Therefore, while a real presence of Christ is demanded by the very nature of the Eucharist which signifies this, it is not immediately evident that the sign need have any different relationship to Christ than it has to *gratia in fieri*.

Among the more notable theologians who have attempted to offer a palatable presentation of the doctrine of transubstantiation is J. Ratzinger.<sup>9</sup> He begins his study by pointing out the weakness of the approach of recent Dutch theologians: they attempt to answer a philosophical question from liturgical considerations. Next he points out the poor conception Calvin had of the implications of the ascension of Christ, which leads to a view of the Real Presence as a presence in faith. Luther's explanation of how Christ can be present is judged to be no more successful. He extended the multipresence theory of Ockham to that of the theory of the ubiquity of Christ's humanity. Thus for Luther, it is the words of institution which tell us that Christ, who is everywhere, is to be sought in a special loaf. Ratzinger judges that this theory shifts the accent from the gift to the word as the only really distinctive thing. The meaning of the Eucharist thus coincides profoundly with that of the preached word. Eating becomes secondary to hearing that the presence of Christ is assigned to the bread and wine "for me." The reduction of the Eucharist to (1) word, (2) *pro me*, and (3) certainty of forgiveness results in a profound diminution of the sacrament.

Turning to the doctrine of transubstantiation, Ratzinger asks: Is it a meaningful explanation today? He discusses the history of the doctrine and the modern consensus that substance lies outside the physical and the physically appearing, and so the real changes without a change of the physical. He then asks: What is this "real" which changes? He answers that it is the substantiality which bread and wine have in common with all creatures: being-in-self existence derived from the Creator. Thus bread and wine lose creatural autonomy and become pure signs of Christ's presence. As a result of God's creative word, bread and wine are changed in their metaphysical depth, being drawn into the presence of the Kyrios.

As stated, this theory takes seriously the incarnational dimension of the

<sup>9</sup> "Das Problem der Transsubstantiation und die Frage nach dem Sinn der Eucharistie," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 147 (1967) 129-58.

change: the self-binding of the Lord to earthly realities. However, since Ratzinger does not discuss the important question of the causality exercised by the humanity of Christ on the elements, it is not altogether clear whether this presentation is merely paying lip service to the traditional doctrine of transubstantiation. Ratzinger insists that the possibility of bread and wine becoming essentially signs of Christ's presence is derived from a consideration of what the glorification of Christ entails. As he puts it, the glorification of Christ means that He is not bound by history (space and time) and can grant the offer of His nearness (personal presence) where He chooses in sign as anticipation of the coming world in which His nearness will be fully realized.

Perhaps the most surprising convert to the newer approach to the Eucharistic presence of Christ is E. Gutwenger. Until quite recently he was of the opinion that the Council of Trent, in view of its approval of the verdict of the Council of Constance,<sup>10</sup> indirectly approved of the Aristotelian-Thomistic doctrine of substance and accidents as an inevitable ontological implication of the Catholic view of the Eucharistic presence of Christ.<sup>11</sup> Now he rejects this thesis and states that the cosmological explanation of the Eucharistic change is not an object of faith and is burdened with difficulties to which no satisfactory answer can be given.<sup>12</sup> His new perspective on this mystery begins with three basic presuppositions. (1) In the Eucharistic presence Christ is somehow fixed in space and in a certain span of time (while the elements remain). Therefore the Eucharistic presence is not an intentional presence based on the purely human activity of believers. (2) While a material being is in a place by quantitative contact, the exercise of causality in space and in spatial things is the basis of the presence of a spiritual being in space and in a certain span of time. (3) The glorified Christ no longer belongs to the system of relations of earthly space and so can become present only according to the mode of a spiritual being.

These presuppositions lead to the question: How can a causality be exercised by the Kyrios on bread and wine? Two solutions have been offered by Catholic theologians. The classical explanation is that the Kyrios takes over the function of supporting the accidents of bread and wine in existence. Gutwenger notes that he defended this theory himself earlier out of despair.<sup>13</sup> Now he rejects it as too tortuous and as making too many concessions to an ancient philosophy. The more recent approach, which

<sup>10</sup> DS 1151-52.

<sup>11</sup> "Substanz und Akzidenz in der Eucharistielehre," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 83 (1961) 257-306. Cf. *ibid.* 74 (1952) 334-38.

<sup>12</sup> "Das Geheimnis der Gegenwart Christi in der Eucharistie," *ibid.* 88 (1966) 185-97.

<sup>13</sup> "Substanz und Akzidenz" (n. 11 above).

speaks of the substitution of the being of bread by the created being of Christ's humanity, is also found unsatisfactory.<sup>14</sup> It avoids the substance-accident scheme of Aristotelian-Scholastic theology, but is burdened by an unverifiable concept of being.

Gutwenger is, in general, not content with these theories which stress the *Dinghafte*. What should be stressed, in his opinion, is the relationship which the Kyrios has to the Eucharistic food which is prepared for men and which serves to relate Him to men. These are personal relations. Hence he goes on to ask: Can this personal self-bestowal found the pneumatic real presence of the Kyrios in the Eucharistic species? His answer comes to this: through His will of self-bestowal, the Eucharistic food and drink are changed; they become symbols of His self-bestowal and so of spiritual and supernatural food for men.

The presence of the Kyrios thus comes about by a change. But what is the nature of this change? Gutwenger refers to the dissatisfaction of certain theologians with the classic interpretation of Catholic theology and their preference for the view that a change of being occurs when a being is given a new meaning for men. He agrees that being and meaning are interchangeable concepts on the level of human experience and clarifies this by a simple example. A house or bridge results from a definite ordering of bricks. In each case a change of meaning results in a change of being, without loss or removal of the material bricks. But can this be applied to the Eucharist? Can bread change to Eucharist without loss of substance?

Instead of answering this question directly, Gutwenger asks whether the following proposal is a theologically acceptable basis of discussion. Through the will of the Kyrios, expressed in the words of institution, the bread and wine become symbols of the pneumatic presence of Christ, who offers Himself as spiritual food. This presence of the Kyrios gives to the bread and wine a new meaning: place of the presence of the Kyrios. By this determination of the elements to be symbol of the personal presence of the Kyrios bestowing Himself on men, the former content of meaning and so the former being is changed.

Granting that this proposal is an acceptable basis of discussion, Gutwenger asks: Does it suffice as an explanation of the Eucharistic change? He agrees that the doctrine of transubstantiation goes beyond this; but it is full of difficulties, and so he suggests that we should be content with a more subtle and understandable explanation as long as the concept of change of being is respected. In his opinion, St. Ambrose's concept of

<sup>14</sup>Ratzinger's position would come under this criticism. He noted (cf. article cited in n. 9 above) his awareness of Gutwenger's latest contribution but was unable to make use of it in his own preparation.



“transelementation” and the terms used by the Greek Fathers leave the mode of Eucharistic change in suspense and are not opposed to the concept of change of meaning involving change of being as sufficient basis for the explanation of how the bread and wine become sacrament of the body and blood of Christ.

Gutwenger concludes that the words of institution do not seem to exclude the more subtle explanation of the Eucharistic change which is content with the concept of change of meaning. He states that a symbol is the explicitation of a reality which both appears and veils itself in the symbol. The consecrated bread and wine is the sacramental form of the appearance of Christ. Hence it is completely in place to see symbol and reality, form of appearance and Christ, as a unity and to claim this concrete bread as Christ.

Arguing from a different point of view, Ch. Duquoc points out the problem of establishing the ontological basis of the dialectical link between symbol and presence in the case of the Eucharist. He insists that the Real Presence can only be properly conceived in the totality of the symbolical gesture which forms the structure of the Eucharist: *the sharing of food together*, which can celebrate realized fellowship or fellowship being realized but only be sign of the desire for universal fellowship unrealizable by the power of men. In the Eucharistic meal, he argues, the actual possibility of total reconciliation is proclaimed on the basis of attachment to the one Mediator and is actually being attained through the sharing of the Eucharistic food. Hence the human gesture is truly “transfinalized.” This means that the real presence of Christ must be immanent to the dynamic of the Eucharistic meal as “bread shared.” Consequently there is a conversion of the symbol of the sharing of bread, because the movement toward the *eschaton* can only work through a rupture of the human meal, which always expresses limited fellowship. In the case of the Eucharist the sign effects exactly what it signifies: the coming communion between men and Christ.

Duquoc concludes that, in the case of the Eucharist, presence of Christ and symbol are inseparable: the symbol signifies unlimited communion of men with Christ being realized; the presence of Christ assures the truth of the symbol. But can we base the dialectical link, the dynamic interconnectedness, between symbol and presence on an ontology? Not at present, he says, for the whole problem has not been sufficiently thought through.<sup>15</sup>

Duquoc’s presentation has many points of convergence with the approach of process philosophy to the Eucharistic presence of Christ. But

<sup>15</sup> “Signification sacramentelle de la ‘présence réelle,’” *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 53 (1969) 421–32.

whereas with Duquoc a special mode of real presence of Christ is assigned to the symbolical gesture of the sharing of bread and wine itself, it is more in keeping with process philosophy to refer the presence of Christ to the whole event in an undifferentiated way. Thus T. M. Dicken, arguing from the presuppositions of this philosophy, states that the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist finds its locus in the total context of the Lord's Supper, "in the total event of Christians, indwelt by Christ and becoming conformed to his embodiment in their lives, coming together in the community which is his body, to break bread and pour wine, actions and elements in which Christ has willed to make his presence known."<sup>16</sup> This approach, which shifts the accent from the gift to the event, from the eating of the bread and the drinking of the wine to the breaking of the bread and the pouring of the wine, makes the outward form of the "event" the only really distinctive thing which sets it apart from other real presences of Christ in the community which gathers in His name.

Dicken finds his view in harmony with the New Testament community's understanding of the Lord's Supper. The proof-texts he offers without analysis are unconvincing. Ultimately he bases his argument on an exegesis of the words of institution which places the emphasis on the gestures of breaking bread and pouring wine. Such an approach will find an audience only among those who are content both with J. Jeremias' understanding of Jesus' intention in regard to the Eucharistic gestures at the Last Supper and with applying this understanding to the New Testament communities at large, including those for which Paul (1 Cor 10:16-17; 11:17-30) and the fourth Gospel (Jn 6:51-58) bear witness.

It is not altogether clear that the approach of many modern Catholic theologians to the Eucharistic presence of Christ differs essentially from that of Th. Süß, professor of Lutheran dogmatics in the faculty of Protestant theology of Paris. His view was presented in a report on recent Protestant research concerned with this problem.<sup>17</sup>

Süß emphasizes the importance of approaching the problem from the institutional accounts. The question concerning the objective presence of Christ under forms of bread and wine can only be answered by an analysis of the words of institution and their function in the totality of the narrative of the institution of the Eucharist. Süß finds that the words of institution represent an example of "exhibition substitutive" (substitutive donation). An example of this, drawn from daily life, would be the gesture of a man giving a ring to a woman with the words "Take this, I give myself to

<sup>16</sup> "Process Philosophy and the Real Presence," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 6 (1969) 72.

<sup>17</sup> "La présence du Christ: Recherches Protestants," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 53 (1969) 433-57. For a fuller explanation of this theory, cf. his *La communion au corps du Christ* (Neuchâtel, 1968) pp. 280 ff.

you." In this case the man offers the gift of himself by way of substitution of an object for the actual gift. The man is not identified with the ring, nor is he present in the ring. But there is identity of the gift of the ring with the gift which the man makes of himself. The ring intervenes as a necessary element of the act of donation. Applying this to the Eucharist, Süss argues that Jesus announces the gift of Himself as source of reconciliation between men and God in giving the bread and wine with the words "This is my body given" and "This is my blood shed." The words of institution express directly the notion of a real gift. Hence there is identity between the gift of the bread and wine and the gift which Christ makes of Himself. But, he insists, there cannot be a real gift without a real presence of Christ. A real gift implies a real presence of Christ, not in the bread and wine, but in the Eucharist, as subject and object of the Eucharist.

To establish the possibility of the Real Presence, Süss turns to the theology of Christ's resurrection. In virtue of His glorification, Christ escapes entirely from the categories of space and time and can be present where and when He wills and in the way He wills. Bread can be used by God to signify the gift of Christ Himself to His disciples, and so be called body of Christ in keeping with its function of signifying the real gift of Christ Himself to His disciples. The only problem, concludes Süss, is to know how to find where God chooses to relate Christ's presence to earthly things.

