SACRIFICIUM LAUDIS: CONTENT AND FUNCTION OF EARLY EUCHARISTIC PRAYERS

EDWARD J. KILMARTIN, S.J.

Weston College School of Theology

THE PURPOSE of this essay is to present the basic structure of the Lord's Supper underlying the accounts of institution and then to show how this relational system was articulated in typical Eucharistic prayers from the second to the fourth century. Such a study provides material for judging what should be normative for our Eucharistic theology regarding the sacrificial character of the Lord's Supper and the consecratory power of the prayer of the Church. It will also furnish us with examples of prayers which were, for their day, integrally modern (= expressing the religious sensibilities consistent with the age) and radically conservative. These examples of recreative conservatism should be a stimulus to the current quest for modernity in the prayer of the Church. They also provide a clue to the balance needed between modernity and tradition in the creation of a prayer which can be expected to survive as a usable common expression of faith.

THE NEW TESTAMENT EUCHARIST

The New Testament canon accepted the forms of Eucharistic worship described in the Synoptic Passion narratives and 1 Cor 11:23–25 as derived from Jesus and normative for Christian worship.[1] The so-called accounts of institution relate what Jesus did at the Last Supper but at the same time express the essential ingredients of Palestinian Christian practice within a decade of Jesus' death.[2] Despite obvious differences between the accounts, there is an essential kernel displaying a uniform relational system which must be found in all celebrations claiming to be conformed to the tradition of the night of betrayal.[3]

[1] We can only conjecture as to how the primitive Church came to recognize the Last Supper action as an "institution." Paul is especially clear on its normative value, cf L Goppelt, "Der eucharistische Gottesdienst nach dem neuen Testament," *Erbe und Auftrag* 49 (1973) 435

[2] On the Palestinian origin of these texts, cf J Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (New York, 1966), H Schürmann, *Der Einsetzungsberichte Lk 22 19–20* (Münster, 1955), P Neuenzeit, *Das Herrenmahl Studien zur paulinischen Eucharistieauffassung* (Munich, 1960) On the whole problem of the accounts considered as expression of the celebration of the Eucharist at a definite point of time and their concrete liturgical *Sitz im Glaubensleben*, cf R Feneberg, *Christliche Passafeier und Abendmahl Eine biblisch-hermeneutische Untersuchung der neutestamentlichen Einsetzungsberichten* (Munich, 1971)

[3] Cf X -Leon Dufour, "Das letzte Abendmahl Stiftung und kultische Aktualisierung," *Bible und Liturgie* 46 (1973) 167–73

This uniform structure is the same for Jesus' activity in the "breaking of bread" and in the cup rite at the end of the meal. Following Jewish table practice, he praises God and distributes the broken loaf to the disciples. This action expresses the twofold relationship basic to Jewish community life and the inner connection between the relations. The sharing of bread and cup symbolizes the community of life among the participants; the prayer of praise confesses the foundation of this relationship. In other words, the unity of the participants is grounded on their relation to the God of the covenant.

Jesus, however, gives to the blessing and the sharing a new meaning which, without disturbing the basic relational structure, reveals the deepest meaning of the twofold communion. The ultimate grounds of the union between Jesus and the disciples is their common union with the Father. But this union is not founded on the common attachment of all to the old covenant; it results from the personal attachment of the disciples to Jesus. He is the unique "way" (Jn 14:6).

In the Antioch tradition (Pl/Lk), the sharing of bread, symbol of the living body which it sustains and so expressive of community of life,[4] is not simply referred through the blessing to the Giver of all life and so ultimate source of communion among men. Rather Jesus, by his word, transforms the symbolic reality of bread. It is now stated to be his historical reality (= body[5]) which is "given", i.e., dedicated to God in such a way that he becomes principle of life, "bread of life" (Jn 6:35), for those who receive him as such.

In the context of a Jewish meal the pregnant formula "This is my body which is given for you" (Lk 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24) should mean: *This* (sharing of bread) *is* (has the meaning of sharing in) *my body* (my person as transitory earthly being and nevertheless principle of life in relation to others) *which is given for you* (become so by total dedication to the will of God). Since this sharing of bread establishes a relationship of identity of life between Jesus and the disciples and so a new principle of unity between the disciples, we can also paraphrase the bread words thus: You are my body, you who share this bread and eat it together.[6] This relationship of identity is referred by Jesus not merely in an oblique way to the Father through the prayer of blessing; he asserts that it is grounded on his work as Servant: "given for you." Ultimately the union

[4] J. P. de Jong, *L'Eucharistie comme réalité symbolique* (Paris, 1972) pp. 57–61, discusses the Hebrew understanding of bread and wine as symbols of flesh and blood and so of the living body and life of the body.

[5] *Sōma* means the historical acting ego (Rom 6:6, 12). Jesus may have used *gûph* (Aram.) or *gûphâh* (Hebr.), or more probably *bisrā* (Aram.) or *bāsār* (Hebr.). For the use of *bāsār* in this sense, cf. Is 40:6.

[6] Thus Paul interprets the bread-saying in 1 Cor 10:17.

between Jesus and the disciples is based on their participation in his new relation to the Father sealed by his obedience "unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:8).

The cup-saying of the Antioch tradition clearly affirms the basis of the union of identity between Jesus and the disciples: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (1 Cor 11:25). In the context of a Jewish meal this pregnant sentence means: *This cup* (the sharing of this cup) *is* (has the meaning of sharing in) the *new covenant* (definitive bond of union between God and man involving the commitment of man to God's will) *in my blood* (brought to completion by the death of the Servant). The theocentric orientation of the cup-saying,[7] centering on the ultimate gift of communion with the Father, is characteristic of Jesus. It could be closer to the Last Supper than Mk's cup-saying. Yet it is also characteristic of Pauline theology.[8] In any case, the content of the cup is understood to afford a sharing of the blood, i.e., communion with the dying Jesus through which communion with the Father is possible. 1 Cor 10:16 makes this clear.[9]

The cup-saying of Mk focuses on the blood of Christ as gift of the cup: "This is my blood of the covenant which is shed for many" (14:24). The Greek text can hardly be a literal translation from Aramaic or Hebrew.[10] The original reading may have been "This is the covenant blood, namely mine, shed for many," or "This is my blood, the covenant blood, shed for many."[11] It is important to note, however, that both types of cup-saying announce the same thing, only in opposite directions: the ultimate gift is the covenant realized through the Servant and communicated through sharing the gift of the cup.

The emphasis on the gift of blood in Mk's formula results from the use of the Mosaic covenant rite to portray the meaning of Jesus' death. His blood is the "blood of the covenant" (Ex 24:8). But Mk continues to

[7] A theocentric orientation of the bread-saying may be indicated in the use of the passive "which is given for you" (Lk). The subject, not mentioned, would be the Father in the first place.

