

EUCCHARISTIC EPICLESIS: MYOPIA OR MICROCOSM?

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IN HIS excellent study of the Holy Spirit and the Eucharist, J. M. Tillard remarked that the epiclesis question is a very secondary one which often tends to stifle theological reflection and make one myopic in regard to the Holy Spirit and the Eucharist.¹ On the other hand, Edmund Bishop, one of the greatest liturgical scholars living at the turn of this century, insisted that the epiclesis lay at the heart of matters liturgical.² More recently, Lukas Vischer, the noted ecumenist, proclaimed the epiclesis question to be of key importance to the ecumenical dialogue on the Eucharist,³ and Orthodox theologian Paul Evdokimov cited the question of the epiclesis as methodologically even more important than that of the *Filioque* in this same dialogue.⁴

I do not intend to go into the complex, often painful history of the question; this has been done elsewhere.⁵ Nor do I intend to delve into the question of "real presence," although it forms a necessary, at times obscuring backdrop to the epiclesis question.⁶ I shall simply spell out some of the implications of using a Eucharistic epiclesis. Unless otherwise indicated, the term "epiclesis" will refer to an appeal for the Holy Spirit (1), to transform or sanctify the bread and wine (2), so that they may benefit those who partake of them worthily (3).

¹ J. M. Tillard, "L'Eucharistie et le Saint-Esprit," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 90 (1968) 387, 379, 364.

² Cf. E. Bishop, "Notes and Studies: Liturgical Comments and Memoranda VIII," *Journal of Theological Studies* 14 (1912) 39, and N. Abercrombie, *The Life and Work of Edmund Bishop* (London, 1959) pp. 252, 378-79.

³ L. Vischer, "Epiklese, Zeichen der Einheit, der Erneuerung und des Aufbruchs," *Oecumenica* 2 (1967) 302-12; appeared in English as "The Epiclesis: Sign of Unity and Renewal," *Studia liturgica* 6 (1969) 30-39.

⁴ P. Evdokimov, "Eucharistic—Mystère de l'église," *Pensée orthodoxe* 2 (1968) 62, n. 33.

⁵ For a more complete treatment of the question, cf. such works as E. G. C. F. Atchley, *On the Epiclesis of the Eucharistic Liturgy and in the Consecration of the Font* (London, 1935); S. Salaville, "Epiclèse eucharistique," *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 5/1 (1913) 194-300; F. Cabrol, "Epiclèse," *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* 5/1 (1922) 142-84; E. H. Schillebeeckx, *De sacramentale Heilseconomie* (Antwerp, 1952) pp. 307-54; G. C. Smit, "Epiclèse et théologie des sacrements," *Mélanges de science religieuse* 15 (1958) 95-136, and R. A. Adams, "The Holy Spirit and the Real Presence," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES* 29 (1968) 37-51, as well as my own study, *The Eucharistic Epiclesis in Twentieth Century Theology*, soon to be published in the Alcuin Club series. This last serves as the basis for much of what follows.

⁶ Cf. T. D. Stanks, "The Eucharist: Christ's Self-Communication in a Revelatory Event," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES* 28 (1967) 27-50; my *Eucharistic Epiclesis*, chap. 7; Adams, *art. cit.*, p. 49.

EPICLESIS AND PRAYING, BELIEVING ASSEMBLY

The epiclesis proper can (1) serve as a reminder that God realizes the Eucharist *for* the assembly, and in particular for the partaking assembly; (2) bring out the fact that God realizes the Eucharist *through* the believing assembly; (3) underscore the fact that it can only be as a *praying* assembly that the assembly has a share in the realization of the Eucharist.

Realization for the Partaking Assembly

An epiclesis proper, similar to the more fully developed epiclesis of the early anaphoras, can underscore the fact that the transformation of the gifts has for its aim the benefit or transformation of the assembled faithful. In the earliest anaphoras, e.g., that of the *Apostolic Tradition* and that of Addai and Mari, the epiclesis seeks the sanctification of the assembled faithful. The transformation of the gifts goes unmentioned. Even later, when the epiclesis did come to appeal for a transformation of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood, the epiclesis made it clear that the transformation was in view of the assembly's sanctification. Almost invariably we read of a transformation of the gifts *so that* the faithful might receive such benefits as unity, forgiveness, and life in the present and/or in the eschatological future.⁷ It would be hard to find a clearer statement of relationship between the transformation of the gifts and the transformation of the assembled faithful. Such a relationship reflects the thought of such classical writers as Thomas Aquinas⁸ and Nicholas Cabasilas,⁹ as well as modern personalistic thought which sees Christ's "bodily presence" in the Eucharist as a means to a fuller presence of Christ in his faithful and, in this sense, a transformation of the faithful. As B. Bobrinskoy puts it, "The final goal of the sanctification of the material elements is situated outside of themselves, in their utilization by man and for his edification."¹⁰