This theory is distinguished from the presentation of more recent Catholic contributions by the more manifest reticence of the latter theologians to exclude a deeper ontological link between the Eucharistic elements and the humanity of Christ.

The various attempts of modern Catholic theologians to come to grips with the mystery of Christ's Eucharistic presence manifest a fundamental concern for the importance of a proper integration of the dimensions of the Incarnation and glorification of Christ, the function of sign causing presence, and the finality of the Eucharist. In so far as these contributions to a better understanding of the mystery reflect the conviction that Christ's Eucharistic presence to the believer is only analogous to the presence of one person to another in history through sign as embodiment of the sign maker, and take account of a proper activity of the Spirit to realize this presence (as confessed in the epiclesis of the liturgy), they would seem to remain well within the bounds of Catholic tradition. Any further rational explanation of the ontological basis of Christ's Eucharistic presence will necessarily provoke criticism, especially today, because of the variety of philosophical approaches available. On this level, however, perhaps theologians and the churches which confess Eucharistic realism may soon be able to agree in substance with a statement which Peter of Capua made at the beginning of the thirteenth century after reflecting on the various theological attempts to express how Christ becomes present in

the Eucharist. At a time when the doctrine of transubstantiation was one among several explanations offered to account for this mystery, he judged in his *Summa quaestionum* (A.D. 1201–2): “Nec est articulum fidei credere quod sic vel sic fiat illa conversio, sed tantummodo credere quod corpus Christi ad prolationem verborum sit in altare.”<sup>18</sup>

#### EUCCHARISTIC SACRIFICE

The perennial problem of presenting a balanced view of the Eucharistic mystery, in which the relationships of the various elements to one another clearly appear, continues to hold the attention of theologians. C. Tierney offers a brief commentary on the structure of the Eucharist which reflects the thinking of J. Betz, professor of dogmatics of the University of Würzburg.<sup>19</sup> He begins with this question: What does it mean to say that the Eucharist is sacrament of the sacrifice of Christ—a memorial filled with the reality of Christ’s sacrifice? His answer involves the following points. (1) Christ is actively present by identity with the action of the priest recalling the words and gestures of Christ by which He revealed His self-offering for the world at the Last Supper. (2) As a result of this active presence of Christ, He becomes substantially present as the “given” person in the Eucharistic species. (3) The Eucharistic words are not only spoken by Christ through the priest, thus causing His sacrifice to be present; they are also spoken by Christ to the Church, and so become the Church’s word of faith. As spoken by the Church, they proclaim the Church’s faith in Christ’s sacrifice and her desire to be united to it. (4) The Eucharistic presence of Christ is sign that the Church’s worship is acceptable to God; and communion of the body and blood of Christ signifies the deeper involvement in the paschal mystery in its personal and social dimensions.

This presentation highlights the function of the remembrance act of the priest (identified with the actual presence of Christ) and the remembrance act of the believers, implied in the Church’s prayer of thanksgiving, as essential aspects of the Eucharistic sacrifice. But the understanding of the relationship between the memorial and thanksgiving aspects can be deepened. J. Betz has pointed this out in presenting the solution of the Fathers of the Church to this problem.<sup>20</sup>

For them, the Eucharist is anamnesis: both a subjective remembrance of the participants and the objective presence of the redemptive work of

<sup>18</sup> Cf. H. Jorissen, *Die Entfaltung der Transsubstantiationslehre bis zum Beginn der Hochscholastik* (Münster, 1965) p. 24.

<sup>19</sup> “The Structure of the Eucharistic Mystery,” *Australasian Catholic Record* 46 (1969) 35–44.

<sup>20</sup> “Sacrifice et action de grâces,” *Maison-Dieu* 87 (1966) 78–96. Cf. “Sacrifice and Thanksgiving,” *Theology Digest* 17 (1969) 16–21.

Christ. Hence the Eucharist is sacrifice of Jesus remembered and rendered present (*commemorata et repraesentata*). For them, the Eucharist is also thanksgiving: the response to the gift received which involves recognition of the giver's favor in the gift. Hence the sacrificial action of the Church is essentially remembrance and thanksgiving and as such presents itself as the unique sacrifice of Jesus offered in the past. In celebrating the memorial of Jesus' sacrifice with thanksgiving, the Church celebrates and accomplishes her own sacrifice; for thanksgiving involves the recognition of the giver's favor in the gift. In referring the gift to the giver, the person mentally restores the gift to the giver. This is the concept that underlies sacrifice. But this reference of the gift to the giver involves thanksgiving; for the offerer understands that he owes the gift he offers to God along with all else.

The importance of the memorial aspect of the Eucharist in making Christ's sacrifice present to the Church is stressed by N. Lash in his treatment of how the Mass is a sacrifice.<sup>21</sup> To say that Christ is present offering His sacrifice in the Church means, for him, that the final word of God to men spoken in Christ is still heard in the Church and the final deed of Christ is made present in the life and celebration of the community. This happens through the Spirit, who causes the Church to hear and to recall this final word. By means of this recall Christ continues to be present in human history in the unique act of His death and resurrection. The recall is made effective in the response of love and praise which it draws from the men to whom and by whom it is recalled. Briefly, Christ's sacrifice is made present by being recalled in the Church's sacrifice of praise. The Church's offering consists in the worship of the community, whose words and gestures are both the revelation of the final word of God to men and the acceptance of this word.

The role of the memory in relation to the problem of the presence of the historical redemptive act of Christ in the Eucharist is further probed in recent periodical literature. B. Faure begins with an analysis of the human act of recalling: an act of making oneself present to one's self, to others, to events.<sup>22</sup> In the Eucharist, the Church is invited to participate in the eternal memory of God as does the divinized memory of Christ. On the part of God and Christ, all the Eucharists of the Church are directly linked to the Cross. This guarantees the presence of the redemptive act of Christ to all Eucharists; for the eternal memory is present equally to all moments of history. But the goal of the Eucharist is to permit men to associate themselves with and participate in Christ's sacrifice. This is made possible by the Spirit, who, as soul of the Church, is particularly the

<sup>21</sup> *His Presence in the World* (London, 1968) chap. 4: "How Is the Mass a Sacrifice?"

<sup>22</sup> "Eucharistie et mémoire," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 90 (1968) 278-90.

memory of the Church. Through the Spirit Christ makes His spouse participate in His divinized memory. At the time of the Eucharist, the Spirit gives the Church the grace to recall, to render herself present to the Christ of history, passing from the world to the Father.

Faure goes on to add that the memorial command of Christ gives to the Church the power to render present under forms of bread and wine the body "given for many." But the memory is an integrating part of this event: there is no true consecration without the intention *faciendi quod facit ecclesia*, i.e., of associating the memory of Christ's historical existence and passover to the concrete, spatial presence of Christ in the Eucharist. He also notes that since memory is presence, active presence, it implies a presentation of one's self as well as union which goes beyond spatial juxtaposition. The gathering of the community to recall is expression of the will to render one's self present to the Lord's passover in order to make of one's life an offering linked to that of Christ. The term to which this memorial tends is communion; for the recalling in the Spirit looks to interpersonal union, to a total presence, to the unity of the Body of Christ expressed by eating.

The author concludes: our memory, in the Spirit, allows us to bring back the sacrifice of Christ to the center of history and our lives. The movement is not from the historical event of the Cross to us: the event is not withdrawn from its historical context and made to come to us. Rather, we go to the event, are made present to it. The movement by which we meet a passed event is called memory. It is by remembrance that we meet the sacrifice of the Cross.<sup>23</sup>

The existential presence of the participants of the Eucharist to the sacrifice of Christ through recalling in the Spirit admits, however, of degrees, as K. Rahner has pointed out in his discussion of the relation of devotion to the fruits of the Mass.<sup>24</sup> This important truth is given some prominence by K. B. Osborne in the context of an ecumenical dialogue concerning the sacrificial character of the Mass.<sup>25</sup> He explains that while the participants are present to Christ, who is offerer and offered, they are in a sacrificial situation in which presence is always more or less: "sacrificial" refers

<sup>23</sup> Cf. R. Didier, "Eucharistie et le temps des hommes," *Lumière et vie* 18 (1969) 27-49. The author deals with the understanding of the presence of the historical saving act in the Eucharist and underlines the importance of including the believing conscience in the explanation.

<sup>24</sup> K. Rahner and A. Häussling, *The Celebration of the Eucharist* (New York, 1968).

<sup>25</sup> "Ecumenical Eucharist," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 6 (1969) 598-619. Cf. esp. pp. 613-17. Osborne affirms his dependence on J. Betz, "Der Opfercharacter des Abendmahls im interkonfessionellen Dialog," in *Theologie im Wandel* (Munich, 1967) pp. 469-91.

to the personal, relational dimension between Christ and the Church.<sup>26</sup> Here Osborne cites N. Lash's statement: recalling Christ's death, we make Him personally present to us to awake the response of faith and love and so make Christ's sacrifice effective among us here and now. He also refers to J. Coventry's observation that Christ is present in such a way as to enable us to draw grace from the memorial of His sacrifice.<sup>27</sup> He concludes: since we stand in a personal, relational situation to Christ's sacrifice (= sacrificial situation) in the Mass, it is sacrificial. But not every Eucharist is as sacrificial as another, because the *pro me* modality varies.

In the article of C. Tierney to which we have referred, one sees how the Mass is sacrifice of Christ: through the active presence of Christ identified with the recalling action of the priest. In this perspective J. J. Hughes finds a solution to the debate between the Reformers and the Catholic apologists of the sixteenth century.<sup>28</sup>

The Reformers saw the Lord's Supper as memorial of the Cross—subjective memorial—in which Christians recalled and thanked God for salvation in Christ and received forgiveness. The Catholic apologists rejected the shifting of the center of gravity through stress on the downward movement. They also saw the Mass as a mental recalling of the sacrifice of the Cross involving thanksgiving and the reception of redemptive blessings, but stressed that a separate and new act of oblation was made by the priest or Church *after* the body and blood of Christ had been made present by transubstantiation. Hence, for them, what made the Mass the sacrifice of Christ was the offering by the priest of Christ present under forms of bread and wine.

This view, found in G. Biel's presentation, which was very influential in the sixteenth century, was a by-product of the thirteenth-century Scholastic doctrine which situated the "essential form" of the Mass in the words of institution. In this perspective the oblationary language of the prayers following the words of institution, e.g., "Memores offerimus," was gradually referred not to the offering which the Church makes of herself in union with Christ, but to the body and blood of Christ. This, however, was not the view of St. Thomas, who founds the presence of the sacrifice of Christ in the commemoration of the Last Supper itself.

Hughes draws the conclusion, with reference to S. Moore,<sup>29</sup> that the

<sup>26</sup> Here Osborne refers to E. M. B. Green's article "Christ's Sacrifice and Ours," *One in Christ* 4 (1968) 275-76.

<sup>27</sup> "Eucharistic Presence," *One in Christ* 4 (1968) 267.

<sup>28</sup> "Eucharistic Sacrifice: Transcending the Reformation Deadlock," *Worship* 43 (1969) 532-44.

<sup>29</sup> "The Theology of the Mass and the Liturgical Datum," *Downside Review* 69 (1951) 31-44.

“something done” in the Mass which makes it sacrifice of Christ is not an offering before or after the consecration, but the consecration itself. The Mass is sacrifice because it is the sacramental commemoration and representation of Christ’s unique sacrifice of Calvary. It is anamnesis in the biblical sense: the sacrament of the sacrifice of the Cross in which Christ’s redeeming act becomes present through the ministry of a priest in a memorial which is the image of the reality but without any need of a special and literal act of sacrifice.<sup>30</sup>

### *Eucharistic Sacrifice in Ecumenical Dialogue*

The new Eucharistic prayers of the Roman Mass, which express the fundamental intent of the Eucharist, have been made the subject of a number of studies.<sup>31</sup> All these prayers emphasize the offering of the Church. This has evoked some interesting comments from K.-H. Bieritz.<sup>32</sup> He asks whether the stress on the *oblatio ecclesiae* of the three new anaphoras presents a difficulty from the Reformation churches’ viewpoint.