[8] Paul represents Jesus' work (2 Cor 5:18–19), as well as that of the apostle (2 Cor 5:20), as primarily God's work.

[9] Paul stresses the death as source of life. However, he is aware of the pneumatic character of the Eucharistic gifts. Cf. 1 Cor 10:3–4 and 12:13, where Paul characterizes the typological correspondence between the Eucharist and desert drink as "spiritual" and "the one Spirit."

[10] Jeremias, *op. cit.*, p. 193: a noun with a pronominal suffix generally does not tolerate the genitive after itself.

[11] This saying may be more ancient than 1 Cor 11:25. The latter formula could have resulted from concern for an explicit theocentric orientation or to link Jer 31:31 to the covenant theme. In the latter case the insertion of "new" would require the manipulation of the text, of which the most readily available transposition is 1 Cor 11:25.

relate the blood of Jesus to the act by which he established the new grounds of communion with the disciples. The relation of Jesus to the disciples depends ultimately on their sharing in his covenant.

Briefly, then, the bread- and cup-sayings have as their object the prayer of blessing and the sharing of bread and wine. Jesus announces the new covenant sealed by his death and symbolically represents the sharing of the disciples in this covenant through their personal union with himself. The interest is not centered uniquely, exclusively, and directly on the elements of the meal. The elements are never separated from the totality of the act by which Jesus establishes the new people of God.

The accounts of institution make it clear that the Eucharist of the Church must be related to the work of the Servant and its goal: communion with the Father. They also make it clear that the relationship can only be realized in the community meal by the presence of the Lord placing the reality of his body and blood which grounds and forms the Christian meal.

This sacramental presence, however, means that the community is not yet completely established, that it has the task of growing according to the way of its Lord. The prominence of this eschatological perspective in the early Eucharistic meals is reflected in the eschatological saying attached to the accounts of institution. 1 Cor 11:26 views the Lord's Supper as proclamation of the death of the Lord until he comes. Mk 14:25 (Mt 26:29) refers the Eucharist to the heavenly banquet with the visible Lord.[12] Lk 22:15–18 (19–20), 21–38 shows, however, greater sensitivity to the eschatological situation of the sacramental act. Here the situation of the community in the between-times is made the object of Jesus' farewell address.[13] Into this discourse the account of institution is inserted. This highlights the fact that the Eucharistic presence is that of the Absent One who offers himself as Servant. Through the farewell address the consequences of this for the community are developed.

In the absence of Jesus (15–18) the community, united through the rite of the bread and cup to the Absent One who gives himself as Servant (19–20), is a brotherhood which cannot abide a betrayer (21–23), and being a brotherhood of Jesus has a legacy of service (24–27). Though ordered to the heavenly banquet (28–30), it must still undergo strife

[12] The oldest accounts may have placed the eschatological saying before or after the narrative of institution. Placed before (Lk), it offers grounds for the institution of the Eucharist as means of encounter with the Lord in his absence (Goppelt, *op. cit.*, p. 438).

[13] Dufour, *op. cit.*, pp. 174–76, analyzes this "testament tradition," the literary form of farewell address in Judaism. He shows how it is used in Lk 22:15 ff. to bring out the meaning of the rite for the life of the Church.

(35–38). However, it is assured the support of the Absent One who strengthens Peter and, through the faithful disciple, supports the community (31–32). Here we have an important dimension which should be expressed in a Eucharist. The Lord's Supper should represent the actual situation of the Church in the time between the past sacrificial action of Jesus and the future heavenly meal with the visible Lord. It should express the struggle with the "world" which is the lot of the Church united to the absent Lord and, simultaneously, the brotherly fellowship of the participants who are called to be Christ in person serving one another and the many for whom Christ died.

The Pauline references to the Eucharist typically refer to the demands which it makes on the community. In 1 Cor 10:14–33 the problem of the scandal of eating meat sacrificed to gods is approached from a liturgical point of view. The unity of the Eucharistic community demands seeking the neighbor's good. In 1 Cor 11:17–34 selfishness at the Lord's Supper is judged to be a sinning against the body and blood because it denies the unity effected by Christ. In 1 Cor 10:1–13 Paul opposes a concept of the Eucharist which excludes the eschatological perspective. According to this view, the Eucharistic elements communicate a heavenly Pneuma-Substance which emancipates the individual from his earthly body and allows him to ignore social and moral responsibilities. For Paul, on the contrary, the Spirit conveyed through the Eucharist is none other than the Lord whose Father is the God of the old law. The Eucharist is, as the gifts of the desert, "spiritual food and drink" (10:3–4), i.e., mediates God's saving work through Christ (10:4). It even conveys the Spirit himself, i.e., the Lord (2 Cor 3:17): "and all were made to drink of the one Spirit" (1 Cor 12:13). But the possession of this Spirit does not absolve one from following the will of the Father, the gospel of Jesus Christ (10:5–13).[14]

For Paul, the Eucharist is the most direct prolongation of the work of the historical Jesus. It fulfils the promise of the Last Supper. But it is a fulfilment which is open to future completion and so makes demands on the believer. Paul in his own way relates the Eucharist to the past and the future and draws out the consequences for life in the Spirit of Christ (Eph 3:17).

We can only touch on the remaining direct reference to the Eucharist in the New Testament. In Jn 6:51c–58 the author mentions the special content of the Eucharist by extending the speaking and acting of Jesus into the present situation of the Johannine church. Despite differences of

[14] Cf. Goppelt, *op. cit.*, p. 444.

terminology,[15] Jn's presentation coincides with that of Paul. For both, the gift of the Eucharist is the Word-made-flesh in the power of his death.[16] The goal of communion, union with the Father, is described in terms of "life" (57); the eschatological situation of the communicant is alluded to in the theme of faith and the final resurrection (54). The consequences of this union in the Lord are developed elsewhere (e.g., 1 Jn).

For the actual mode of celebration of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament period, 1 Cor 10:16 provides some valuable clues. The phrase "the cup of blessing which we bless," while reflecting Jewish table-custom, indicates that a change has taken place. The cup, and not the whole meal, is the object of thanksgiving. The content of this prayer must have referred to the gift which the Lord offers by way of the cup: the covenant (1 Cor 11:25). The essentials of such a prayer may be found in Col 1:12–20.[17] The second phrase, "the bread we break," should also be interpreted to mean: the bread over which we offer praise in view of the gift of Christ.