An epiclesis proper also highlights the fact that the sanctification of the assembled faithful should take place through the reception of the gifts. In other words, the Eucharistic epiclesis can underscore the unity of "consecration," in the narrower sense, and Communion. It is no accident

⁷ Cf. Tillard, *art. cit.*, pp. 369-74; B. Bobrinskoy, "Le Saint-Esprit, vie de l'église," *Contacts* 18 (1966) 190, suggests a link between the Logos or "Christological" epiclesis and Christ's second coming. He sees this type of epiclesis complementing the Spirit epiclesis. In general, however, the eschatological aspect of the epiclesis has received surprisingly little attention from twentieth-century students of the Eucharistic epiclesis.

⁸ Cf. *Sum. theol.* 3, q. 73, a. 3.

⁹ Cf. Nicholas Cabasilas, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* (tr. J. M. Hussey and P. A. McNulty; London, 1960) p. 25.

¹⁰ B. Bobrinskoy, "Présence réelle et communion eucharistique," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 53 (1969) 408.

that by far the majority of the fully developed epicleses ask that the gifts be transformed so that those *partaking* of these gifts (“accipientibus,” “qui in fide vera ederit . . . et biberit,” “*metalabontes, metechontas,*” etc.) may benefit. The epiclesis texts take for granted that those who have come together to celebrate the Eucharistic meal will partake of it. In a modern context in which theologians stress the meal character of the Eucharist and in which it is difficult to separate the “real presence” of Christ in the bread and wine from the acceptance of this “real presence” in Communion, this aspect of the epiclesis becomes increasingly important.

It is true that the “real (or ‘bodily’) presence” of Christ in the Eucharist does not depend on the individual’s belief or acceptance. Christ’s offer of himself remains real even when it does not find personal acceptance on the part of the individual member of the assembly. Nevertheless, it is in view of this personal acceptance that Christ makes his offer. Whatever may be said for minimalist interpretations regarding the “validity” of the Eucharist,¹¹ one fact remains: Christ’s sacramental offer of himself finds its complete realization only in the sacramental acceptance of this offer by the faithful.¹² The Eucharistic epiclesis is admirably suited to underline this unity between the “consecration” or the realization of Christ’s “bodily presence” and Communion or the sacramental acceptance of this “bodily presence.”¹³ An epiclesis proper can thus serve as a reminder that God realizes the “bodily presence” of Christ in the Eucharist for the assembly, and more specifically for the communicating assembly.

Realization through the Assembly

An epiclesis proper can also indicate that God realizes the Eucharist *through* the assembly. This latter proposition is admittedly delicate, but it must be faced.

One danger in the later Scholastic approach lay in focusing too much attention on the material elements of the outward sacramental sign. One

¹¹ Cf. Ledogar, “Faith, Feeling, Music and the Spirit,” *Worship* 43 (1969) 15; also E. Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament* (Stagbook edition; London, 1963) pp. 123–27.

¹² E. Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist* (London, 1968) p. 141. Cf. also Bobrinskoy, “Présence réelle,” pp. 405–12, esp. 408–9; N. Nissiotis, “Pneumatologie orthodoxe,” in F. J. Leenhardt *et al.*, *Le Saint-Esprit* (Geneva, 1963) p. 10; Stanks, *art. cit.*, pp. 36–37, 40–43.

¹³ In this regard we might mention in passing Kavanagh’s criticism of a “split epiclesis,” i.e., placing the appeal of the epiclesis for the transformation of the gifts before the institution narrative and the appeal for the sanctification of the faithful after the institution narrative; cf. A. Kavanagh, “Thoughts on the New Eucharistic Prayers,” *Worship* 43 (1969) 6, 9–12. Besides the other reservations which Kavanagh has in regard to this “split epiclesis,” it would seem that it does run the risk of obscuring the basic unity of “consecration” and Communion.

could thereby get, and give, the impression that the realization of the sacrament rests to a great extent on the mere juxtaposition of words and gestures.¹⁴ One would thus leave oneself wide open to the accusation of a sacramental physicism or magic. There are some who, perhaps in reaction to such a sacramental physicism, emphasize that it is God alone who realizes the Eucharist. For these, the proposition that the assembly plays a role in the realization of the sacraments can be particularly touchy.