Bieritz finds that the new prayers offer the same perspective as that found in K. Rahner’s presentation of the *oblatio ecclesiae*: the Church, acting as instrument of Christ, presents the cultic act of Christ instituted at the Last Supper and does it in such a way that the sacrifice of the Cross becomes actually present. Secondly, the Church presents sacrifice to God in so far as she realizes in a subjective, existential way the objective meaning of her cultic act, i.e., offers in faith and love Christ’s body and blood to the Father. Hence the Church is existentially included in the sacrifice of Christ.<sup>33</sup> He shows from the texts of the new anaphoras how they express this point of view:

<sup>30</sup> Here Hughes quotes L. Scheffczyk, “Eucharist, iii: Eucharistic Sacrifice,” *Sacramentum mundi* 2 (New York, 1968) 275. Cf. E. Lussier, “Some Reflections on the Narrative of the Institution of the Eucharist,” *Chicago Studies* 8 (1969) 249–59. He observes that the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist, from the viewpoint of NT scholarly research, comes from the nature of the Eucharistic food: the given body and blood. The sacrificial symbolism of certain details of the liturgy are later mystical considerations which have little to do with essential Eucharistic symbolism.

<sup>31</sup> For good brief studies of these prayers, cf. J. Dupuis, “The New Eucharistic Prayers,” *Clergy Monthly* 33 (1969) 490–95; C. Tierney, “The Meaning of the Eucharistic Prayers,” *Australasian Catholic Record* 46 (1969) 91–100. Perhaps the most violent adverse criticism of the new order of the Mass was made in the anonymous pamphlet of a group identified as “Roman theologians”: *A Critical Study of the New Order of the Mass* (distributed in English by the Latin Mass Society). Andrew Ryder uses the accusations of this study, which he finds baseless, as a starting point for his reflections on the theology of the new order: “The Theology of the New Order of the Mass,” *Clergy Review* 55 (1970) 101–11.

<sup>32</sup> “*Oblatio ecclesiae*: Bemerkungen zu den neuen eucharistischen Hochgebeten der römischen Liturgie,” *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 94 (1969) 242–51.

<sup>33</sup> For similar viewpoints Bieritz refers to the article of A. E. Buchrucker, “Die Repräsentation des Opfers Christi im Abendmahl in der gegenwärtigen katholischen Theologie,” *Kerygma und Dogma* 13 (1967) 273 ff.



1) The body and blood of Christ, in the form of sacrament, are present in the condition of being sacrificed and so realize the presence of the sacrifice of the Cross. They are presented by the Church as her sacrifice to God. This is expressed in the new prayers by phrases following the narrative of institution: "We offer you His body and blood" (E.P. 4); "We offer you in thanksgiving this holy and living sacrifice" (E.P. 3); "We offer you, Father, this life-giving bread, this saving cup" (E.P. 2).

2) The presentation of this sacrifice is understood as an act of thanksgiving: "We offer . . . giving thanks" (E.P. 2); "We offer you in thanksgiving" (E.P. 3). But the Church does not offer from her own; she presents what God has prepared for her: "Lord, look on the sacrifice, which you have prepared for your Church" (E.P. 4).

3) The community enters into the sacrifice of Christ through receiving the body and blood of Christ in Communion: "Gather all who share this bread and wine into the one Body of Christ, a living sacrifice of praise" (E.P. 4); "Grant that we who are nourished by His body and blood may be filled with His Holy Spirit, and become one body, one spirit in Christ" (E.P. 3).

4) The sacrifice which the Church presents is acceptable because it represents the sacrifice of Christ: "Look with favor on your Church's offering, and see the victim whose death has reconciled us to yourself" (E.P. 3); "We offer you His body and blood, the acceptable sacrifice which brings salvation to the whole world" (E.P. 4).

5) This sacrifice is beneficial for the whole world and is offered for the living and the dead: "Lord, may this sacrifice, which has made our peace with you, advance the peace and salvation of the whole world" (E.P. 3); "Lord, remember those for whom this sacrifice is offered . . ." (E.P. 4).

In the perspective of these prayers, therefore, the cultic presence of the sacrifice of the Cross is the presupposition of the sharing of the Church: the Church enters into the act of the Head in faith and love in a cultic way. Accordingly, the cultic action of the Mass is both the cultic manifestation of the sacrifice of Christ and that of the co-offering of the Body with the Head.

With this view of the sacrifice of the Mass in mind, Bieritz now presents the main thesis of W. Averbeck's *Promotionsschrift*, which shows that a real dialogue is possible between Reformation and Catholic theology on the question of the *oblatio ecclesiae*.<sup>34</sup> Averbeck judges that the Reformation objections to the traditional teaching stem from a misunderstanding of the role of the humanity of Christ in the redemptive process. To him, Christ is both representative of God before men and, above all, the representative of men in their encounter with God. This holds true for the

<sup>34</sup> *Der Opfercharacter des Abendmahls in der neueren evangelischen Theologie* (Paderborn, 1967).

sacrifice of the Cross, where Christ acted not only for Himself but as Head of the "many," who ought, in their turn, to consent and so enter into the glory of their representative.

Bieritz understands that this conception of the role of the Church in the Eucharistic sacrifice goes beyond K. Rahner's description of the sacrifice of the Church as "the subjective sharing" in the sacramentally present sacrifice of Christ. It involves co-operating in the sacrifice of the Cross itself. Conversely, the Eucharistic act of the Church is also truly *medium salutis*, because praise and glory are presented to God the Father through Christ (as representative of humanity) and thereby redemption and sanctification are realized (sanctification being the effect of *latría*). Hence the sacrifice which the Church presents in the Eucharist is sanctifying and reconciling for the whole world, benefiting the living and the dead.

A theologian schooled in Reformation theology, says Bieritz, will find difficulties with the presentation of Averbeck and the new Eucharistic prayers. However, he cites the warning of the Lutheran theologian G. G. Blum about a precipitous *summa summarum* of the Lutheran type. In his investigation of the Eucharistic teaching of the early Church, Blum was forced to ask this question, which relates to the presentation of Averbeck: "Has Christ achieved His sacrifice *qua Deus, humanitate nihil cooperante*, or did He act as High Priest on the first level according to His human nature and as representative of humanity?"<sup>35</sup> If an affirmative answer is given to the second alternative, Blum finds this conclusion unavoidable: "Through, with, and in Christ the Church herself presents to God the Father the sacrifice of His Son present in a liturgical manner and so experiences the *mystērion* of her proper sacrifice, which ought to be visible in her whole life from this source."<sup>36</sup> Bieritz concludes his exposition with the personal observation that the new Eucharistic prayers offer the occasion for all to co-operate in the solution to the problem of the *oblatio ecclesiae*.

The reference to Averbeck's extensive study offers an opportunity to present an outline of this important work. He begins with a presentation of the traditional view of Lutherans concerning the Lord's Supper: (1) It is a memorial of the Cross but does not involve any active offering of the sacrifice of the Cross. (2) For later Lutherans, even on the Cross the humanity of Christ is not the subject of the activity: He is not representative of men but of God who does all. This was held despite the fact that these Lutheran theologians adhered to the conciliar decisions against the Monophysites and Monothelites.

<sup>35</sup> "Eucharistie, Amt und Opfer in der alten Kirche: Eine problemgeschichtliche Skizze," *Oecumenica: Jahrbuch für ökumenische Forschung*, 1966, p. 56.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

As Averbeck sees it, the underestimation of the possibilities of man, and even the humanity of Christ, and the exaggeration of the omnipotence of God led to further consequences. Later scholars criticized the Apostolic Fathers, who by the name "Eucharist" put the human act in the foreground (W. F. Schmidt), and by the name *thysia*, as in *Didache* 14, linked the Eucharist to Old Testament and pagan sacrifices (R. Hupfeld). For many of these Lutheran scholars, the history of the Mass is a history of decline. From Irenaeus to Cyprian to the Roman Canon to Gregory the Great, sacrifice and priesthood are mentioned more explicitly and the service of word and sacrament is placed in the background. The end point is reached with Trent's teaching that the Mass is *sacrificium propitiatorium*, thus implying that the Cross does not suffice.

Replying to the criticism of Trent's teaching, Averbeck gives an answer with which anyone who has studied the sources and decrees of this Council must concur: the forgiveness of sin is not ascribed to the Mass as a direct effect, but is linked with it in somewhat the same way as it is bound, on the Evangelical side, with the believing reception of the Lord's Supper.

Averbeck finds that the concept of re-presentation of the salvation event of the Cross in the Lord's Supper is given a place in Lutheran theological circles. Thus, P. Brunner speaks of the Lord's Supper as a preaching through sign-action in which there is present, through effective representation, the salvation event of the Cross with its victim and so the sacrifice of the Cross. While Brunner denies a co-offering of the Church, the *repraesentatio* doctrine points to the drawing of the participants into the event of the Cross. This conclusion has been drawn by ecumenically-minded Reformation theologians.

In Averbeck's judgment, the later Lutheran theologians bypassed the *Confessio Augustana*<sup>37</sup> and basically abandoned Luther himself. In accord with the ancient conciliar decisions against the Monophysites, the humanity of Christ must be given an active role in the redemptive work. This active role is "represented" in the Lord's Supper. And in this liturgy the act of the Church is drawn into the act of Christ. This means that the Eucharist is "the sacramental coaccomplishment of the sacrifice of Christ in the Church." There is no question of an isolated act of men and of an

<sup>37</sup> Cf. R. Knust, "Die Eucharistie im ökumenischen Dialog im Anschluss an die liturgischen Aussagen der *Confessio Augustana*," *Theologie und Glaube* 59 (1969) 115-31. He judges that the *Confessio Augustana* need not be a source of separation of the churches. On the question of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist, he refers to R. Prenter's observation that the *Confessio's* understanding of the Catholic view is incorrect: the Catholic Church does not teach that the Mass is a good work of men but that the *offerimus* indicates that the Church is identified with Christ offering.

action of Christ through the Church. The act of Christ and that of the Church are bound together unconfused and unseparated. Thus the Church is allotted an activity in Christ: an external act which is the expression of an inner self-offering. If Christ is the primary actor, men also act in the liturgy.

In regard to the ongoing ecumenical dialogue on the role of the Church in Eucharistic worship, the recent articles of G. Siegwalt and E. Griese, representing the Lutheran side, are worthy of note as a conclusion to this section.

Siegwalt asks whether the activity of the Church, sharing in the priesthood of Christ, has a propitiatory value.<sup>38</sup> His answer is based on the similarity between the mediatorial role of Christ and of the Church. Just as Christ is High Priest by substituting Himself for us, so the Church, participating in His priesthood, substitutes in a true sense. The Church does this—actualizes and represents the substitution of Christ—by sacrifice: gift of self to God for men (Rom 12:1, Eph 5:1-2). This sacrifice of the Church is, moreover, necessary for the salvation of the world (Col 1:24) in the sense that through it the sacrifice of Christ continues to accomplish its goal in the course of human history. Here the notion of the Church's mediation comes in: in living from and in following Christ, the Church is transparency of Christ offering Himself for the world. In living in the world and taking on the burdens of the world, which she refers to the one who can transform all things, the Church offers the world to Christ.

Siegwalt concludes that the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ is accessible in its effects, which the Kyrios bestows on us by the Spirit. This actualization for us takes place in the Eucharist in so far as it is sacrament. But he does not hesitate to assign a propitiatory value to the Church's worship. He only insists that it must not be objectified in a reified sense, as though the leaders of the Eucharist were priests sacrificing in the Levitical way—a restriction which will meet the approval of Catholic theologians. In his estimation, the sacrifice of praise of one's life is propitiatory in union with the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ and in its following.

Griese, in an article dealing with some preliminary statements of a liturgical theology, takes up the question of the relationship between liturgy, justification, and Eucharist in the third part.<sup>39</sup> Next to the question concerning salvation and the meaning of the Cross as sacrifice for us, he finds the distinction between the foundation of salvation and its appropriation

<sup>38</sup> "Sacerdoce ministériel et ministère pastoral d'après les livres symboliques luthériens," *Istina* 13 (1968) 7-22. This is the abridged text of a paper delivered at a May 24, 1967, meeting between Catholics (bishops and theologians) and Protestants (pastors and theologians).

<sup>39</sup> "Prospektiven einer liturgischen Theologie," *Una sancta* 24 (1969) 108-10.

decisive for the meaning of cult. In baptism, preaching, absolution, and the Eucharist, the salvation effected by Christ, and which does not include all men unavoidably, is appropriated through the Spirit. The Eucharist, therefore, involves an existential grasping of justification *sola gratia*. But because the worship of the Church happens in the Spirit of Christ, it happens in Christ. It is therefore a share in the never-ending worship of Christ before God. This fact, in Griese's opinion, establishes a bridge to a current critical problem for Protestants.