According to 1 Cor 10:16, the elements are considered as sanctified through God's response to the prayer. They become a "sharing of the body and blood of Christ." The importance of the prayer of thanksgiving is attested by the fact that it is used to designate the Lord's Supper from the beginning of the second century.[18] This prayer of thankful praise must be considered the apostolic form of "consecration."[18a]

[15] While Ignatius of Antioch uses the same terminology as Jn, "flesh" (*Ep to Smyrnaeans* 7, 1 [K Bihlmeyer, *Die apostolischen Vater*, Tubingen, 1956², p 108]) refers not to man as transitory earthly being but to the glorified human nature Hence Ignatius cannot transfer the saying about flesh to blood A heavenly blood is unthinkable Thus he refers to blood in another way, though in the New Testament both elements are used in a strict parallel fashion in a Eucharistic context (Goppelt, *op cit* , p 447)

[16] Jn 6 51c–58 is introduced into a chapter which is concerned to show that Jesus is the unique mediator between God and mankind The Eucharist proves that Jesus in the flesh is still the bread of life in the time of the Church (cf P Borgen, *Bread from Heaven An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo* [Leiden, 1965] pp 147–92)

[17] N A Dahl, "Anamnesis Memoire et commemoration dans le christianisme primitif," *Studia theologica* 1 (1948) 86, n 1, singles out indications of a Eucharistic prayer in Col 1 12–20 J Betz, *Die Eucharistie in der Zeit der griechischen Vater* 1/1 (Freiburg, 1955) 154, n 49, builds on this K Gamber, "Anklange an das Eucharistiegebet bei Paulus und das judische Kiddusch," *Ostkirchliche Studien* 9 (1960) 254–64, analyzing the relationship between Col 1 12–20, the Jewish table-prayer, and early Eucharistic anaphoras, comes to the same conclusion as Dahl and Betz

[18] Ignatius of Antioch, *op cit*

[18a] Blessings in Judaism are directed to God and are thought to hallow the whole meal procedure, thus in 1 Tim 4 4 ff The absolute use of the verb "to bless" is not found in 1 Cor

Following the prayer, a distribution of the elements took place. 1 Cor 10:16, a very ancient formula as the allusion to Jewish table-customs indicates, attests to the stage of development in which the bread and cup rites were separated by a meal of satiation. At this period the distribution was probably accompanied by the narrative of institution.

By the time of 1 Corinthians both rites were placed at the end of a meal.[19] The Jewish grace-after-meals served as the basic literary form of the one blessing.[20] The earliest Christian version of this probably included a thankful praise of God for Christ and a petition for the coming of the kingdom.[21] With this development the account of institution probably continued to serve as an introduction to Communion, a distribution formula in a qualified sense. This usage is indicated in Mk 14:22: "*Take*, this is . . . ," and more so in Mt 26:26: "*Take, eat*, this is . . . ," and Mt 26:27: "Drink all from it," where the reading of Mk 14:23, "And they all drank of it," is changed to direct address. This use of the bread and cup words as "words of distribution" would be appropriate for a Eucharistic celebration around a table.[22]

10:16a. As in Lk 9:16, "blessed . . . them (loaves)," it is constructed with the impersonal object; this follows Greek secular usage. Nevertheless, in neither case should "to bless" be interpreted precisely as "to consecrate" (as Jeremias, *op cit.*, p. 175, seems to do). Rather, the elements are made the object of thankful praise in view of what God will do through them. Only later will the accounts of institution include "sanctified" with (*Dêr Balyzeh*) or without (*Anaphora of Apostolic Constitutions*) "blessed," thus implying that Jesus himself consecrated the food.

[19] 1 Cor 11:21 indicates that a meal preceded the Eucharist. Moreover, the use of *eucharistein* in Lk 22:19 (1 Cor 11:24) for the rite of the bread (*eulogein* in 1 Cor 10:16) reflects a stage of development in which both rites were linked with the final solemn blessing of thankful praise giving its name to the whole rite. Hebrew and Aramaic know only one expression for the bread and cup prayer (*bērak, bārēk* = *eulogein*). However, *eucharistein* is appropriate for the cup blessing which includes a thanksgiving. It would not be suitable for the bread rite if it referred to the simple benediction in an exclusive way. Mk 14:22-23 makes a clear distinction between *eulogein* (bread) and *eucharistein* (cup).

[20] Its content was: blessing of God who nourishes mankind; thanksgiving for the promised land; petitions for Israel, Jerusalem, the Temple (cf. L. Finkelstein, "The Birkat Ha-Mazon," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 19 [1928-29] 211-62).

[21] The *maranatha* of 1 Cor 16:22 served as a fixed liturgical formula over a long period. It has the same meaning as Ap 22:20: "Lord, come." The sames holds true for *Didache* 10, 6, where the eschatological perspective is brought out by the parallel phrase "Let grace come."

[22] The term "words of distribution" means that the formulas were recited as a whole before Communion. This seems indicated because the accounts are units which show liturgical characteristics: conciseness of expression, paralleling tendency, omission of unnecessary historical details. Thus they served the function which narrative had in ancient Oriental rites: to explain the origin, meaning, and procedure (cf. S. H. Hooke, *Myth and Ritual* [New York, 1933]). Examples can be found in Judaism: Day of Atonement

We have studied the relational system inherent in the accounts of institution and alluded to the scanty evidence for the way the Eucharistic celebration was conducted in the apostolic period. Now it is time to turn to the sources which witness to the mode of celebration outside the New Testament. We will confine ourselves to typical Eucharistic prayers dating from the end of the first century through the fourth century. These prayers maintain the basic structure of the New Testament Eucharist while emphasizing one or other aspect at times and interpreting the action of God and that of the Church in accord with particular theological outlooks.

EARLY EUCHARISTIC PRAYERS

The most significant development in the liturgy of the first century was occasioned by the combining of the rites of the bread and cup. This resulted in a unified prayer. Subsequently the meal was dropped or displaced after the Eucharist in accord with fasting regulations.[23] Egyptian custom provided an exception. With this development the character of the Eucharist as symbolic festive meal no longer stood in the foreground. The Lord's Supper took on the form of ritual sacrifice and a clear distinction emerged between the offering of the sacrifice of praise and communion of the holy food. This is mirrored in the Eucharistic prayers of the early centuries. An investigation of these prayers shows the gradual growth in the Church's recognition that its "sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name" (Heb 10:15) was primarily accomplished in the Eucharistic prayer.

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and the Passover Feast. G. D. Kilpatrick suggests that the accounts of institution may have had the role suggested by Hooke's analysis ("L'Eucharistie dans le Nouveau Testament," *Revue de théologie et de philosophie* 97 [1964] 193–204). Later on, when distribution formulas properly so called are found, e.g., "The bread of heaven in Christ Jesus" (*Apostolic Tradition* 4, 55 [B. Botte, *La Tradition apostolique de saint Hippolyte: Essai de réconstruction*, Münster, 1963]), the accounts of institution will retain the same basic function.