Both positions, when carried too far, seem to jeopardize a balanced understanding of the Eucharist. To deny the role the believing assembly plays in the realization of the Eucharist—whether one makes this denial in favor of the external rite or even in favor of the divine intervention—is to deny a very real aspect of the Eucharistic encounter. It is especially within a personalistic approach to the sacraments that this becomes clear. Once one admits that a full, personal encounter must by its very nature be mutual, the believing response of the Church becomes a necessary element in the realization of the sacramental encounter. For the sacramental sign of the Eucharist is not merely a symbol of Christ's "bodily presence" to his Church. It is at the same time a symbol of the presence of the Church, believing and responsive to Christ.¹⁵ Christ's presence in the Eucharist is not realized in the abstract. It is in the context of a believing assembly, an assembly which celebrates the memorial of Christ's passion, death, resurrection, and ascension, that God intervenes.¹⁶ It is in this context, a context which presupposes not only God's intervention but also the Church's faith, that the presence of Christ to his Church and of his Church to Christ takes place. It is in this context that the individual is invited to become personally involved in this mutual presence.¹⁷

Thus both the human and the divine elements belong to, are necessary for, the full symbolic reality. That it is God who takes the initiative, that He is absolutely free and sovereign in realizing the Eucharist, is undeniable. Without the divine intervention there is simply no sacrament, no sacramental encounter. It is, nevertheless, also undeniable that the Church plays a role, however subordinate, in the realization of the

¹⁴ Cf. Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament*, pp. 87–88.

¹⁵ Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, pp. 141–42: "The eucharistic presence is therefore not dependent on the faith of the individual, but the sacramental offer cannot be thought of as separate from the community of the Church. It is, after all, a real presence of Christ *and of his Church*" (italics his). Cf. also A. Kavanagh, "Thoughts on the Roman Anaphora," *Worship* 39 (1965) 515–29, and 40 (1966) 2–16, as well as Stanks, *art. cit.*, pp. 36–37.

¹⁶ Cf. M. Thurian, *Le pain unique* (Taizé, 1967) pp. 39–47, esp. 44, 47, where he brings out this context well in relating the anamnesis and the epiclesis.

¹⁷ Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, pp. 143–44.

sacrament. Without the Church's faith there is also no sacrament and no sacramental encounter. As Rahner, speaking of the sacrament as an "efficacious word,"¹⁸ puts it:

... In this relationship between the efficacious word of God and the efficacious hearing (also worked by God) both realities are so closely interwoven that one can honestly say: *were one not there, then the other would not be what it in fact is.* ... The Reformation position that it was the act of faith which constituted the presence of the Lord when applied to the individual was false and heretical; when applied to the faith of the Church as a whole, however, this becomes an orthodox Catholic position.¹⁹

That the faith of the Church is necessary for the realization of a sacrament is hardly something new. Augustine, for instance, clearly recognized this. He acknowledged the power of the word in realizing a sacrament: "Accedit verbum ad elementum, et fit sacramentum."²⁰ He hastened to add, however, that the power of this word hinges not on the fact that it is spoken but on the fact that it is believed: "unde ista tanta virtus aquae, ut corpus tangat et cor abluat, nisi faciente verbo, non quia dicitur, sed quia creditur?"²¹ Aquinas cited and seconded Augustine on the necessity of faith for the realization of the sacrament.²² In addition, Thomas pointed out that this is why the intention of the minister to do what the Church intends is a minimal requirement for the realization of a sacrament. This intention supplies, at least minimally, a necessary component, viz., the faith of the Church.²³ Bonaventure was no less clear on this point.²⁴

¹⁸ K. Rahner, "Wort und Eucharistie," *Schriften zur Theologie* 4 (Einsiedeln, 1960) 330; appeared in English as "The Word and the Eucharist," *Theological Investigations* 4 (London, 1966) 253-86.

¹⁹ Rahner, *ibid.*, p. 353 (italics mine). Cf. Louis Bouyer, *Eucharistie: Théologie et spiritualité de la prière eucharistique* (Paris, 1966, 1968²) pp. 433, 434 (467); appeared in English (tr. of 2nd ed.) as *Eucharist* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1968); unless otherwise noted, I cite the page numbers from the 1966 edition together with the page numbers from the English edition (in parentheses). Cf. also Brunner, "Zur Lehre vom Gottesdienst der im Namen Jesu versammelten Gemeinde," *Leiturgia* 1 (1954) 217. The balanced approach of these authors underscores the one-sidedness of positions such as that of Salaville ("Epiclèse eucharistique," pp. 201-2), who insists that the words of "consecration" must be pronounced *in persona Christi* and not *in nomine ecclesiae*. Both dimensions, divine and ecclesial, have to be represented or present in some way for a really complete Eucharistic presence.

²⁰ *Tractatus in Johannis evangelium* 80, 3 (CCL 36, 529).

²¹ *Ibid.* Cf. Ledogar, *art. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

²² *Sum. theol.* 3, q. 60, aa. 6 and 7, ad 1m. Cf. Ledogar, *art. cit.*, p. 15.