In the following section of his article, which deals with "Liturgy and Worship of Life," Griese takes up this critical problem.<sup>40</sup> The rejection of cult in Protestant circles has many causes. One is the shifting from the causative to the cognitive understanding of the *media salutis*: one goes to worship to express what has long been established, but not to receive justification. Another cause is the separation between worship and the life of Christians, which is, as a whole, worship (Rom 12:1). Griese goes on to indicate the relationship between them. In the Eucharistic liturgy Christ comes to us for our salvation and we answer as God's people—an answer which holds for the whole of our life in the world. Here we learn, by offering our lives united with the sacrifice of Christ, to offer ourselves in our daily life for the love of the brethren. The *offertorium* of the Mass is, accordingly, an essential part of worship both as theological aspect and as liturgical action: the offering of ourselves as Eucharistic sacrifice through the sacrifice of Christ present in the Lord's Supper. Through the *offertorium* it is recalled that Christ alone mediates the way to God. The way to God is made possible when we recall what He has done for us (anamnesis). Hence we bring the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross before God and unite our lives, praise, and prayer to it.

Griese concludes that as long as Christians do not discover the essence of the Eucharistic sacrifice, the relation of worship to daily life will not be clarified. In the Eucharist the tension between prayer and action, cult and ethos, is dissolved. Here in eschatological anticipation both lines intersect, since the sacrifice of the Church is taken up into the sacrifice of Christ. Daily work, seen in this light, will be understood as work before God, "liturgy." Without the relation to the Eucharist, the actions of daily life are simply not understood as worship. Briefly, our daily activity is worship if our worship is activity.

#### MEANING OF CHRIST'S EUCHARISTIC PRESENCE

Eucharistic communion with the Kyrios, "who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification" (Rom 4:25), effectively signi-

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 111-12.

fies our incorporation into this mystery: (1) reconciliation with God (and men), which implies (2) participation in Trinitarian life and (3) the vocation of service to the world. This has been the traditional understanding of the meaning of the Lord's Supper and offers a good division for a brief review of some literature dealing with these dimensions of the Eucharist.

### *Eucharist and Reconciliation*

#### 1. Meal As Form of Sacrament of Reconciliation

The theme of the Eucharist as sacrament of reconciliation has been studied in some recent articles which take as point of departure the form of the Eucharist: a meal. The meal has considerable importance in the Old and New Testaments under one form or another. In his study of this biblical theme, P. Bourget observes that while the Bible does not underestimate the importance of God's gifts of food and drink, it does not equate eating and drinking well with living well: gluttony and eating related to degrading ideologies are condemned. On the other hand, he cites many instances where the meal is occasion of giving thanks, expressing hospitality, effecting reconciliation, and creating an atmosphere of joy. In the Lord's Supper, he concludes, all the elements which contribute grandeur to the sharing of bread and wine are transfigured through the real, spiritual presence of the Kyrios: generosity, hospitality, reconciliation, benediction, reunion, and communion.<sup>41</sup>

But if Christ chose the human meal as form of the worship of the gathered believers because of the meaning it had in Judaism, this meaning was also shared by other cultures. This consideration prompted Ch. Duquoc to undertake an analysis of the anthropological dimension of the human meal in order to show that it was aptly chosen by Christ to express the fact that the Eucharist is sacrament of "l'existence reconcilée."<sup>42</sup>

He reasons that because the Eucharist is given in the form of a meal, its meaning cannot be properly understood apart from the meaning of a human meal. So he asks: What is the meaning of a human meal? What characterizes the human meal is the sharing of food together. In this context the biological act of eating is elevated from the level of exclusive appropriation of food to an act of communion. This fact allows Duquoc to draw certain conclusions with regard to the possibilities of the meal. It can be a sign of fellowship already realized (meal with friends) or of fellowship being realized (meal with strangers). It can be made, by the intention of the participants, a sign of the desire for universal fellowship and

<sup>41</sup> "Esquisse d'une doctrine du 'repas' selon la Bible," *Revue réformée* 20 (1969) 29-41.

<sup>42</sup> "Le repas du Seigneur: Sacrement de l'existence reconcilée," *Lumière et vie* 18 (1969) 51-62. Cf. also Duquoc's article cited in n. 15 above.

reconciliation. This dimension is implied in the act of sharing, which of itself denies exclusion, and in the hospitality extended to strangers. However, the sharing is never fully realized; it is always limited by the group of actual participants. It can only be a utopian gesture of universal reconciliation.

Duquoc proceeds to analyze the Eucharistic meal. In this meal the proclamation is made of the redemptive work of Christ, which reconciles humanity with God and so gives the possibility of individual reconciliation, on condition that the individual relate himself to the one Mediator. Since this reconciliation implies reconciliation between all who are in Christ, this meal reveals the actual possibility of a total reconciliation of all men.

What the human meal expresses as a desire which is not clearly attainable, the Eucharist expresses as a possibility which is attainable and is actually being attained through the one Mediator, as He draws men into the one redeemed humanity through the Father in the Spirit. Furthermore, Duquoc adds, the words of institution proclaim that this reconciliation is actually being realized in the Eucharist. The sharing of the bread, which is a participation in Christ, underlines (1) that what the human meal tends to cannot be accomplished except through Christ, and (2) that total reconciliation is actually being realized through Christ, who by His presence draws men into communion with the Father through the Spirit and so into communion with one another.

Since the human gesture is transfigured, says Duquoc, the real presence of Christ must be immanent to the dynamic of the Eucharist as shared bread and wine. There must be a conversion of the symbol, because the passage to the *eschaton* cannot operate except by the rupture of the intimacy of the human meal. By this conversion the sign effects what it signifies: the coming communion between men in Christ.

Duquoc's final observation is that since the Eucharist is sacrament of reconciled existence not yet fully achieved, it calls men to reconciling action in the world. By such activity, what is celebrated in the symbol becomes more real; the link between symbol and the reality of universal reconciliation becomes more apparent. On this same theme, R. Didier writes that as a meal the Eucharist is an eating together and unites Christians, because Christ is the common nourishment and evokes a common intimacy between Himself and all the participants. But the fact that Christians are nourished by the glorified victim of the Cross signifies that they are to follow the way of Christ and proclaim His death in act. This sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist specifies Christian existence and as such unites Christians. It calls for a common project to seek reconciliation with God and all men, a project in which Christ Himself opens human liberty to

make it capable of surpassing human limitations. In this perspective Didier stresses that the unity signified and realized in the Eucharist is promise and anticipation of the eschatological unity. Hence the Eucharist is sacrament of reconciliation rather than sacrament of unity. On this earth unity is announced under the form of reconciliation, since men are always strangers in some fashion. The Eucharist does not escape this law; it effects unity only through reconciliation.<sup>43</sup>

## 2. Eucharist and Remission of Sins

The fact that the Eucharist is the celebration of man's reconciliation with God through Christ relates it to the forgiveness of sins. In the tradition of the Eastern and Western Churches, remission of sins is related to the reception of the Eucharistic body and blood and to the sacrificial prayer of the liturgy. It is also related to the penitential rites inserted into the Eucharistic liturgy.

The theme of Eucharist and remission of sins has been the subject of a number of recent articles.<sup>44</sup> Almost all point out the existence, in the patristic period, of a theology of Holy Communion in which the reception of the Eucharist is seen to involve purification from sin on condition of repentance, in accord with 1 Cor 11:27 ff., which is referred to frequently. Likewise, these articles refer to the patristic understanding of the propitiatory value attached to the sacrificial prayer of the priest with respect to sins of weakness and inadvertence, but not to those sins which excommunicated a person from the community. For these sins some other remedy was needed. Public penance was the ordinary means. However, there is evidence of the introduction of penitential rites into the Eucharistic liturgies in some areas of the patristic Church which appear to involve an exercise of the keys and which relate to the forgiveness of "voluntary and conscious" sins (= sins which exclude from the kingdom) which do not come under the discipline of public penance. Ligier has collected the material

<sup>43</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>44</sup> Ch. Didier, "L'Eucharistie: Problèmes du temps présent," *Esprit et vie* 79 (1969) 649-56; J. A. Jungmann, "De actu poenitentiali infra Missam inserto conspectus historicus," *Ephemerides liturgicae* 80 (1966) 257 ff.; L. Ligier, "Dimension personnelle et dimension communautaire de la pénitence en Orient," *Maison-Dieu* 90 (1967) 155-88; *id.*, "Pénitence et eucharistie en Orient: Théologie sur une interférence de prières et de rites," *Orientalia Christiana periodica* 39 (1969) 5-78; M. van den Nieuwenhuizen, "De Eucharistie als Sacrament van de Zondervergeving," *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 9 (1969) 178-95; J. Quinn, "The Lord's Supper and Forgiveness of Sins," *Worship* 42 (1968) 281-91; A. Raes, "Un rite pénitentiel avant la communion dans les liturgies syriennes," *L'Orient syrien* 10 (1965) 107-22; D. A. Tanghe, "L'Eucharistie pour la rémission des péchés," *Irénikon* 34 (1961) 165-81; J. M. R. Tillard, "L'Eucharistie, purification de l'église pèlerinante," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 84 (1962) 449-75; *id.*, "Pénitence et eucharistie," *Maison-Dieu* 90 (1967) 103-31.



on this point. We will present his findings, which also include an analysis of a patristic understanding of the function of the sacrificial prayer of the priest as it relates to forgiveness of sins. Finally, we will review the contribution of M. van den Nieuwenhuizen, which deals with the relationship of the Eucharist to the sacrament of penance.

First, then, the findings of Ligier on remission of sins through sacrificial prayer and additional penitential rites. Ligier, in his study of the penitential dimension of Eastern liturgies, quotes the remark of Theodore of Mopsuestia which distinguishes between sins remitted by the Eucharistic sacrifice (sins of ignorance and weakness) and those requiring a particular penance.<sup>45</sup> In the former case, he appeals to the sacrificial power of the bishop in virtue of which he is constituted to offer for his sins and those of the people. The teaching of Theodore is an echo of the common understanding of the churches of the East and West, for which we have evidence from the third century onward.

This conception of the power of the sacrificial prayer of the priest is derived, in Ligier's opinion, from a formal comparison with the power of the Old Testament sacrifices. In the latter case, ritual sacrifice was understood to have the power to pardon sins of weakness and ignorance, sins which were not diametrically opposed to the law. Since the sinner did not place himself outside the conditions of the covenant, he could make use of the covenant sacrifices. From this perspective the early Church came to the conclusion that the sinner could find no remedy in the Eucharist for those sins which excluded him from the community of the new covenant: idolatry, adultery, murder, etc. But sins of weakness and ignorance, which did not exclude one from the community, could be remedied in the Eucharistic sacrifice.

However, within the Syrian liturgies at a very early date (probably the end of the fifth century), after the great Eucharistic prayer of thanksgiving, praise, and remembrance, prayers of intercession for the remission of sins include "voluntary and conscious" sins, and before the *fractio panis* the priest petitions for pardon of all sins, including grave ones. The anaphora of Patriarch Mar Johannan I provides an interesting variation. While the prayer of intercession for the pardon of all sins remains the same, the subsequent prayer of the priest refers only to sins of "weakness and ignorance." Ligier postulates that this anaphora represents a stage of development. It conserves a very early heritage of a Jewish liturgical prayer in the first prayer of intercession and conforms, in the second prayer of pardon, to the theological principle of Theodore which contradicts the perspective of the first prayer.

In the present version of the Chaldean liturgy of the apostles Addai and

<sup>45</sup> "Pénitence . . ." (n. 44 above).

Mari, the Oriental branch of the Syrian liturgy, the penitential prayer is extended. Moreover, the prayer of absolution of the priest comes after the *fractio panis*. Hence it is not immediately associated with the great sacrificial prayer. It could, therefore, have a different meaning and be related to the sacrament of penance.

In the Coptic liturgy, which is related to the Syrian, the influence of the penitential prayers of the latter is evident. Here the prayer of pardon of the priest comes after the *Pater* and before the *Sancta Sanctis*. It is a long prayer asking for the pardon of all sins, with reference to Mt 16:18 ff. Ligier points out that it is at the basis of the Coptic absolution formula used in private confession.