[23] For direct evidence of a morning Eucharist, cf. Tertullian, *De corona* 3 (A. Kroymann, *CSEL* 70 [Vienna, 1942]). It probably obtained earlier in Rome (Justin, *1 Apol.* 65–67). John Chrysostom reads a later practice of taking the meal after the Eucharist into 1 Cor 11:17–34 (*In 1 Cor. hom.* 27 [11:17]; *PG* 61, 223). While *Epistula apostolorum* 15 (Coptic) places the meal after the Eucharist, the earlier Ethiopic version puts it before (E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha* 1 [Philadelphia, 1963] 199–200). In Egypt the latter custom was maintained into the fifth century (Socrates, *H. E.* 5, 22 [*PG* 67, 636A]; Sozomen, *H. E.* 7, 21 [*PG* 67, 1478]). However, the Eucharist was not celebrated at table. The earlier practice of inserting a meal between the bread and cup rites, reflected in *Didache* 9–10 and 1 Cor 10:16, was probably continued in Egypt for some time after the first century (cf. Gamber, *art. cit.*, n. 64).

Second Century

In this period the prayer is called a thanksgiving and gives its name to the rite: *eucharistia*. It was seen as the response to the legacy of the Last Supper and to evoke the active presence of the Logos, who transforms the symbols of the Church's thanksgiving into symbols of his body and blood.

Few examples of these simple prayers remain. *Didache* 9–10 contains either an actual Eucharistic prayer or the elements of an earlier one.[24] The Christological theme is dominant and thanksgiving[25] is made for life and knowledge (9, 3; 10, 2). The Eucharist renews the gifts of Paradise and is the banquet of Wisdom. It affords an indwelling of Jesus in the hearts of believers (10, 2–3b). A petition for the gathering of the Church is voiced (9, 4; 10, 5). No reference is made to the Last Supper.[26] While the prayer looks to the final fulfilment, the eschatological world is understood to be at work in the present. This allows the food to be qualified as "spiritual" (10, 3b) and its effect seen as "eternal life" (*ibid.*).[27] The evident confidence of the community in the power of its prayer coincides with the ancient Hebrew's understanding of the power of prayer undertaken on the basis of Yahweh's promise: "In every place where I cause my name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you" (Ex 20:24).

It would be incorrect to conclude that this text does not represent a true Eucharist because of the lack of an explicit reference to the Last Supper.[28] It contains all the elements required for the fulfilment of the command "Do this. . . ." There is a giving of thanks for redemption

[24] Text of *Didache* 9–10 J P Audet, *La Didache* (Paris, 1958) pp 234–36 Gamber argues that the prayer is a Eucharist properly so called ("Zur Geschichte des frühchristlichen Eucharistiegebetes," *Heiliger Dienst* 26 [1972] 151–52), J Betz maintains that it contains elements of a Eucharistic prayer but is now used for a meal of satiation ("Die Eucharistie in der Didache," *Archiv fur Liturgiewissenschaft* 11 [1969] 10–29) Betz's thesis is difficult to prove because of the lack of evidence for agapes independent of the Eucharist in the early second century (cf A Hamman, "Quelle est l'origine de l'agape?" *Studia patristica* 10 [1970] 351–54)

[25] "Thanksgiving" is interpreted as "your sacrifice" in *Didache* 14, 1–2

[26] For a detailed analysis of this prayer, cf Betz, *op cit*, and E J Kilmartin, "The Eucharistic Prayer," in *The Word in the World*, eds R J Clifford and G W MacRae (Cambridge, Mass, 1972) pp 125–30

[27] The incarnational-oriented view, i e, descent of Wisdom, and "eternal life" are points of contact with Jn 6 51b–58 The latter text stresses the Eucharist as prolongation of the Incarnation, *Didache* 10, 2 focuses on the Eucharistic indwelling

[28] As does H Lietzmann, *Messe und Herrenmahl* (Bonn, 1926) p 126 Cf K Gamber, "Die Serapion-anaphora ihrem altesten Bestand nach untersucht," *Ostkirchliche Studien* 16 (1967) 33–42, where the author contends that older Egyptian liturgies had a simple thanksgiving over bread and wine linked to a remembrance of Jesus' work with the account of institution recited outside the prayer (esp pp 40 ff)

through Christ in a rite in which the risen Lord's presence is mediated through food and drink.

Another example of an early Eucharistic prayer which relates to *Didache* can be found in the *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles* (2nd/3rd century). One such prayer is that of *Acts of John* 85, where a breaking of bread is accompanied by a thanksgiving for faith and knowledge directed to Christ.[29] The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 14 also contains a simple thanksgiving prayer almost certainly derived from the Lord's Supper.[30] It begins with an invocation of God, emphasizes the gifts of knowledge and election, and closes with a reference to the sharing in the cup of Christ unto eternal life. A prayer quite similar to that of Polycarp is found in a *Coptic Ostracon*, B.M. Nr. 32 799 + 33 050, of the 7th/8th century.[31] It includes an invocation of God linked to a cosmology and Christology. An explicit thanksgiving is made for knowledge of God obtained through Christ. The concluding Trisagion is a late insertion.

Justin Martyr and Irenaeus provide us with second-century commentaries on the content and function of these prayers.[32] Both stress that the elements of bread and wine are symbols of the Church's thanksgiving and interpret the transformation of them as a "sacramental incarnation."

Justin describes the prayer as thanksgiving for creation and redemption (*Dial.* 41; 70) in which there is an offering of bread and wine based on the institution of Jesus (*Dial.* 41).[33] The prayer is made to the Father by means of praising the Son, and this occasions the activity of the Logos through whom the elements become "the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus" (*1 Apol.* 66).[34] This makes it understandable why Justin should

[29] Hennecke and Schneemelcher, *op. cit.* 2 (1964) 253.

[30] Bihlmeyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 127–28. Cf. J. Robinson, "Liturgical Echoes in Polycarp's Prayer," *Expositor* 9 (1899) 63–72.

[31] H. Quecke, "Das anaphorische Dankgebet auf den koptischen Ostraka, B.M. Nr. 32 799 und 33 050," *Orientalia christiana periodica* 37 (1971) 391–405. For a fuller treatment of the liturgical significance of this prayer, cf. K. Gamber, "Das koptische Ostraka London B.M. Nr 32 799 & 33 050 and seine liturgiegeschichtliche Bedeutung," *Ostkirchliche Studien* 21 (1972) 298–308.

[32] Justin Martyr, *1 Apology* and *Dialogue with Trypho* (E. J. Goodspeed, *Die ältesten Apologeten* [Göttingen, 1914]). Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* (W. W. Harvey, *Sancti Irenaei ep. Ludg. libros quinque adversus haereses* 1–2 [Cambridge, 1857]).