²³ Cf. *Sum. theol.* 3, q. 64, a. 9; also Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, p. 142; Ledogar, *ibid.*, and Stanks, pp. 36-37.

²⁴ Bonaventure, *In 4 Sententiarum*, d. 6, p. 2, a. 2, q. 1, ad 2m (*Opera omnia*, Quaracchi edition 4 [1889] 153), and *Breviloquium* 6, 7 (*Opera omnia* 5 [1891] 271-72). Cf. P. F.

The Orthodox tradition, following the lead of such men as Nicholas Cabasilas, also recognizes the need for the Church to express her belief and apply the words of Christ here and now to the realization of the Eucharist. It goes without saying that the Reformation tradition has affirmed, perhaps at times with too individualistic a bent,²⁵ the necessity of faith for the sacraments.

Even Trent, for all its opposition to the proposition that the sacraments confer grace through faith *alone*,²⁶ insisted on the necessity of the minister's intention for the realization of a sacrament.²⁷ Both Thomas and Bonaventure viewed this intention in terms of the Church's faith. Unfortunately, since Trent's rejection of the position that faith alone was sufficient, sacramental theology, within the Roman Catholic tradition at least, "has spent most of its time minimizing the role of faith in sacramental action."²⁸ In recent times Vatican II has happily reasserted the necessity of faith as a presupposition for the realization of the sacraments.²⁹ In view of all this, it seems hard to deny not only that the Church's faith is necessary for the realization of a sacrament but also, in consequence of this, that the Church plays a very real role in the realization of the sacraments.³⁰

Moreover, it is important to keep two things in mind. First, it is a question here of realizing not simply the so-called "fruits" of the "real presence," although the Church's faith certainly plays a role in realizing these as well.³¹ Rather it is a question here of realizing the "real

Fransen, *Faith and the Sacraments* (London, 1958) p. 16, and Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, p. 142, n. 55, who offers an additional reminder that the statements of both Thomas and Bonaventure in this regard have to be considered within the context of the medieval understanding of the Eucharistic presence.

²⁵ Cf. Rahner, "Wort und Eucharistie," p. 353.

²⁶ *DS* 1608 (851).

²⁷ *DS* 1611 (854); cf. *DS* 1312 (695), 1262 (672), and R. de Salvo, *The Dogmatic Theology on the Intention of the Minister in the Confection of the Sacraments* (Washington, D.C., 1949) p. 20. In this context Ledogar, *art. cit.*, p. 15, remarks that Trent also acknowledged that no man was ever justified without faith. Cf. *DS* 1529-31 (799-800).

²⁸ Ledogar, *loc. cit.*

²⁹ Cf. Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Dec. 4, 1963) no. 59, in *AAS* 56 (1964) 116. Cf. E. J. Lengeling, *Die Konstitution des zweiten vatikanischen Konzils über die heilige Liturgie* (Münster, 1964) p. 134.

³⁰ This does not, of course, preclude disagreement over the terms, e.g., "to cause," "to effect," "to share in the realization of," "to play a role," etc., used to describe the Church's part in the sacramental encounter. All too often these terms have nuances or, even more regrettably, in the course of polemics have taken on connotations which make them unacceptable to one party or another.

³¹ Besides its prayer, issuing from faith, that the Holy Spirit open the recipient to God's saving presence, the assembly by manifesting its own faith can help, at least on the psychological plane, to stir up the faith of the recipient; cf. Ledogar, *art. cit.*, pp. 19-23.

presence" itself. Secondly, it is normally, ideally, the faith of the Church here and now present, i.e., the local assembly, which shares in this realization. It may be true that, in the absence of a believing assembly here and now, the intention of the minister may supply the *minimum* required for a sacrament, viz., the faith of the Church at large. This remains, however, the bare minimum,³² and one should build one's theology not on the minimum but on the ideal or normal. As R. Ledogar puts it, "normally speaking, it is the faith of those *present* (i.e., the faith of the church which they have made their own) that accomplishes the marvelous change and transformation that our Roman tradition calls 'Transubstantiation.'" ³³

Thus God freely and sovereignly effects a real presence in the Eucharist. He does so, however, through the faith of the Church, since this presence involves both Christ present and offering himself to his Church and the Church accepting and responding to this offer in faith. Moreover, involved in this mutual presence is an invitation to each individual in the assembly to personally share in this presence and thus have it attain the goal for which it was intended.