Ligier offers the following explanation of the occurrence of this penitential rite of absolution in the Coptic liturgy. While the liturgy was developing, the propitiatory value of the Eucharist was taken into account. This power, attached to the sacrifice of Christ, was seen to have its type in Yom Kippur. This authorized liturgical borrowing from the liturgical confession of the Jews on the Day of Atonement (dating from the first century of the Christian era) in which the high priest prays for the pardon of all sins. In this context the prayer of pardon of the priest became a rite of absolution, as in the liturgy of the Day of Atonement. Ligier concludes that a sacramental value should be ascribed to this penitential rite. The prayer does not go against the discipline of public penance, for it does not include those sins of a grave nature which are the subject of public penance.

In a previous article Ligier judged that the rites of absolution of the Syrian Eucharistic liturgies have a sacramental value. As a supportive argument for this, he recalled that from the age of public penance to that of private confession—the fourth to the ninth century and up to the thirteenth century in Egypt—the Eastern priests had no other rite to put at the disposal of the faithful guilty of serious sin but not subject to the discipline of public penance. The existence of this rite of general absolution in the Eucharist gave Ligier grounds for thinking that it could be reintroduced and might prove a solution to the problem of the small number of priests actually available for confession in the East.<sup>46</sup>

In the West there is no such ancient tradition of the interference of the rite of sacramental absolution in the Eucharistic liturgy. In the tenth century such a rite was introduced as an extension of the solemn reconciliation of public penitents on Maundy Thursday. From the evidence at hand one gathers that it was related only to “sins of weakness and ignorance” but not to grave sins. In the thirteenth century this absolution, after the sermon, was no longer considered an exercise of the keys but remained in a privileged position because of the indulgences which were attached to it.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup>“Dimension . . .” (n. 44 above).      <sup>47</sup>Cf. Jungmann, *art. cit.*

Now we must review the contribution of M. van den Nieuwenhuizen on the Eucharist as sacrament of forgiveness of sins. If Holy Communion purifies from sin and the sacrificial prayer of the priest is efficacious for the forgiveness of sin (*ex opere operantis*), how is the Eucharist related to the sacrament of penance, the direct and regular effect of which is traditionally described as remission of sins? Van den Nieuwenhuizen addresses himself to this problem and proposes the thesis that the Eucharist should be considered, properly speaking, as the sacrament of forgiveness of sins.<sup>48</sup> What follows here is a brief summary of the main points he makes.

Forgiveness of sins becomes a salvation event in the believing recognition of sinfulness by the sinner. The Eucharist constitutes the Church's proper confession of the salvation event of forgiveness of sins. Here the Church includes herself in the offering of Christ and so expresses the event of forgiveness. Hence the Eucharist is proper sacrament of forgiveness of sins. It is not this in an exclusive sense, but it is the central sacrament of the Church, wherein the Church herself, as Church, testifies to the salvation event. And as the salvation event in men is characterized as forgiveness and reconciliation, so the Eucharist ought to be considered proper sacrament of this.

The author points out that in the patristic period ecclesiastical penance was considered the way to the Eucharist. It was conceived in the perspective of man's involvement in the life of the Church and not immediately referred to the salvation event in Christ. Hence it was not called *sacramentum-mysterium*, for it lacked the Christological symbol.

Originally, therefore, the stress was on the *agere paenitentiam* for grave sin, and reconciliation with the Church was the seal, on the part of the community, that the fault did not stand in the way of acceptance into the community. However, at the term of the Western evolution of the rite of penance from public to private penance, the center of gravity was transferred from "doing penance" to "receiving absolution" from the priest—an absolution which is not a declaration of the end of penance, but has a causal meaning. This evolution makes it clear, says van den Nieuwenhuizen, why the sacrament of penance is viewed as sacrament of forgiveness of sins.

To explain the relation of the Eucharist to penance, this author brings into play the analogous case of the relation between conversion (as a human activity) and forgiveness (as an act of God in man). God acting to forgive sins is not objectively observable but is known by faith. The fact that God so acts is not an objective observation concerning a factual situation, but a confession of the understanding of oneself in faith. The Eucharist is the proper sacrament of the confession of this faith, the grateful remem-

<sup>48</sup> *Art. cit.*

brance of Christ's self-sacrifice on the Cross. Only in gratitude does the gift of grace become fully grace.

*Eucharistic Communion and Trinitarian Life*

B. Bobrinskoy, Orthodox theologian, deals with the implications of the Eucharistic encounter with Christ in Holy Communion as explained in Eastern patristic and liturgical sources.<sup>49</sup> A summary of his contribution will be useful in view of the current interest of Western theologians in the role of the Spirit.

In this tradition emphasis is placed on the fact that the Church lives in the economy of the Spirit, who is both agent and gift of the risen Lord. Thus in the Eucharistic mystery both the presence and activity of Christ and of the Spirit are to be accounted for. The presence of Christ, effected through the work of the Spirit in view of the sanctification of the faithful (epiclesis), results in the transfiguration of the bread and wine and so their identity with the body and blood of Christ. Through Holy Communion the believer becomes "concorporeal" with Christ. Thus the Eucharist communicates to a degree of highest intensity the experience of the vision in which all Christian ecclesiology is situated: the total Christ, Head and Body.

The presence of the Spirit and His work in the Eucharistic mystery differ from that of Christ, requiring of the Eastern Fathers a different mode of expression to render account of them. The formulation took place at a very early date in Eastern liturgy and theology due to the experience and certitude of the economy of the Spirit in the Eucharist. In this tradition the Spirit not only brings about the Eucharistic presence of Christ in the elements but also transforms the faithful. To express this latter aspect of the Spirit's work, especially since Basil of Caesarea, the theology of "communion of the Holy Spirit" was developed. In this theology the presence of the ascended Kyrios was seen as sign of the presence and communion of the Spirit whom Christ promised to send (Jn 15:26). Through communion of the Spirit the faithful were understood to be made "spiritual," i.e., participants in the life of the Trinity.

Beyond this, communion of Christ and the Spirit was understood to involve communion of the Father, the proper fruit of which is expressed in the liturgy by the phrase "filial adoption." Because of the presence of the ascended Christ in the liturgy, the Church was understood to be drawn up to the Father and to participate in the life of the Father. Thus the presence of the ascended Christ was interpreted as sign of the presence of the Father in accord with Jn 14:1-3: sign and anticipation of our real presence

<sup>49</sup> "Présence réelle et communion eucharistique," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 53 (1969) 402-20.

above, a presence inaugurated sacramentally in the communion of the Spirit of filial adoption to the Father given now in the concelebration and Holy Communion.

J. M. R. Tillard's study on the role of the Spirit in the Eucharist parallels closely that of Bobrinsky.<sup>50</sup> He begins by a reference to the neglect of the Spirit in the Western Church, reflected in the fact that only once does the Second Vatican Council affirm explicitly that the Eucharistic bread is the flesh of the Lord "made vital and vitalizing by the Holy Spirit."<sup>51</sup> Tillard makes the following points. In the New Testament the Lordship of Christ is linked with the activity of the Spirit in the sense that Jesus comes to men only through the Spirit. Translating this in terms of the Eucharist, the early Church's epiclesis invoked the Spirit primarily to make fruitful the lives of the faithful. In later forms of the epiclesis the emphasis is on the Spirit's power to transform the gifts, but the orientation is still on the transformation of the believers. Thus in the early liturgies the Eucharist emerges as sacrament of the gift of the Spirit, who acts in the believer to enable him to respond to Christ present in the Eucharist. The effect of the Eucharist is inseparably an act of the Spirit in the Lord, or act of the Lord in the Spirit. The Spirit disposes the believers to receive the sacrament, transforms the bread and wine, and interiorizes the graces contained in the sacrament.

#### *Eucharist and Vocation of Service*

The theme of service or mission in relation to the Eucharist is taken up by J. M. R. Tillard in one of his many articles concerned with the various dimensions of the Eucharist.<sup>52</sup> The earliest forms of the institutional accounts interpret the meaning of Jesus' death in terms of Ebed Yahweh, and the demand of fraternal service of the disciples is linked to this service of Jesus (Lk 22:26-28; Jn 13:3-11). Moreover, at the Last Supper two important gestures of a Jewish meal are made the form of the Eucharist. The breaking of bread was considered symbol of communion of the participants with the Father who gives the bread and with one another. The

<sup>50</sup> "L'Eucharistie et le Saint-Esprit," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 90 (1968) 363-87 (cf. "The Eucharist and the Holy Spirit," *Theology Digest* 17 [1969] 133-38).

<sup>51</sup> Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, no. 5. Cf., in this connection, the remarks of L. Vischer on the lack of awareness of the Spirit's creative activity in the Church which is characteristic of the West and indicated by the lack of an epiclesis in Western liturgical tradition. Vischer favors an epiclesis in the Eucharistic liturgy as expression of the NT message that (1) the Church as a creation of the Spirit cannot commemorate without the Spirit and that the Church is persuaded that the Spirit will be present; (2) the Spirit makes Christ present; (3) the Spirit is the gift of the final days ("The Epiclesis: Sign of Unity and Renewal," *Studia liturgica* 6 [1969] 30-39).

<sup>52</sup> "L'Eucharistie et la fraternité," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 91 (1969) 113-35.

sharing of the cup had a like meaning and also often connoted the idea of sharing in a common destiny (this was probably so at the Last Supper). In the case of the Eucharistic bread, the sharing signifies communion of men with the Suffering Servant. This implies communion in the destiny of the Servant: to become "body-for-others." The sharing of the cup of the covenant implies engagement with Jesus in the covenant enterprise. With this analysis Tillard is able to conclude that, according to the accounts of institution, the Eucharist is not only a sign of personal sharing in the blessings of the new covenant, but also (and because of this) the sharing in the love which Jesus has for all men and so the power to fulfil the mission which the communion of the Suffering Servant implies: to be servant of all men.

It is characteristic of the Fathers of the Church to speak of the social demands made on Christians because of their participation of the Eucharist, especially when they begin to comment on 1 Cor 10:16-17. Thus John Chrysostom, the first Christian author to give due consideration to this passage, says: "If we have eaten of the same bread, and so become the same, why then do we not show the same love and in this also become one?"<sup>53</sup>

But did the New Testament consciously reflect on the relation between Eucharist and the mission of the Church? Convincing evidence for this is found in 1 Cor 10:14-31 and 11:17-34. A proper exegesis of the first passage ought to include the following elements: (1) Through the Eucharist Christ becomes the one Lord of Christians and they become united to one another in Him (vv. 16-17). (2) This unity demands responsibility for one another: seeking the neighbor's good (v. 24). (3) Concretely this is realized by not eating sacrificial meat if it offends the conscience of the neighbor (vv. 28-29), and this has reference to all men: "Jews, Greeks . . . the Church of God" (v. 32). Paul thus approaches the problem of eating meat sacrificed to idols from a consideration of the implications of the Eucharist. The movement of the second passage is somewhat the same. Selfishness at the Lord's Supper is an offense against the body and blood of Christ, because it is opposed to the unity of which the Eucharist is efficacious sign. The remedy is self-examination, which leads to the proclamation of the Lord's death, i.e., dying to self in accord with the law of service which is intrinsic to the new order of salvation grounded on the work of the Suffering Servant.

On this point P. Neuenzeit has some useful remarks in his study of the reciprocal relation between Eucharist and Church in 1 Cor 10-11.<sup>54</sup> His final observation can serve as a conclusion to this section. As a community, the Church is, as the Pauline linking with the Eucharist shows, not a mere

<sup>53</sup> *Hom. on 1 Cor 24*, 2 (PG 61, 200-201).

<sup>54</sup> "Eucharistie und Gemeinde," *Una sancta* 25 (1970) 116-30.

human society, but one supported by the risen Lord and nourished by His Eucharistic gift. But the Church is also not an esoteric society merely concerned with the salvation of the individual after death. Rather, service in and for the community, and service of the Church in and for the world, are the presuppositions and consequences if the Christian, in the Eucharist, wishes to become sharer in his Lord redeeming him. Where the one or the other is missing, both collapse. Service of the community without the Eucharist quickly becomes undistinguishable from humanitarian concerns; Eucharist without service becomes a senseless magical practice.