[33] *1 Clement* 44, 4 (Bihlmeyer, *op. cit.*, p. 59) refers to the "offering of the gifts proper to the episcopacy" in a Eucharistic context. It probably refers to the bread and wine as symbols of thanksgiving and so gives earlier evidence of this thinking.

[34] Justin holds that the Logos effects both the historical (*1 Apol.* 33; 46, 5) and Eucharistic incarnation. Irenaeus has the same view (cf. Betz, *op. cit.* [n. 17 above] 272–75). Another example of Eucharistic incarnation theology of the same period can be found in the *Paschal Homily* of Pseudo-Hippolytus (cf. R. Cantalamessa, *L'Omelia "in s. Pascha" dello Pseudo-Ippolito di Roma* [Milan, 1967] pp. 119–21, 133–35, 157, 161).

refer to the Eucharist as memorial of the Incarnation (*Dial.* 70, 4).

This clear structure of the *admirabile commercium* in which the thanksgiving is answered by sacramental incarnation[35] is also found in the commentary of Irenaeus on the Church's Eucharist.[36] It is not clear that Irenaeus conceives the "oblation of the Church" [37] as receiving its essential content only when the Logos has made the bread and wine symbols of his body and blood. Irenaeus sees the apostles as priests who share in the priesthood of Christ and recognizes that all the righteous possess the sacerdotal rank.[38] He knows that redemption comes through Christ's sacrifice[39] but also says that others propitiate God.[40] What Christ and the believing Christian do is of consequence to God. Having been given the Spirit, a work of Christ,[41] man is able to offer prayer acceptable to God. As a result of this prayer made in the memorial of the Last Supper, the Logos makes the elements sacrament of his humanity "for us."

The writings of Justin and Irenaeus do not offer good evidence for the existence of a formal epiclesis of consecration. The prayer itself seems to have been considered to fulfil this function without the need for an explicit petition.[42]

Third Century

Characteristic of this period is the introduction of sacrificial prayers which amplify the simple thanksgiving and eventually lead to the prayer being called sacrifice.

The prayer of *Apostolic Tradition*[43] begins with a thanksgiving to God made "through Jesus Christ," i.e., the Father is praised through the praising of the works of the Son. The narrative of institution is located in this Christological prayer of thanksgiving. This arrangement was probably due to Hippolytus himself.[44] Otherwise, in available prayers, the

[35] For a fuller treatment of Justin's viewpoint, cf Kilmartin, *op cit*, pp 120–25

[36] Cf esp *Adv haer* 4, 29–31 (Harvey 200 ff)

[37] *Adv. haer* 4, 31, 1 (Harvey 201) This writer cannot agree with de Jong, *op cit*, pp 80–101, who maintains that Irenaeus conceives the sacrifice of the Church, symbolized in the gifts of bread and wine, as receiving its essential content only when the Logos has made of the symbols of the Church's thanksgiving the symbols of the gift of himself to the Father Rather, the transformation of the gifts appears to be the response to the acceptable prayer of the Church

[38] *Adv haer* 4, 17 (Harvey 167)

[39] *Ibid* 4, 16 (Harvey 166)

[40] *Ibid* 4, 29, 2 (Harvey 195)

[41] *Ibid* 5, 1, 2 (Harvey 315)

[42] Kilmartin, *art cit*, pp 120–25

[43] 4, 11–16 (Botte, *op cit*)

[44] As Gamber contends (*art cit* [n 24 above] p 156)

narrative is linked to the thanksgiving as a relatively independent pericope (Oriental) or enclosed in a sacrificial prayer (Egyptian, Roman).

The subsequent sacrificial prayer begins by summarizing the previous section, "We recall then his death and resurrection," and continues: "we offer to you the bread and cup, giving thanks that you have judged us worthy to stand before you and exercise a priestly function." The thanksgiving is considered a memorial and an offering which takes place through the offering of bread and wine. To recall, to give thanks, to offer, all mean the same thing. Furthermore, in the perspective of Hippolytus the offering of bread and wine by the faithful, the presentation by the deacon to the bishop of this "oblation,"[45] and the offering by the bishop of the gifts in the prayer are considered as parts of a unified whole, with the *offerre* of the bishop as the decisive moment.[46] It is the whole of this action which is referred to in the subsequent Communion petition: "oblation of the holy Church."

What is done in the Eucharist is the Church's offering of bread and wine with thanksgiving and the reception of the gifts as "antitypes" of the body and blood. Since this doing is the fulfilment of the command of Christ, the narrative of institution is given a central place. It serves as both object of thanks and authority for what the Church does. The thanksgiving which precedes the narrative leads up to it, and the sacrificial prayer and petition which follow depend on it.

The final Communion petition asks that the Spirit come on the oblation of the Church with a view to the sanctification of the faithful. It does not ask explicitly for the consecration of the bread and wine as do later epicleses.[47] In the section on baptism[48] the prayer as a whole is considered the occasion for the consecration of the gifts: The bishop is said to "eucharistize" the elements to "antitypes of the body and blood." Hence the Communion petition must be understood to serve as explanation of what the prayer as a whole ultimately intends: the sanctification of the communicants, especially through the communication in the spiritual food and drink.

One last point should be made regarding this prayer. Hippolytus uses "Spirit" to refer to the Logos' divine mode of being which effects the

[45] *Apost. Trad.* 4, 10 (Botte).

[46] H. Aldenhoven, "Darbringung und Epiklese im Eucharistiegebet: Eine Studie über die Struktur des Eucharistiegebetes in den altkatholischen Liturgien im Lichte der Liturgiegeschichte," *Internationale kirchliche Zeitschrift* 61 (1971) 90–111.

[47] For a more complete study of this Communion petition, cf. Aldenhoven, *art. cit.*, pp. 111–17.

[48] *Apost. Trad.* 21, 54–55 (Botte).

Incarnation.[49] Thus the express mention of the Spirit in the recalling of the Incarnation, "born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin," as well as in the epiclesis appears intended to convey an understanding of the Eucharistic transformation as re-presentation of the historical Incarnation.

The prayer of Hippolytus was probably used only by his community in Rome, exerted little influence on later Roman prayers, but served as the basis for a whole series of Oriental anaphoras.

The *Papyrus Strassburg gr. 254* (4th/5th century) contains an Alexandrian prayer apparently known to Clement of Alexandria and Origen.[50] It corresponds to the later prayer of *St. Mark*[51] but is shorter, and the fragment closes with a doxology only found at the end of that of *St. Mark*. The prayer contains a short praise of God for creation of the world and man through Christ. A proper Christology is lacking. This is followed by a brief thanksgiving made through Christ which flows into a sacrificial prayer. The concluding section contains a relatively long prayer of intercession for the Church, for the living and dead, and a doxology.