We have dwelt on the role that the Church's faith plays in the realization of a sacrament because of the implications this role has for an understanding of the Eucharist and, in particular, of the Eucharistic epiclesis. For if the Church's faith is indeed necessary for the realization of the Eucharist, those explanations which regard the epiclesis proper as an expression of the Church's intention and/or the Church's faith take on increased significance; for these explanations would in effect be saying that the epiclesis proper expresses an element which is absolutely necessary for the realization of the Eucharist. In other words, they would be saying that the epiclesis proper can express the fact that God realizes

³² Nissiotis, "Worship, Eucharist and Intercommunion: An Orthodox Reflection," *Studia liturgica* 2 (1963) 214-15, if one takes his words literally, would seem to go one step further. He declares: "It is, therefore, impossible for one priest to celebrate alone a service of Holy Communion as 'his mass', and no Communion service can be *valid* with only one communicant" (italics mine). While acknowledging all the danger to the essentially communal nature of the Eucharist, and even the abuses; that the so-called "private Mass" could lead to, one would also have to admit that it is impossible to expect the Roman Catholic tradition to concede that such Masses are invalid. Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, p. 142, n. 54, reflects what seems to be a more realistic position in this regard: "On the basis of the presence of both Christ and his Church, the *liturgical* form of the Eucharist requires the presence of a believing community. The dogmatic form of the 'real presence' of the people of God is undoubtedly preserved in the so-called 'private mass,' namely in the consecrated signs ('which we are,' as Augustine said), but, if there is no real community celebrating mass together with the priest, the possibility of a liturgical experience of this reciprocal real presence is reduced to a minimum" (italics his).

³³ Ledogar, *art. cit.*, p. 22.

the Eucharist *through* the assembly.³⁴ The fully developed Eucharistic epiclesis could thus help counteract any tendency to deny the role that the believing assembly plays in the realization of the Eucharist. This holds true whether such a denial stems from an exaggerated emphasis on the external rite in the sacrament or from an isolated stress on the divine intervention.

Moreover, an epiclesis proper could also help counteract any tendency to exaggerate the role of the ordained minister at the expense of the whole assembly. The stress on the exclusive consecratory value of the institution narrative, coupled with the insistence that the ordained minister pronounces the words of "consecration" *in persona Christi* and not *in nomine ecclesiae*,³⁵ can tend to play down the role of the *whole* assembly in the realization of the Eucharist. The attention given to the "intention of the minister" within a Scholastic framework,³⁶ while understandable in the context, could tend in a similar direction. The epiclesis proper could do much to underscore the fact that normally it is through the whole assembly, not merely through the ordained minister, that God acts here and now. The ordained minister does indeed have a special and necessary function. One might even regard him as a sort of symbolic point of convergence where Christ's offer of himself and the assembly's believing response to this offer find expression. Nevertheless, it is the whole assembly which, through the ordained minister, calls upon God to make His presence felt here and now. It is through the whole assembly that God realizes the Eucharist.

The Eucharistic epiclesis can underline the fact that God realizes the Eucharist for the believing assembly. It can also express the fact that God realizes the Eucharist through the assembly and through the whole assembly. It is important to note, however, that in the final analysis, it is always God who does the realizing. It is to this final point and its relationship to the epiclesis that we now turn.

Realization through the Praying Assembly

Some authors shy away from the thought that the assembly plays a role in the realization of the Eucharist. They do so, it seems, precisely because of their desire to underline the absolute sovereignty of God in effecting the sacraments. Admittedly, an exaggerated concentration on the rite or the assembly's role in the Eucharist can detract from a healthy understanding of this divine sovereignty in realizing the sacraments. For

³⁴ Cf. John Meyendorff, "Notes on the Orthodox Understanding of the Eucharist," *Concilium* 4/3 (Burns and Oates edition, 1967), 28, has expressed this aspect of the epiclesis well; cf. also Adams, *art. cit.*, pp. 48-51.

³⁵ Cf., e.g., Salaville, *art. cit.*, p. 201; Stanks, pp. 36-37, and Adams, pp. 50-56.

³⁶ Cf. Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament*, pp. 122-31.

instance, a juridical, mechanistic presentation of the doctrine of *ex opere operato* can exaggerate not only by giving the impression that the physical rites are “magical,” but also by giving the impression that the Church or the assembly has a certain control over God in regard to the sacraments.

In the preceding section, however, we were concerned with avoiding another extreme, viz., the denial of any role to the assembly in the realization of the Eucharist. Once one acknowledges this role and admits that the epiclesis can express this role, the way is clear to examine a more obvious and more important facet of the Eucharistic epiclesis. This is the facet which reflects the assembly’s basic dependence in the realization of the Eucharist.

In the Eucharistic prayer the assembly gratefully acknowledges the wonder deeds of God (*mirabilia Dei*) in creation and in the events of redemption, one of the highpoints of which is the institution of the Lord’s Supper. The assembly sees in the renewed celebration of the Lord’s Supper a memorial of all God’s wonders but especially of the greatest wonder of all, Jesus Christ, and his “passover” through death to a new life. Moreover, the assembly proclaims that in celebrating Christ’s paschal mystery in the Eucharist it does so in grateful obedience to his command “Do this as a memorial of me.”