#### ECUMENICAL EUCHARISTIC WORSHIP

The stand taken by the Second Vatican Council and implemented by subsequent official documents<sup>55</sup> on the question of common Eucharistic worship between ecclesiastical communities living separate corporate lives comes close to the old Anglican position. In this instance occasional common Eucharists would be allowed between the "branches" of the Catholic Church. This was justified on the basis that those communities which possessed the essential constituents of "church" (apostolic faith, sacraments, and ministry) comprised the universal Church and so possessed sufficient unity to warrant occasional Eucharists as a means of promoting the desirable social unity. Formerly this viewpoint was completely rejected by both Catholics and Orthodox, who maintained that such worship is possible only when the unity of the *koinonia* which covers the whole of Church fellowship is attained.<sup>56</sup> But at Vatican II and in subsequent official documents of the Catholic Church the essential condition laid down for a common Eucharistic celebration was *institutional oneness*, i.e., common faith, sacraments, and apostolic ministry in historical apostolic succession. The Orthodox, therefore, remain alone in holding the old tradition.<sup>57</sup>

The "new" position of the Catholic Church is defended by her theologians on the same basis as given in the Decree on Ecumenism (nos. 14–15) and the *Ecumenical Directory* (nos. 39–40) for justifying common sacra-

<sup>55</sup> For the latest official statement of the Catholic Church on this point, which reviews the previous recommendations but does not go beyond them, cf. the declaration of the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity entitled "The Position of the Catholic Church concerning a Common Eucharist between Christians of Different Confessions" (*Information Service of the S.P.C.U.*, no. 9 [1970] 21–23).

<sup>56</sup> For a good statement of the traditional Catholic position, cf. Y. Congar, "Amica contestatio," in *Intercommunion: A Report of the Theological Commission of Faith and Order with Selection of Materials Presented to the Commission*, ed. D. Baille and J. Marsh (London, 1952) pp. 141–52.

<sup>57</sup> Recent statements of Orthodox theologians on the Orthodox position are given by G. A. Galitis, "Le problème de la intercommunion sacramentelle avec les non-Orthodoxes d'un point de vue Orthodoxe," *Istina* 2 (1969) 197–219; Ian Bria, "Intercommunion et unité," *ibid.*, pp. 220–37.

mental worship with the Orthodox, namely, that where institutional oneness exists, there is fundamentally the same Church. Hence common worship can be used to render visible, actualize, and so deepen this profound unity.<sup>58</sup> However, a considerable number of Catholic theologians are not content to stop here. In their judgment, lack of institutional oneness is not an essential deterrent to intercommunion on the sacramental level. While there is a great variety of ways of describing the concrete conditions for allowing sacramental intercommunion, most would favor in substance (for practical or theological reasons?) an opinion resembling that of the Protestant theologian R. Mehl.

Commenting on the much publicized unauthorized Eucharistic celebration between members of different denominations at Paris on Pentecost of 1968, Mehl judges that it contradicts the law of sacramentality, which demands that the Eucharist be an act of a visibly structured church.<sup>59</sup> Thus for sacramental intercommunion he would require an act undertaken by churches which manifest catholicity, the criterion of which is unanimity in preaching the same gospel.

We find little support, at least in print, for the view of the non-Catholic T. Simpson. He considers that while institutional structures, and the Catholic church order in particular, are the best context in which to celebrate the Eucharist, sufficient context and visibility of the Church are provided by the commitment to seek and find visible unity expressed in prayer and social action.<sup>60</sup> Presumably most Catholic theologians would want the Eucharist celebrated by visibly structured churches for much the same reason as given by Mehl.

As condition for common Eucharistic worship between separated churches, the Catholic theologians under discussion would demand a faith in harmony with that expressed in the Catholic liturgy, seriousness about attaining unity which the eagerness for sacramental intercommunion suggests, and finally the possession of those elements which would justify describing a community as "ecclesial." For the most part, the question of authenticity of Protestant ministry causes no insuperable problems for them in at least the case of "joint celebrations."<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Thus Y. Congar, who no longer argues for "full communion" before common worship: "Réflexions à propos d'une concélébration," *Vers l'unité chrétienne* 21 (1968) 73-75. Cf. also, for the same approach, J. Hamer, "Stages on the Road to Unity," *One in Christ* 4 (1968) 235-49; *id.*, "Why Not Intercommunion?" *America* 118 (June 1, 1968) 734-37.

<sup>59</sup> "Vers une solution du problème eucharistique," *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses* 49 (1969) 165-75.

<sup>60</sup> "Lambeth on Intercommunion," *One in Christ* 5 (1969) 428-32.

<sup>61</sup> Cf., e.g., B. A. Williams, "Room for Intercommunion," *One in Christ* 4 (1968) 256-66; M. Hurley, "Sacrament of Unity: Intercommunion and Some Forgotten Truths," *The Way* 9 (1969) 109-17; F. J. Buckley, "Principles of Intercommunion," *Theology Digest* 17 (1969) 338-48.



The solutions to the problem of Protestant ministry of the Eucharist offered by recent Catholic theologians will be discussed in the last section of this article. Here we will only note the fundamental theological arguments used for justifying common Eucharistic worship where the principle of institutional unity is not applicable. These arguments, therefore, have reference to the Reformation churches.

The common mode of argumentation is to begin with the presupposition that the Reformation churches have sufficient Eucharistic faith,<sup>62</sup> and this, together with baptism and many elements of church, makes these ecclesial communities part of the one Church of Christ. Granting this "given unity," it is argued that a common Eucharist should be allowed between these churches and the Catholic Church as a means of expressing and deepening what already exists. G. Diekmann offers this theological basis for justifying occasional common worship with Reformation churches.<sup>63</sup> More recently, among others, C. Hay presents the same argument.<sup>64</sup> J. Moingt puts the matter this way. As sign of unity given, the Eucharist points to the past; as means of unity to be obtained, it points to the future. All theologians agree on this; but some place the accent on one side or the other, and so advocate or reject sacramental intercommunion. The young want to give expression to the unity already given through a common Eucharist. The Church must take account of this. The author asks: If the Church is built up by the Eucharist, will the unity of the Church be deepened if we do not make use of the Eucharist in an ecumenical dimension? He concludes by saying that ecumenical Eucharists are not a false sign: they are turned both to the past and to the future. They are signs of unity already existing and of the will to deepen that unity: the fact of participating in the Eucharist as a means of attaining unity is itself a sign of unity already existing.<sup>65</sup>

This argument stresses the importance of the manifestation of the existing oneness between Catholics and Protestants (proclaimed by Vatican II) through the Eucharist as a means of deepening the "given unity." Briefly, it states: (1) If unity exists, it ought to be expressed, in order that it may be

<sup>62</sup> This is resolutely denied by Cardinal Ch. Journet, despite the consensus papers on the meaning of the Eucharist published by a number of teams of theologians representing Catholic and Reformation churches. For Journet, the logical consequence of accepting common Eucharistic worship with Reformation churches would be the acceptance of the "new faith" of the Reformers, which is in fundamental opposition to the apostolic faith's affirmation of the supernatural transformation of matter by the spirit. This, Journet says, the Church will never do; cf. "L'Eucharistie n'est pas malléable, elle est adorable," *Nova et vetera* 44 (1969) 1-6.

<sup>63</sup> "Intercommunion: Its Ecumenical Dimensions and Problems," in *Christian Unity 1968* (5th National Workshop on Christian Unity, 1968) pp. 34-41.

<sup>64</sup> "Eucharist and Intercommunion," *One in Christ* 5 (1969) 355-78.

<sup>65</sup> "Problèmes d'intercommunion," *Etudes*, Feb., 1970, pp. 263-66.

deepened in accord with the basic law of human relationships from which the Church does not escape. (2) It ought to be expressed by the Eucharist, which is sacrament of the unity of the Church and so has the function of intensifying this unity.

A second approach to the justification of ecumenical Eucharists with Reformation churches argues from the function of worship to express the *actual* unity which exists in the pilgrim Church. Thus G. Baum recalls that, before Vatican II, Catholics celebrated the communion existing between Catholics in accord with the view that the Church of Christ is absolutely identified with the Catholic Church. However, the new view of Vatican II affirms that the communion extends to other Christian ecclesial communities. Baum reasons that, given the function of the liturgy to express the actual unity of faith and life in the Church, the Catholic liturgy should now express the fact that communion is not "a closed and exclusive reality, but . . . an open reality which is capable of being shared in ever new and unexpected ways."<sup>66</sup> Moreover, Baum says, not only the prayers of the liturgy but "the liturgy itself should become an open and inclusive reality giving expression to the communion in the Holy Spirit which we teach."<sup>67</sup>

The two theological principles used to justify common Eucharistic worship with Reformation churches are utilized by J. Witte in his contribution to the theological basis for this practice. He shows how Vatican II from beginning to end dealt with common worship in a traditional way. Hence it reaffirmed two traditional principles in the Decree on Ecumenism (no. 8), while allowing a mitigation in their application: (1) Common worship is exclusively a sign of unity already existing in the Roman Catholic Church. This implies, in principle, a negation of sacramental intercommunion. (2) Common worship is also a means of grace. This implies the possibility of exceptions to the first principle in individual cases for pastoral reasons.

Witte goes on to observe that the first principle, taken in the exclusive sense, is acceptable to the Orthodox but not to the Reformation churches. The second principle is unsatisfactory to both, because the problem of intercommunion concerns the admission not so much of individuals as of communities to Eucharistic communion. This leads him to propose a new basic principle for the discipline of intercommunion drawn from the teaching of Vatican II.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>66</sup> "Liturgy and Unity," *Ecumenist* 6 (1967) 99.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100. P. Lebeau touches on this theme when he argues that the Eucharist, as "the principal manifestation of the Church," should manifest the tension between the unity already given to the Church but not yet perfected; cf. "Vatican II et l'espérance d'une Eucharistie oecuménique," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 91 (1969) 23-46; English tr., "Vatican II and the Hope of an Ecumenical Eucharist," *One in Christ* 5 (1969) 379-404.

<sup>68</sup> "The Basis of Intercommunion," *Gregorianum* 51 (1970) 102-9.

At the Council the Fathers approved of a "new vision" of the Church in which the material object of ecclesiology is no longer the Roman Catholic Church alone, but this church together with all the other Christian churches and "ecclesial communities." The vision changed from that of the exclusive Church to that of the inclusive Church: the Roman Catholic Church is no longer to be identified purely and simply with the unique Church of Christ. This means that the unity of the Roman Catholic Church does not express perfectly the unity of the unique Church of Christ. This imperfection of the unity of the Church is reflected similarly and necessarily in the Eucharistic celebration. Consequently the fundamental principle of sacramental intercommunion cannot be that common worship ought to signify the realized unity of the Church, or that the fact of being sign of unity forbids it.

In the concrete situation, says Witte, the Eucharist is ambiguous as sign. It is, for Catholics, the sign of unity already existing between all Catholics in the fulness of faith, communion, and government proper to their church. But it is not a sign of the unity in Christ which already exists between the Catholic Church and other Christian churches. For this reason the Catholic Church should seek ways of expressing Eucharistically this last reality. This brings Witte to his formulation of the fundamental principle of sacramental intercommunion: "The churches have the task to try to express in their Eucharistic celebration the unity in Christ existing in their own churches, but also, as far as possible, the already existing unity between their churches, in order to promote the visible unity of the one Church of Jesus Christ. Therefore intercommunion is commended any time that doctrinal and practical obstacles are overcome."<sup>69</sup>

As a conclusion to this section, three personal observations come to mind. (1) The Eucharist ought to express the "given unity" which exists between Christians. This follows from the very nature of the Eucharist, sacrament of the unity of the Church. On the other hand, the Eucharist has the function of expressing the boundaries of the Church. In the celebration the Church confesses (a) that through sharing in the communion of the body and blood of Christ she attains communion of the Spirit and the Father; (b) her unity, effected through the body and blood of Christ; (c) her sinfulness and her awareness that the Spirit of Christ is at work to heal the sinful community. From this it follows that the fundamental conditions required for common worship are (a) grasp of the faith in harmony with that expressed in the liturgy, and (b) repentance and the desire to live in harmony with the community. When these conditions are fulfilled, there still remains the important pastoral questions of avoiding scandal and indifferentism (not unlike the case referred to in 1 Cor 8:1-13) and the theological problem of the mutual acknowledgment of ministry.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

2) *The condition for a fruitful participation in the Eucharist is fundamentally the desire to live the full faith, which is expressed by fidelity to the gospel in one's life. This basic devotio admits of degrees, and so we can say that in many cases an ecumenical Eucharistic celebration will be a fuller realization of the actual unity of the Church than that celebrated by a Catholic community separately.*

3) The events of the last few years tempt one to assume the role of a prophet and make this prediction: the concept of different levels of Eucharistic celebration will be officially extended by the Catholic Church beyond that of common worship with the Eastern Orthodox churches. This would be in harmony with her acceptance of different levels of membership in the Church. If such a step is taken, in the concrete decisions to allow ecumenical Eucharists first preference should be given to Christians who have established a community of love. The Eucharist is effective in fostering the growth of a Christian community, but its effectiveness is dependent, under grace, on the community consciousness of the participants. Hence the most appropriate occasion for such worship is where Christian love has already established community. Moreover, in such a community we can speak of a community of faith in a very real way, for shared Christian love is the expression of shared Christian faith. In Christianity we cannot separate faith and love, for the kind of knowing involved in this faith is that which functions in a relationship of friendship and love.