The first novelty we note is the absence of the narrative of institution, which usually comes before or is enclosed in a sacrificial prayer where found in later liturgies. We may be allowed to conjecture that the narrative followed the prayer. Secondly, the prayer is called a sacrifice; the concept of thanksgiving is placed in the background: "we give thanks ... and offer to you this spiritual sacrifice, this unbloody ministry ... an offering of incense and a pure offering, a victim and sacrificial gift." Finally, the prayer of offering is directly linked to extensive petitions. This is typical of the Alexandrian anaphora of *St. Mark* and reflects the confidence which the community has in expecting fruit from its sacrificial prayer.

Clement of Alexandria probably offers us a faithful reflection on the theology which lies behind this prayer. He emphasizes the mediation of the Logos High Priest to the neglect of the human side of Christ's priesthood found in the Epistle to the Hebrews.[52] In the Eucharist the Christian is understood to pray with and through the Logos, who stands next to the Father and reconciles all to God.[53] Through the prayer of-

[49] Betz, *op cit* (n 17 above) pp 337-40 Between the "Spirit" of Hippolytus and the Logos of Justin there is only a terminological distinction

[50] A Hanggi and I Pahl, eds , *Prex eucharistica Textus e varus liturgus antiquioribus selecti* (Fribourg, 1968) pp 116-17 Cf Gamber, *art cit* (n 24 above) pp 157-58, "Das Papyrusfragment zur Markusliturgie und das Eucharistiegebet im Clemensbrief," *Ostkirchliche Studien* 8 (1959) 31-45

[51] Hanggi and Pahl, *op cit* , pp 103 ff

[52] Betz, *op cit* (n 17 above) pp 117-18

[53] *Protreptikos* 12 (O Stahlin, *GCS* 12/1 [Leipzig, 1905] 84, 27—85,11)

fered by the Church, the activity of the power of the name of God takes place to sanctify the elements,[54] and this means that the Logos makes a body for himself.[55] Thus in the Eucharist the Logos is understood to intercede for mankind and to prepare a meal for mankind,[56] on the occasion of the prayer of the Church. This conception of the Eucharistic event may account for the lack of a Christology and the emphasis on the activity of the Church.

At one time Origen seems to speak of a prolongation of the earthly sacrifice of Christ in heaven and to relate it to the Eucharist.[57] However, in *Dialogue with Heraclides* he clearly states that the *prosphora* of the Church is directed to the Father through the intermediary of Jesus Christ insofar as he communicates with the Father through his divinity. The divine Logos is presented as the unique mediator between God and mankind.[58] Origen thus concurs with Clement. Likewise, he views the prayer of thanksgiving as the occasion for the consecration of the elements.[59]

The so-called *Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari* reflects a third-century East Syrian prayer which differs from the types we have just seen. It has undergone a number of changes, and many problems remain concerning the original structure and development of the prayer.[60] However, the publication of a series of manuscripts of ancient texts of the prayer (10th/11th century) by W. Macomber[61] allows us to conclude that the original prayer probably contained the following

[54] *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 82 (O. Stählin, *GCS* 17/3 [Leipzig, 1909] 132).

[55] *Ibid.* 60 (Stählin 127).

[56] Betz, *op. cit.* (n. 17 above) p. 118.

[57] *In Lev. hom.* 1, 3 (W. A. Baehrens, *GCS* 6 [Leipzig, 1920] 284).

[58] 4, 24–27 (J. Scherer, *Entretien d'Origène avec Héraclide* (*Sources chrétiennes* 67 [Paris, 1960] 63).

[59] *Contra Celsum* 8, 3 (P. Koetschau, *GCS* 2 [Leipzig, 1899] 249). In *Fragment 34*, on 1 Cor 7:5 (C. Jenkins, "Origen in 1 Corinthians," *Journal of Theological Studies* 9 [1908] 502) Origen speaks of the "loaves over which is invoked the name of God and of Christ and of the Holy Spirit." He probably refers to the prayer as a whole. The epiclesis of consecration mentioned by Firmilian, pupil of Origen, should also be interpreted in the same direction; cf. Cyprian's correspondence, *Ep.* 75, 10 (W. Hartel, *CSEL* 3/2 [Vienna, 1871] 817 f.). Origen, according to the testimony of Theophilus of Alexandria (quoted by Jerome, *Ep.* 98, 13), denied that the Eucharist is consecrated "per invocationem et adventum Spiritus Sancti" (cf. G. A. Mitchel, "Firmilian and Eucharistic Consecration," *Journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 5 [1954] 215–20).

[60] E. J. Cutrone, "The Anaphora of the Apostles: Implications of the Mar Eša 'ya Text," THEOLOGICAL STUDIES 34 (1973) 624–42.

[61] "The Oldest Known Text of the Anaphora of the Apostles Addai and Mari," *Orientalia christiana periodica* 32 (1966) 335–71. An English translation of the earliest text found by Macomber in the church of Mar Eša 'ya at Mosul, Iraq, is given in Cutrone, *art. cit.*, pp. 632–34.

elements: (1) thankful praise of Christ for creation and redemption with enumeration of the effects of the Incarnation: eternal life, forgiveness and knowledge; (2) intercessory prayers for the dead and living; (3) intercessory prayer for the participants of the celebration enclosing an indirect reference to the relationship of the rite to the Jesus-tradition of the Last Supper; (4) petition for the coming of the Spirit to sanctify the oblation of the community in view of pardon, hope of resurrection, and the new life; (5) doxology.

This anaphora relates to that of Hippolytus in many ways. The Christological prayer differs only in that it is addressed to the Son.[62] The same effects are attributed to the Incarnation which Hippolytus assigns to the Passion. As in Hippolytus, the thanksgiving is considered a memorial: "commemorating... the mystery of the Passion...." The epiclesis is strikingly similar to that of *Apostolic Tradition* and should be interpreted in the direction of a Logos epiclesis.

The basic difference lies in the fact that the narrative of institution does not provide the hinge which unifies the prayer of *Addai and Mari*. The epiclesis becomes the high point of the prayer. Correlatively, the value of the Church's activity is played down. It is not called a sacrificial offering and the unworthiness of the participants is stressed: "And we also, Lord, your weak, humble, and miserable servants." This makes an interesting contrast to Hippolytus' phrase: "judged worthy to stand in your presence and serve you," and provides a good example of the differences between the religious sensibilities of the Semite and Roman.

Fourth Century

During the fourth century distinctive anaphoras developed in West Syria and in Egypt. At the same time the typical Roman prayer was fixed in its essentials.