At the same time, the assembly is aware that what it is now doing is a memorial in the fullest, biblical sense of the word. For the community not only recalls Christ and his paschal mystery; it firmly believes that, on the basis of His promises, God will act here and now. He will transform the gifts of bread and wine. He will make Christ present in his eternally actual offering of himself to his Father and to his fellow men.

Despite its confidence that God will act here and now, however, the assembly is aware of its limitations. It cannot induce the divine action. It cannot force God’s hand. It can only acknowledge God’s wonders and pray—pray that He will make these wonders present here and now for this assembly. There is no question of the assembly’s doubting that God will act. Its confidence, however, rests not on its own power but on the promise of God and on the awareness that the prayer of the assembly is united to that of Christ.

As long as one remains conscious of this basic dependence of the community upon God for the realization of the Eucharist, as long as one keeps in mind that the assembly always stands before God as a praying assembly, there is little danger of ignoring God’s absolute sovereignty in one’s understanding of the Eucharist. One of the greatest values of an epiclesis proper lies in its ability to underscore the fact that the believing assembly must pray for the realization of the Eucharist. The fully

developed epiclesis, whatever else it may be, is always a prayer. Even the view that the primitive meaning of "epiclesis" was the naming of a name must include this prayer aspect or face the accusation of magical tendencies.

In the epiclesis the assembly, having recalled the events of saving history and having made grateful acknowledgment of these events, confesses its own helplessness. It appeals to God to act upon the bread and wine in view of those about to partake of them. In other words, the assembly appeals to God to transform both the gifts and the assembled faithful so that this celebration of the Eucharist may bring about a mutual Eucharistic presence. The assembly asks God to intervene here and now so that this celebration may express and deepen the unity between Christ and his faithful and the unity of the faithful with each other and with the Father in Christ. All of this it asks for through the action of the Holy Spirit. How and when this action is to take place is God's concern. The believing community's concern is to partake of the gifts with the firm assurance, springing from faith, that God has answered its prayer. One major contribution of the epiclesis proper to a healthy understanding of the Eucharist lies precisely in its ability to express the helplessness and dependence and, at the same time, the prayerful confidence of the assembly.

Thus the epiclesis serves various functions. It can bring out the fact that God realizes the Eucharist *for* the assembly and that He does so *through* the whole assembly. It can also bring out the fact that this assembly is a *praying* assembly, totally dependent upon God for the initiative in realizing the Eucharistic encounter. It is a question not of exclusivity but of complementarity, and an epiclesis proper is well suited to voice these various facets simultaneously.

Furthermore, still another facet of the epiclesis proper deserves attention. With rare exceptions the fully developed epiclesis of the early anaphoras is an appeal for the Holy Spirit.

EPICLESIS AND HOLY SPIRIT

It would be presumptuous to think that one could propose all-embracing, definitive solutions to the complex questions surrounding the epiclesis. The relationship of the epiclesis to the Holy Spirit's role in the Eucharist is a case in point. A proper grasp of the Spirit's activity in the Eucharist would involve a study in itself. Even the decrees of Vatican II leave much to be desired here.³⁷ Nevertheless, it is necessary to broaden

³⁷ Cf. Tillard, "L'Eucharistie et le Saint-Esprit," pp. 363-64, who notes that the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (Dec. 7, 1965; AAS 58 [1966] 991-1024) no. 5, and the Instruction on Eucharistic Worship (May 25, 1967; AAS 59 [1967] 539-73), nos. 3, 6, 8, 38, 50, have made a more conscious effort here. Cf. Adams, *art. cit.*, pp. 37-40 and Bobrinsky,

the horizons on the epiclesis question to include the role of the Holy Spirit both in saving history and in the Eucharist. The need to reconcile the activity of Christ with that of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist is inherent in the view which sees the epiclesis as an expression of the Spirit's role in the Eucharist. It is first necessary, however, to view this activity against the broader background of the saving economy. Consequently, a brief sketch of the interaction of Christ and the Spirit in saving history and in the Eucharist will precede the application of insights in these two areas to the epiclesis question.