#### AUTHENTIC EUCHARISTIC MINISTRY

In the Decree on Ecumenism it is asserted (no. 22) that the Reformation churches have not preserved the "genuine and total reality" (*geruinam atque integram substantiam*) of the Eucharist, especially because of the "lack" (*defectus*) of the sacrament of orders. This is an echo of the traditional Catholic position, which assumes that "ritual ordination" as practiced in the Catholic Church is the only way ecclesiastical ministry can be established and that the authenticity of the Eucharist depends on such ministry.<sup>70</sup> What is said in a positive way about the religious value of Reformation churches' Eucharists merely reports the traditional Catholic interpretation, which assumes that these communities cannot assemble in such a way that the essential structure of church is present which is necessary for a true sacramental Eucharist.<sup>71</sup> The key missing element is, of

<sup>70</sup> H. J. McSorley is incorrect in interpreting the *defectus* as referring to the minister's lack of visible connection with a bishop in historical apostolic succession; cf. "Protestant Eucharistic Reality and Lack of Orders," *Ecumenist* 5 (1967) 71-72.

<sup>71</sup> G. Tavard is correct when he states that the reality of the Eucharist envisaged in this pericope refers to "a subjective persuasion of piety, not to an objective sacramental fact"; cf. "Does the Protestant Minister Have a Sacramental Significance," in *Christian Unity* 1968, p. 71.

course, ministry conferred by a bishop in historical apostolic succession. However, the same passage also calls for dialogue on the matter, thus leaving the door open to the possibility of validating Reformation ministry in some unforeseen way, i.e., of coming to the recognition of the authenticity of this ministry.<sup>72</sup> Hence the Decree on Ecumenism does envisage what the Council of Trent did not: the possibility of a Eucharistic ministry arising in an established ecclesial community apart from the accepted way.<sup>73</sup>

Since II Vatican, however, the Catholic Church has not officially modified her view concerning the necessity of her traditional form of ritual ordination for Eucharistic ministry. The latest document of the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity states this: "It is well known that the Catholic Church attaches decisive importance to the traditional teaching about the necessity of the ministerial priesthood connected with apostolic succession, and the conditions in which it exists."<sup>74</sup> On the other hand, an unprecedented number of articles have been published by Catholic theologians concerned with showing the historical and theological grounds why the Catholic Church should relinquish her rigid stand.

Generally speaking, these articles give prominence to historical data which seem to indicate that the minister of the Eucharist, in the united Church of the patristic period, was not always a bishop or presbyter ordained in historical apostolic succession. This fact allows the conclusion: a ministry of the Eucharist is possible outside the traditional form, at least in some situations. For our discussion, a rapid critical survey of this material will be useful.

In regard to the New Testament period, the weight of evidence lies on the side of those who affirm that a variety of styles of ministry was in vogue, beginning with charismatic and presbyteral types which soon developed into a monarchical form varying in degrees. Thus, it seems likely that in the early Pauline communities the minister of the Eucharist was a

<sup>72</sup> Cf. J. Hotchkin, "Ministry—An Ecumenical Concern," *American Ecclesiastical Review* 159 (1969) 386–95. The author maintains that from the viewpoint of Vatican II (as well as the Council of Trent) the questions remain open concerning the ministry of the Eucharist and the possibility of obtaining a true ministry in nonepiscopal churches.

<sup>73</sup> This is perhaps a more accurate way of describing Trent's historically conditioned statements than H. J. McSorley's view that Trent saw the ministries of Reformation churches as "illegitimate"; cf. "The Competent Minister: The Roman Catholic Doctrine of the Competent Minister of the Eucharist in Ecumenical Perspective," *One in Christ* 5 (1969) 405–22.

<sup>74</sup> "The Position of the Catholic Church concerning a Common Eucharist between Christians of Different Confessions," *op. cit.*, p. 22. Cf. E. Stakemeier, "Zur ökumenischen Frage der Abendmahlsgemeinschaft," *Der katholische Gedanke* 24 (1968) 24–26. He stresses that the problem of the special priesthood, linked with the question of apostolic succession, will play a decisive role in the ecumenical dialogue.

leader determined so by his charismatic qualities and not by induction into institutionalized offices. And in such communities there were probably several such leaders.<sup>75</sup>

In addition, given the experience of "church" of the New Testament period, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them" (Mt 18:20), it is highly unlikely that the absence of a church overseer would prevent the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The New Testament shows no concern to set down norms as to who could qualify as "celebrant" of the Eucharist. On the contrary, it is highly probable that the community reckoned itself the principal celebrant and considered that the leader's function was to pronounce the Eucharistic prayer in the name of all.<sup>76</sup> Thereby, in principle, many Christians would qualify on the basis of their Christian lives and ability to serve in this capacity.

This view offers the best explanation why the prophets were allowed to pronounce the prayer of thanks in *Didache* 10, 7. There is a problem with the Eucharistic interpretation of *Didache* 9-10,<sup>77</sup> but we can still conclude to prophetic leadership from other remarks concerning the relationship of the prophets to the leaders appointed by the communities. *Didache* 15, 1-2 points to a time when the bishops and deacons were taking over the regular function of leading the Eucharistic worship: "the liturgy of the prophets" (15, 1).<sup>78</sup>

In the second century there is no direct evidence that traditional "ritual ordination" was considered absolutely required for Eucharistic ministry. But given the experience of church, i.e., bishop, presbyterium, deacons, and people gathered together, it is highly unlikely that the Eucharist would be celebrated without the presence of the bishop or some representative of him drawn from the presbyterium or the deacons in the established churches.<sup>79</sup> This would hold especially for the latter part of this

<sup>75</sup>The technical term "Church of the house of . . .," found only in Pauline writings, points to this (Phm 2; 1 Cor 16:19; Rom 16:5; Col 4:15). It was probably derived from the fact that a small group of the larger local community gathered regularly with a more prominent community leader to celebrate the Lord's Supper, which, according to 1 Cor 10:17, forms the Body of Christ, the Church.

<sup>76</sup>The function of the leader of the Eucharist in Justin, *First Apology* 65, 67, is still to pronounce the prayer.

<sup>77</sup>Cf. J. Betz, "Die Eucharistie in der Didache," *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 11 (1969) 10-39. In his new study the author maintains that *Did.* 9-10, in its present form, relates to an early Christian meal in which an agape (9, 1-10, 5) was followed by a sacramental Eucharist (10, 6).

<sup>78</sup>Cf. J. Bernal, "Profetismo y kerygma en la plegaria eucarística," *Communio* 2 (1969) 443-49.

<sup>79</sup>J. F. McCue argues that in view of Ignatius of Antioch's conception of the liturgical role of the bishop—to act as center of unity—the "representative of the bishop" mentioned in Smyrnaeans 8, 1 could be anyone, though the members of the presbyterium and deacons

century in all the churches; *Didache* 15, 1-2 represents a stage in development toward this fixed pattern.

During this century the formation and universalizing of the episcopal church order was carried out by the churches, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to provide a focus of unity for the churches—a unity which would have its center in the Eucharist. On this basis the ministry of the Eucharist was bound exclusively to the office of the bishop and his representatives, the members of the presbyterium, in both the Eastern and Western churches at least from the beginning of the third century.

From the third century onward, only those pertaining to the hierarchical order are found to preside at the Eucharist in the united Church. Apart from the seemingly well-attested cases of presbyters being approved to ordain presbyters in the West from the eighth and especially from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries,<sup>80</sup> only those qualified to preside at the Eucharist who had been ordained by a bishop who in turn had been consecrated by a bishop. Two exceptions to this general rule have been pointed out by scholars. The *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus asserts that confessors, who have suffered, have through their confession the *timē presbyteros*.<sup>81</sup> What this "honor" or office entailed is not stated. According to the rite of Hippolytus, the presbyter is ordained to give counsel and govern.<sup>82</sup> But the presbyterium did have a special liturgical function in baptism,<sup>83</sup> and in the Eucharistic liturgy it was their particular role to give the cup to the faithful.<sup>84</sup> It is likely that they would have presided over the Eucharist in the bishop's absence. If Hippolytus understands that the confessors could also do this, he is following a tradition for which we have no other evidence. Cyprian, for example, writing some thirty-five years later, does not know of it. On the contrary, he speaks of the practice of presbyters offering the Eucharist for confessors in prison.<sup>85</sup>

The second example of an exception is based on an opinion mentioned

would be preferred; cf. "Bishops, Presbyters, and Priests in Ignatius of Antioch," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES* 28 (1967) 828-34. Conjecture can be countered with conjecture: it is unlikely that the need would have arisen for Ignatius to appoint a member of the laity to preside at the Eucharist, or that he would have drawn out the logical consequences of his conception of the bishop's function in the Eucharist.—It is noteworthy that Ignatius speaks of following the bishops and presbyterium in the same verse, and, in *Philadelphians* 4, 1, the bishop, presbyterium, and deacons are linked in a Eucharistic context.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. H. Lennerz, *De sacramento ordinis* (Rome, 1949) pp. 145-47; J. Beyer, "Nature et position du sacerdoce," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 76 (1954) 363-68.

<sup>81</sup> *Apostolic Tradition* 9 (B. Botte, *La tradition apostolique de saint Hippolyte* [Münster, 1963] p. 29).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* 7 (Botte, p. 21).   <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* 21 (Botte, p. 47).   <sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* 21 (Botte, p. 57).

<sup>85</sup> *Ep.* 5, 2 (CSEL 3/2, 479).

in the past and now revived by W. Telfer, who argues that previous to Athanasius' consecration as bishop of Alexandria by the laying on of hands of the episcopacy, another procedure was followed: twelve presbyters elected the bishop and the right hand of the dead bishop was placed on the head of the elected one as sign of succession to office.<sup>86</sup> The arguments and conclusion of this historian have been accepted by a number of Catholic theologians uncritically and used as proof that "ritual ordination" in the traditional sense was not absolutely necessary in the united Church of the third century. Characteristically these authors, who show a close dependence on one another, fail to mention the refutation of E.-W. Kemp, which was published in the same journal and should perhaps have made them somewhat hesitant about accepting Telfer's conclusions without qualification.<sup>87</sup> The recent study of J. Lécuyer, which indicates the superficiality and unwarranted conclusions of Telfer, should cause even more doubt about the whole matter.<sup>88</sup>

A few Catholic theologians have cited the Council of Arles as affording an example where the Eucharist was celebrated by leaders whose qualifications were never explicitly declared.<sup>89</sup> Canon 15 of this Council, held in 314, decrees that deacons, who in "multis locis" have been offering the Eucharist, are forbidden to do so. One will readily grant that this is an exceptional case, but to say, as O'Hanlon does, that the canon implies approval of an "extraordinary ministry" in time of persecution is to read too much into the text.<sup>90</sup> This canon rather provides evidence that at this time the deacon was not considered capable of offering the Eucharist. Confirmation of this can be found in the Council of Nicaea (325), canon

<sup>86</sup> "Episcopal Succession in Egypt," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 3 (1952) 1-13.

<sup>87</sup> "Bishops and Presbyters at Alexandria," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 6 (1955) 125-42. F. J. van Beeck, without reference to this refutation, accepts the thesis of Telfer; cf. "Towards an Ecumenical Understanding of the Sacraments," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 3 (1966) 57-112. D. J. O'Hanlon, with reference to van Beeck, repeats Telfer's conclusion and extends the case to "a number of [unnamed] churches of the first centuries"; cf. "A New Approach to the Validity of Church Orders," *Reconsiderations: Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Reformed Theological Conversations 1966-67* (New York, 1967) p. 148, n. 26. H. J. McSorley also accepts Telfer's conclusion, referring to van Beeck and O'Hanlon (*op. cit.*, n. 70 above), as does K. McDonnell without reference either to Kemp or to the later publication of Lécuyer mentioned below; cf. "Ways of Validating Ministry," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 7 (1970) 209-65.