West Syrian Tradition

The prayer of *Apostolic Constitutions* 8, 12, 4–51 is very long and includes all that could be expected in a comprehensive Eucharistic prayer.[63] Its structure is typical of Oriental anaphoras: thankful praise of the Father, Trisagion, post-Sanctus Christological prayer, narrative of institution, memorial, epiclesis, intercessions, and doxology.

[62] The tendency toward monarchianism in the text could explain this. Cf. B. Botte, "L'Anaphore chaldéenne des apôtres," *Orientalia christiana periodica* 15 (1949) 259–76.

[63] Hänggi and Pahl, *op. cit.*, pp. 83–94. The length of the prayer has caused doubts about its actual use in the liturgy. L. Bouyer contests this; for his commentary on the prayer, cf. *Eucharist: Theology and Spirituality of the Eucharistic Prayer* (Notre Dame, 1968) pp. 250–68.

In this prayer, to recall, to give thanks, to offer, all mean the same thing. The memorial "Recalling ... we offer" is a slightly different version of that of *Apostolic Tradition*. However, the epiclesis now asks explicitly for the consecration of the gifts in view of the sanctification of the faithful. The narrative of institution is a relatively independent pericope which offers the grounds for what the Church does and its Communion petition. The introduction of the Trisagion represents a new development.[64]

A final synthesis of this Antiochean type is found in the *Prayer of St. James*, which represents the Jerusalemite tradition. A reconstruction of the original, based on the manuscript tradition of the so-called *Anaphora of St. James*, has been made by A. Tarby.[65] In its essentials this prayer reaches back to Cyril of Jerusalem. Here the Trinity is presented not simply acting one after the other. Rather, the divine Persons are shown as entering into action and revealing themselves together: specificity of act and unity of action are admirably expressed.[66]

In the theological perspective of this prayer the whole cosmos is called to return to God in a unique liturgy which links heaven to earth. The history of salvation is viewed as animated by the synergism of the three divine Persons and crystallized around the divine image impressed on man the sinner, whom Christ, the full expression of the divine philanthropy, comes to renew in the perfection of his sacrifice. The Eucharist is understood to insert the believer into the economy of salvation, which is fully realized in the effusion of the Spirit. It is the sacrifice of propitiation which the Church, attentive to the fearful return of the Judge, ceaselessly offers to the Father to draw on itself His mercy and pardon. Simultaneously it is, for the participants of the body and blood, the source of communication of the Spirit, who divinizes man progressively in the totality of his being.

[64] It is found in most Eastern prayers before the Post-Sanctus, which is generally a Christological prayer. In Egyptian liturgies it follows from the praise of the Father and is linked to an epiclesis of consecration. K. Gamber theorizes that the order of *Apostolic Constitutions* derives from the fact that the Jewish Shema, which includes Is 6:3, was adapted by early Jewish Christians for a morning liturgy and made to serve as introduction to the original Christological Eucharistic prayer when the Eucharist was transferred to the morning. In Egypt, where an evening liturgy continued for a long time, the Trisagion was introduced at a later date under the influence of existing Eucharistic prayers ("Die Eucharistiegebet im Papyrus von Dêr Balyzeh und die Sontagabend-Agapen in Ägypten," *Ostkirchliche Studien* 7 [1958] 48–65).

[65] A. Tarby, *La prière eucharistique de l'église de Jérusalem* (Paris, 1972) pp. 47–69. Cf. also Hänggi and Pahl, *op. cit.*, pp. 342–46.

[66] Tarby, *op. cit.*, pp. 90 f. Bouyer is mistaken when he speaks of a regrettable trichotomy which reserves creation to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Spirit (*op. cit.*, p. 278).

Egyptian Tradition

The *Dêr Balyzeh Papyrus* (6th/7th century)[67] and the *Anaphora of Serapion*,[68] which probably dates from A.D. 350, have basically the same structure: thankful praise of the Father, Trisagion, I epiclesis, narrative of institution, II epiclesis, doxology. *Serapion* encloses the narrative of institution in a sacrificial prayer and inserts intercessions before the final doxology. The Trisagion was probably borrowed at a late date from other Eucharistic prayers. In turn, it seems to have influenced the creation of I epiclesis, which repeats the "full" of the Trisagion and asks for the consecration of the gifts.[69]

The I epiclesis of *Dêr Balyzeh* asks for the sending of the Holy Spirit to make the bread and wine the body and blood of Christ. It includes also a prayer for the Church which combines *Didache* 9, 2; 9, 4; 10, 5. I epiclesis of *Serapion* asks for the sacrifice to be filled with "your power." The petition for the Church of *Didache* 9, 4 is situated after the bread-saying of the account of institution. This probably reflects a former practice in Egypt of introducing the meal between the Eucharistic rites.[70]

In *Dêr Balyzeh* the grounds for I epiclesis is the account of institution: "*For* the Lord Jesus . . . on the night . . . ." In *Serapion*, however, the grounds for I epiclesis, which asks for the consecration of the elements which the Church offers, is enclosed within a sacrificial prayer. Thus what the Church does and expects from God are referred to the narrative of institution.

II epiclesis of *Dêr Balyzeh*, in its fragmentary form, asks for the sanctification of the communicants by the Holy Spirit. II epiclesis of *Serapion* petitions for the Logos to make the bread "the body of the Word," and the cup "the blood of truth," with a view to the hallowing of the communicants.

The *Dêr Balyzeh* prayer is essentially a petition for consecration of the elements and sanctification of the communicants. The insertion of I epiclesis puts the thanksgiving in the background and so changes the orientation of the whole prayer. The addition of "sanctified" in the account of institution also indicates the basic thrust of the prayer: "he blessed, *sanctified*, broke . . . ."

The prayer of *Serapion* is also concerned with the consecration of the gifts. But by enclosing the narrative of institution in a sacrificial prayer, the Church's sacrificial action is depicted as representing the sacrificial

[67] Hänggi and Pahl, *op. cit.*, pp. 124–27.

[68] *Ibid.*, pp. 128–33.

[69] Cf. Aldenhoven, *art. cit.*, pp. 154 ff., where the author argues for the greater antiquity of II epiclesis; also Gamber, *art. cit.* (n. 64 above).

[70] Cf. Gamber, *ibid.*

action of Christ at the Last Supper. The breaking of bread at the Last Supper is interpreted as symbolic representation of Jesus' death: "took bread and *broke* . . . saying . . . this is my body which is *broken* for you." And so the prayer continues: "Wherefore we also making the likeness of the death have offered this bread and ask thee through this sacrifice to be reconciled to all of us . . . ." [71]

In doing what Jesus did, the Church's offering becomes the representation of the sacrifice which Christ offered at the Last Supper: the Church offers "the likeness of the body . . . the likeness of the blood." And the prayer asks that the offering be filled with the reality of the body and blood.