Holy Spirit and Saving History

If Christ is the sacrament of encounter between God and man, it is because he bears within his body-person the fulness of the Spirit.³⁸ One may speak of a Johannine-Alexandrian approach, which stresses the Incarnation or the descendent, Logos-Flesh movement. In this approach the emphasis is on the fact that the Logos became man and by so doing divinized man.³⁹ One may also speak of the Pauline-Antiochene approach, which stresses the death-resurrection (glorification) or the ascendent, Man-God movement. Here the emphasis is on the fact that the Son of God become man is made Kyrios or Lord only at the moment of his resurrection.⁴⁰

Nevertheless, here as elsewhere it is a question not of exclusivity but of complementarity. Incarnation is not simply the fact that the Logos or Second Person of the Trinity took on human flesh through birth. Incarnation, in its fullest sense, is a lifetime process of becoming human, fully human. For Christ, it involved a progressive opening up in loving obedience to his Father and in love to his fellow man. Corresponding to this opening up on the part of Christ was his progressively being filled with the Holy Spirit; put another way, the fulness of the Holy Spirit, which he possessed from the beginning, was gradually being unveiled in him. The culmination of this dynamic process took place in his death, resurrection, and glorification.⁴¹

Thus, whether one looks upon the redemptive process as a gradual filling up of Christ with the Spirit or as a gradual unveiling of the fulness

"Le Saint-Esprit," p. 195, who quotes a Catholic expert at Vatican II as referring to the Holy Spirit as still "ce grand méconnu," "Celui dont on ne savait comment parler et où les paroles sonnaient creux."

³⁸ Cf. Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament*, esp. pp. 5-54.

³⁹ Cf. Tillard, *The Eucharist: Pasch of God's People* (New York, 1967) pp. 71-102.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 102-12.

⁴¹ Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament*, pp. 20-27; cf. also A. Verheul, *Introduction to the Liturgy* (London, 1967) pp. 52-58, who outlines the Spirit's role in the various stages of Christ's saving mission.

of the Holy Spirit which Christ possessed from the first moment of the Incarnation, a number of common factors emerge. First, a progressive "transformation" of the man Christ is involved. Secondly, the whole process involves an interaction between Christ and the Spirit. It is not a question of an either-or. This becomes especially clear when one views the activity of Christ and the Spirit in relationship to the sanctification of mankind. We have here a double presence, a double service and mediation, a double action of Christ in the Spirit and the Spirit in Christ serving as "the two hands of the Father" in drawing man into a new life.⁴² Moreover, it is no question of a watered-down notion of "appropriation" in which the distinctive divine personalities become lost in the common *ad extra* activity of the Trinity. It is "appropriation" in the strong sense which the Greek tradition and writers like Aquinas within the Latin tradition have given this notion.⁴³ Drawing man up into the Trinitarian life is indeed a common work. In achieving it, however, each Person keeps His own characteristics; the operation comes from the Father, through the Son, and is accomplished in the Holy Spirit. Finally, both approaches to the redemptive process agree in seeing the Resurrection—or perhaps more exactly, the paschal mystery—as the event which enables Christ to dispense to his human brethren the Spirit with which he is filled, the Spirit of new life. It is the Holy Spirit who accomplishes the sanctification of men, who carries the work of Christ to its fulfilment. To put it another way, it is Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, who, through his own resurrection and exaltation as Lord (Kyrios), is now able freely to communicate this life-giving Spirit to mankind.

One can regard the paschal mystery as the event which enables Christ to radiate the fulness of the Spirit which he possessed from the very first moment of incarnation;⁴⁴ or one can see this paschal mystery as the event through which Christ is transformed and receives the fulness of the Spirit which he, as Kyrios, shares with his fellow men.⁴⁵ It seems, however, to be basically a case of different emphases.⁴⁶ In both approaches, moreover, it is clear that Christ, as Kyrios, as triumphant Lord, exercises his saving activity only in the Spirit (*en pneumatī*). Thus in the saving economy, while each has a distinct role, the activity of Christ and the Holy Spirit are inseparably entwined. This symbiosis holds true for any saving activity but especially for that of the glorified Lord. As Tillard puts it, "One understands, then, that for Paul, whenever it is a ques-

⁴² Cf. Bobrinskoy, "Le Saint-Esprit", pp. 186-187, 191.

⁴³ Cf. Tillard, *The Eucharist*, pp. 89-90, 94-95; P. H. Dondaine, *La Trinité 2* (Paris, 1950) 409-23.

⁴⁴ Tillard, *ibid.*, pp. 72-73.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, esp. pp. 104-5.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-12, 120; cf. Verheul, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

tion of the blessings of the kingdom and it is necessary to designate the agents, the titles *Kyrios* and *Pneuma* are interchangeable. Jesus is Lord in the Holy Spirit."⁴⁷ This "pneumatological Christology," as Nissiotis calls it,⁴⁸ has important implications for the Eucharist and for the Eucharistic epiclesis as well.