<sup>88</sup> "La succession des évêques d'Alexandrie au premiers siècles," *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique* 70 (1969) 81-99. The author considers also the subsequent article of Telfer, "Meletus of Lycopolis and Episcopal Succession in Egypt," *Harvard Theological Review* 48 (1955) 227-37.

<sup>89</sup> See F. J. van Beeck, *art. cit.*, n. 87 above.

<sup>90</sup> O'Hanlon states (*cf. op. cit.*, n. 87 above) that the canon seems to say that "this extraordinary practice, which filled a real need in difficult times, should cease now that the situation has returned to normal."



18, which states that deacons do not have the *exousia* to offer the Eucharist. While *exousia* can refer to the juridical concept of freedom to act, it appears to relate to the office of deacon as such and embraces both the concept of capability of action and that of freedom to act.<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless the problem remains: Were these deacons acting on the basis of a tradition, no longer honored by the bishops, according to which deacons could fill the role of leadership in the Eucharist in the absence of the bishop or a member of the presbyterium?

In view of the historical evidence just summarized, it would seem correct to conclude that (1) the episcopal church order is not a ministerial absolute but, because established under the guidance of the Spirit, subject to change only under the guidance of the Spirit, who manifests Himself through a collegial act of the whole Church; (2) the connection between Eucharistic ministry and episcopal church order, or any other form of church order, is not so based on the nature of the Church that it excludes the possibility of other members of the Church assuming the role of leadership in certain circumstances.<sup>92</sup>

The agreement of many Catholic theologians on these conclusions has led them to a new evaluation of Reformation Eucharistic ministry. First, there is the more general agreement that the minimal judgment the Catholic Church can make regarding this ministry is the admission of inability to guarantee its authenticity. Such a judgment would be based on her inability both to recognize her experience of church in these Eucharists and to know where the Spirit will choose to hear the prayer of faith and intervene to give the memorial of the Lord's Supper a sacramental dimension.<sup>93</sup>

Some theologians have proposed the argument that since the Reformation communities are churches, they must be conceded a true ministry of the Eucharist. This argument is often based on an appeal to Vatican II's reference to Reformation communities as "churches or ecclesial communities." In this connection L. Renwart cites M. Redfern's remark about the concept of church necessarily involving sacraments and sacramental

<sup>91</sup> At this time it was understood that presbyters had the capacity to offer but that the right could be curtailed. The Council of Ancyra (314), canon 1, forbade repentant presbyters, who had sacrificed to idols, "to offer, preach, or fulfil any sacerdotal (*hieratikôn*) function."

<sup>92</sup> The first conclusion is emphasized by K. McDonnell, *art. cit.*, n. 87 above. The second conclusion has allowed a number of authors to speak of the possibility of the Eucharist being celebrated in an "extraordinary situation" without an ordained minister; cf. H. Küng, *The Structures of the Church* (New York, 1964) pp. 205-6, where he raises the question. In his volume *The Church* (New York, 1963) p. 443, the possibility is envisaged.

<sup>93</sup> E. Schillebeeckx speaks, e.g., of the pneumatic character of the Church allowing for the possibility of office being assumed "praeter ordinem"; cf. "Réflexions théologiques sur la crise actuelle de prêtre," *Collectanea Mechliniensia* 54 (1969) 221-57; "The Catholic Understanding of Office in the Church," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES* 30 (1969) 567-87.

ministry.<sup>94</sup> He objects to this conclusion, observing that Vatican II used the term "ecclesial communities" to indicate varying degrees of participation in church, and also explicitly stated that the full reality of the Eucharist was lacking in these churches because of the defect of the sacrament of orders. In his judgment, deficiency in the domain of ecclesiality can involve the privation of elements necessary for the full structure of church, notably the sacrament of orders in its full reality.

Renwart calls for a serious attempt to harmonize apostolicity of doctrine with the hierarchical structure of the Church. He believes that the Catholic concept of apostolicity must include a succession of sacramental powers—and sacramentally transferred. As regards the possibility of exceptional cases where the transmission of powers takes place outside the imposition of hands, Renwart refers to the proposals of M. Villain<sup>95</sup> and P. Lebeau,<sup>96</sup> who suggest a substitute: recognition by the Catholic Church of the role of the Spirit in actualizing Reformation ministry. This presents a difficulty for him in that the principle of "economy" is being extended to situations where it was never applied before. He does not reject the possibility but personally prefers mutual imposition of hands as a solution.

It has been suggested that the Eucharistic ministry of Reformation churches should be based on the priesthood of all believers. H. Küng proposed this in view of the "emergency situation" in which these churches are found.<sup>97</sup> Others such as F. J. van Beeck<sup>98</sup> and J. Duss-von Werdt<sup>99</sup> have taken a similar stance. O'Hanlon would require more. Referring to van Beeck's position, he objects that it does not do justice to Trent's view that the minister must be ordained to exercise ministry: an action of Christ and the Spirit must be involved in the election of the minister. However, he concludes that in the case of ministers ordained in an extraordinary way, outside episcopal succession, competence is acquired to celebrate

<sup>94</sup> "L'Intercommunion," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 92 (1970) 49. Cf. M. Redfern, "Freedom of Worship: Intercommunion," in *Church and World Freedom*, ed. L. Briget (London, 1966) p. 87. For remarks of a similar nature, cf. C. Hay, *art. cit.* He points out that the ministries of the Church derive from the Church, which as such succeeds the apostolic Church. Hence where there is Church, there is apostolic ministry. Now Vatican II calls Reformation churches, churches in which the Spirit works. Hence their ministry must be considered empowered by Christ. These reflections lead Hay to ask: Why cannot the Spirit provide authentic Eucharists for Protestant churches?

<sup>95</sup> "Can There Be Apostolic Succession outside the Chain of Imposition of Hands?" *Concilium* 34 (1968) 87-104.

<sup>96</sup> *Art. cit.*

<sup>97</sup> *Structures of the Church*, p. 212; *The Church*, p. 443.

<sup>98</sup> *Art. cit.*

<sup>99</sup> "What Can a Layman Do without a Priest?" *Concilium* 34 (1968) 105-14.

the Eucharist.<sup>100</sup> G. Tavard likewise objects to Küng and van Beeck for basing their reasoning on the consequences of baptism. However, he does see the possibility of the recognition of Protestant Eucharistic ministry based on an examination of the way the minister functions. If the minister and community believe that he functions as a leader of the Eucharist, the Catholic Church should recognize this ministry as authentic.<sup>101</sup>

In treating the question of authentic ministry of the Eucharist, it seems to this writer that a clear distinction should be made between the ministry of Reformation churches and that of a hypothetical group of Christians isolated from their institutional church for a protracted length of time. In the latter case, there are theological grounds for allowing the celebration of the Eucharist even if the circumstances, such as frequency of gatherings and expected length of isolation, do not seem to warrant the election and ordination of permanent ministers. Designation for the leadership of a particular Eucharist could be based on the universal priesthood of all believers. Such an action would not entail an equation of this priesthood with ecclesiastical ministry. It would merely be a concrete application of the highly respectable theological opinion—finding its historical basis in early Church practice and the grounds for the formation and universalizing of episcopal Church order—that there is no absolutely necessary link between ministry of the Eucharist and episcopal ministry. D. N. Power has argued recently, in this connection, that leadership of the Eucharist in the New Testament period was not always assumed by an ordained minister and so this is not a condition laid down by divine law. In his opinion, one can be designated for leadership of the Eucharist in case of emergency.<sup>102</sup> K. B. Osborne also refers to historical data which seem to point to the possibility of the Eucharist not being related exclusively to “priestly powers” and concludes: where there is Church, there are sacraments even if orders are not present. The Eucharist, though related to orders, is no longer exclusively connected with priestly powers.<sup>103</sup>

It is debatable whether this concept of “extraordinary ministry” is a viable one when applied to Reformation churches. At the beginning of the Reformation it might have proved useful if sixteenth-century Catholic the-

<sup>100</sup> *Op. cit.* Cf. B. Dupuy, “Is There a Dogmatic Distinction between the Function of Priests and the Function of Bishops?” *Concilium* 34 (1968) 74–86. Dupuy observes how the Council of Trent teaches both that ecclesiastical priesthood is not based on the universal priesthood of believers and does not derive from it.

<sup>101</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

<sup>102</sup> “The Church’s Pastoral Ministry,” *Irish Theological Quarterly* 30 (1969) 99–112.

<sup>103</sup> “A Rethinking of the Special Ministry,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 6 (1969) 200–217.

ologians were disposed (and clearly they were not) to find grounds for recognizing this ministry. And one might even argue with some degree of conviction that the Reformers would have accepted this concept. They themselves sometimes stated that if a Christian community, by some misfortune, was cut off from the rest of Christianity, it might establish and ordain ministers. This question was not a purely theoretical one for them. The *Apologia Confessionis Augustanae* states that the office of bishop was acceptable provided that the bishops agreed to reform the Church. However, not receiving the help they considered necessary, they felt forced by their isolation to establish the presbyteral form of ministry.

Today the situation has totally changed. The Catholic Church is confronted with the fact that this ministry has proved fruitful in institutional churches for over four hundred years. Moreover, the Reformation churches are not disposed, as the Reformers might have been, to regard their ministry as extraordinary. From the Catholic Church's viewpoint, the duration and fruitfulness of this ministry do not automatically make of it an ordinary ministry of the Church of Christ. It must be recognized as such by a corporate act of the whole Church. But are there signs that this deadlock is being transcended, that this recognition is taking place now? Among many Catholic theologians and ecumenists one finds the frank admission of the recognition not only that the Spirit is operative in this ministry, but also that this ministry is fully in keeping with the nature of the Church, i.e., serves the essentials of apostolic life, faith, service, and authority. The problem of the adaptability of this ministry in a united Church remains and may well prove to be the ultimate cause of vacillation of the Catholic Church in its regard. Hence one of the concrete bases for recognition of this ministry by the Catholic Church will undoubtedly be the efficacy of this style of ministry in corporate unions which include both episcopally and nonepiscopally ordered ministries.

The possibility of "joint Eucharists" in which Catholic and Protestant ministers would concelebrate is acceptable to a number of Catholic theologians who still find difficulties concerning the authenticity of the ministry of Reformation churches' Eucharists. M. Hurley reasons that in such celebrations the participants are assured of a true Eucharist because of their ministers' participation.<sup>104</sup> F. Buckley, however, seems correct in demanding "at least unofficial acceptance of the orders of all Christian ministers participating." He remarks that simply to "allow" other ministers to participate but not recognize their ministry would be patronizing and offensive.<sup>105</sup> Given the role of the Spirit in the liturgy, P. Lebeau believes that a joint invocation of the Spirit would create authentic communion until mutual and definitive recognition of ministry.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>104</sup> *Art. cit.*    <sup>105</sup> *Art. cit.*    <sup>106</sup> *Art. cit.*

What is needed, from a theological point of view, is a more precise analysis of the dynamics of this form of worship. On this subject J. Moingt has made some useful remarks which can serve as a conclusion to this report.<sup>107</sup>

He begins with a general description of the inner dynamics of the celebration of the Eucharist. It commences when the Spirit calls the faithful to assemble and nourishes them with the word of God. It is fulfilled when the Spirit renders Christ present and when Christ nourishes the community with His Eucharistic body and blood. In the celebration the priest is invested with the power of the faith of the Church and put by the Church at the disposal of the Spirit. The faithful, by their participation in the liturgy, communicate in the faith of the Church of which the priest is representative.

These principles, says Moingt, show how a "joint Eucharist" would function and why it is theologically justifiable. In such a celebration the Protestant minister, called by his ministry to represent the whole Church, becomes representative also of the Catholic Church. Both the priest and the minister are equally grasped by the faith of the Church, placed by it in conjunction with the priesthood of Christ, and subjected by Him to the sanctifying work of the Spirit in such a way that together they constitute one instrument of the same Eucharistic mystery.

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<sup>107</sup> *Art. cit.*, pp. 260-62.