Western Tradition

In the West typically the prayer of the Lord's Supper has a variable element (thanksgiving) and a stable one (sacrificial prayer enclosing the narrative of institution). The oldest example is found in *De sacramentis*.[72] This prayer is not a creation of Ambrose. It resulted from a gradual development to the point where an authoritative decision was made fixing it in its essentials.[73] It shows the influence of older Eastern liturgies, especially Egyptian.

The narrative of institution is enclosed in a prayer resembling that of Serapion. But the petition of the sacrificial prayer ("Fac nobis . . . oblationem") is concerned with the acceptance of the gifts and is not directly a petition for consecration [74] The offering of the Church is supported by the fact that the gifts are "figure of the body and blood." Moreover, as in *Serapion*, the Church's offering is understood to represent directly the sacrifice of Christ offered by way of anticipation at the Last Supper. Corresponding to the bread-saying of Serapion, the breaking of bread is made a representation of Jesus' death: "took bread

[71] The earliest account of institution outside the New Testament omits mention of the breaking of bread (Justin, *1 Apol* 66, 3) In *Apost Trad* 4, 14 (Botte) the gesture is transferred to the bread-saying to qualify the body of the Passion "broken for you " Hippolytus follows a tradition of 1 Cor 11 24 commonly found in Eastern liturgies, but shows no concern for the symbolism of broken bread The actual breaking of bread takes place at Communion (4, 55 [Botte])

[72] 4, 5, 21-22, 6, 26-27 (O Faller, *CSEL* 73 [Vienna, 1955] 55, 57), Hanggi and Pahl, *op cit* , pp 421-23 Cf Aldenhoven, *art cit* , pp 170-79, J Beumer, "Die altesten Zeugnisse fur die romische Eucharistiefeier bei Ambrosius von Mailand," *Zeitschrift fur katholische Theologie* 95 (1973) 311-24

[73] Traditionally Pope Damasus I (A D 366-84) is named as the authoritative source, this is questionable (cf Beumer, *art cit* , p 320)

[74] The corresponding *Quam oblationem* of the Roman canon is developed in the direction of a prayer for consecration

. . . *broke* and what was *broken* gave . . . saying . . . this is my body which will be *broken* for many."

The *Fac nobis* was preceded by a thanksgiving prayer and petitions, which thus served as introduction to what is basically a sacrificial prayer.[75] Following this, the *Ergo memores* interprets the memorial of the Lord's Supper as an offering of the "holy bread" and the "cup of eternal life." It parallels closely the prayer of *Apostolic Tradition:* "We recall . . . we offer you the bread and cup." This prayer should not be interpreted to mean that the Church now offers these gifts as already consecrated, but with a view to consecration resulting from the prayer as a whole. It is not stated in the *Ergo memores* that the gifts are the body and blood.

At this time a fixed moment of consecration was not generally known in the West.[76] In *De mysteriis* Ambrose states that "benedictio consecravit." [77] But he also notes in the same work that the consecration is effected primarily by the "sermo Christi." [78] In *De sacramentis* the consecration is attributed to the "sermo Christi," and this is opposed to the words of the priest spoken on his own authority.[79] How should this be interpreted? The words of Christ confer a consecratory power on the prayer as a whole. Ambrose is concerned to attribute the efficacious power of consecration to Christ alone and not to fix the words of Christ as the moment of consecration.[80] It may be significant that he does not say precisely "post verba Christi" the bread and wine become the body and blood.[81]

In the *Ergo memores* prayer, as in the *Fac nobis*, the bread and wine are provisionally the body and blood of Christ. This interpretation allows us to make some sense out of the *Et petimus* prayer which follows: a petition for the gifts to be carried to the heavenly altar by angels and so a prayer for the consecration of the gifts.[82] If the gifts were viewed as already the body and blood of Christ, a petition for additional consecration would be meaningless.

[75] *De sacramentis* 4, 14 (Faller 52, 10–14) lists the types of petitions of the priest.

[76] De Jong, *op. cit.*, pp. 89–90, 113, notes that the controversy between Rome and the East about the moment of consecration came when the epiclesis and narrative of institution were no longer seen as moments within the scope of a unified symbolic action.

[77] 9, 50 (Faller 110).

[78] 9, 52 (Faller 112).

[79] 4, 14 (Faller 52).

[80] Aldenhoven, *art. cit.*, pp. 174–76.

[81] As does Bishop Faustus of Riez (A.D. 490–500) in the homily *De paschate* attributed to Caesarius of Arles: "antequam . . . substantia illic est panis et vini, post verba Christi corpus et sanguis Christi" (*PL* 67, 1056).

[82] The petition was probably linked to a Communion prayer for the sanctification of the communicants, as is commonly found elsewhere. The prayer of *De sacramentis* is incomplete (cf. Aldenhoven, *art. cit.*, pp. 184–85).

The new Roman Eucharistic prayers of 1968 (II, III, IV) do not accept the orientation of *De sacramentis*. The epiclesis of the Spirit for sanctification of the elements substitutes for the *Fac nobis*, a prayer for acceptance of the offering. A simple epiclesis of sanctification of the communicants replaces the *Et petimus*, a prayer for consecration of the elements. The decisive influence on the structure of these prayers was not concern for traditional forms of Eucharistic prayers, much less for modernity, but the concern of Western theology to fix the moment of consecration in the recitation of the narrative of institution.

CONCLUSIONS

The original thanksgiving prayer, which expressed the Church's desire for participation in the covenant relation of Jesus with the Father, was gradually overrun with sacrificial prayers and petitions which emphasized the Church's activity and the Church's confidence in the efficacy of its prayer. Contributing to this change was a growing awareness that Christians are called to live in Christ in the world and a correlative decrease in sensibility toward the Second Coming.

While one or other aspect of the Eucharistic mystery is emphasized in the prayers we have considered (gift of communion, sacrificial act of the Church), the relational structure of the accounts of institution remains: thanksgiving to God for His mighty works in Christ is the *sacrificium laudis* of the Church undertaken with a view to obtaining deeper communion with the Father, especially through the sacrament of the humanity of Christ.

The *sacrificium laudis* of the Church was thought to evoke the divine action which transforms the gifts into the body and blood of Christ. The link between the prayer of thanks and communion of the body and blood was expressed by the Communion petition.

The implication of the thanksgiving prayer, spiritual sacrifice and petition for the sacramental incarnation, was gradually articulated by sacrificial prayers and epiclesis of consecration. These in turn were given authority by the narrative of institution. These developments were to be expected. Later theological reflection would give a consecratory value either to the narrative of institution or to the epiclesis of the Spirit. This sundering of the unity of the *sacrificium laudis* had the negative effect of placing the thanksgiving on the margin of Eucharistic theology and consequently making the laity spectators at the rite, in which the priest does all that is really important.