Holy Spirit and Eucharist

The first implication of what we have just seen concerning the relationship of Christ and the Spirit in the saving economy flows from the fact that the Eucharist is an activity of the triumphant Lord, the glorified *Kyrios*. To say that the glorified Lord is at work is automatically to say that the Holy Spirit is at work, since the glorified Lord is the Spirit-filled Lord, the "pneumatic Christ."⁴⁹ It is the penetration of Christ by the Spirit which has brought about Christ's glorification, and it belongs to the Holy Spirit to bring the work of Christ to its fulfilment. It belongs to the Holy Spirit to take the historical and objective work of Christ, the summit of which is the paschal mystery, and to actualize it in the lives and destinies of the faithful and of all mankind.⁵⁰

In the Eucharist He does this not only by realizing the so-called fruits of the Eucharist in the faithful; He is also intimately bound up with the transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of the Lord. The testimony that it is the Holy Spirit who realizes this transformation—apart from any question about the moment in which he does so—is unimpeachable. Theodore of Mopsuestia, Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, Augustine, Paschase Radbert, and Thomas Aquinas,⁵¹ not to mention many of the early epicleses, are among the numerous witnesses to this fact.

The bread and wine have become "spiritual" nourishment in the fullest sense of that word. They are filled with the Holy Spirit; for they are no longer ordinary bread and wine but the body and blood of the glorified Christ, who has become "Spiritized," filled with the Holy Spirit.⁵² They are radically different, just as Christ after his resurrection and as-

⁴⁷Tillard, "L'Eucharistie et le Saint-Esprit," p. 367; cf. p. 376; also Brunner, "Zur Lehre," pp. 355-56, who speaks of the "dynamischer Identifikation" of Christ and the Holy Spirit since Christ's resurrection and glorification; also Adams, *art. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

⁴⁸Cf. N. Nissiotis, "Pneumatological Christology as a Presupposition of Ecclesiology," *Oecumenica* 2 (1967) 241.

⁴⁹Cf. Tillard, "L'Eucharistie," pp. 366-69; also O. Casel, "Mysteriengegenwart," *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 8 (1938) 161-63.

⁵⁰Cf. Tillard, *The Eucharist*, p. 120, and his "L'Eucharistie," p. 367.

⁵¹Cf. Salaville, "Epiclèse eucharistique," pp. 235-47; Tillard, "L'Eucharistie," 378-83; Smit, *art. cit.*, pp. 118-19.

⁵²Tillard, "L'Eucharistie," p. 376.

cension is radically different, since they, as he, have been impregnated with the Holy Spirit. They are the "pneumatic Lord, the Kyrios." As Tillard puts it, "Everything becomes clear once one discovers, along with the great tradition, that the body and the blood thus present are the body and blood of the risen Lord. They are, therefore, the 'Spiritized' ('pneumatiques') body and blood. Moreover, since, after the Ascension, it is only in and by the Holy Spirit that Christ is present to his Church, the intervention of the Holy Spirit is indispensable for the accomplishment of this 'Eucharistic wonder.'"⁵³

The real wonder, however, has yet to take place. The whole purpose of the humanization of the Logos is the divinization of man. Evdokimov sums it up well when he says: "God became incarnated in man and man became Spirit-ualized in God. To the Incarnation, the humanization of God, corresponds the pneumatization, the divinization of man."⁵⁴ The purpose of Christ's resurrection and ascension was, similarly, not to take Christ away from his disciples; it was to make him present to them in a new way. His presence was to be interiorized. No longer was he to stand before them; he was to live on within them. This is the goal of the Eucharist. And it is precisely this interiorization and divinization that is the task of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist. He is there not simply to "Spiritize" the bread and wine by making the glorified body and blood of Christ present in them. Even more, He is there to "Spiritize" those who partake of the bread and wine by making the glorified Lord present in *them*.

This "Spiritizing" of those partaking involves two aspects. First, the Holy Spirit makes the body and blood of Christ, in a sense, capable of achieving its saving effects in the faithful. Secondly, the Holy Spirit works in the hearts of the faithful to open them to the action of the sacramental body and blood of the Lord. If either the presence of Christ offering himself or the acceptance of the assembled faithful is lacking, a full sacramental encounter does not take place. Now it is the Holy Spirit who makes possible not only the offer and the attitude of acceptance but also the joining of the two here and now in the celebration of the Eucharist.⁵⁵

Finally, it should be emphasized once more that it is in no way a question of the Holy Spirit replacing Christ in the Eucharist. It is

⁵³ Cf. Tillard, *The Eucharist*, pp. 112-27. It is, however, especially from the Orthodox theologians that one receives, if not a grasp, at least a glimpse, of the richness of the relationship of Christ's glorified body, the Holy Spirit, and the Eucharist in the light of the Resurrection and Ascension. Cf. esp. Bulgakov, "Das eucharistische Dogma," *Kyrios* 3 (1963) 47-55, and Evdokimov, *art. cit.*, pp. 59-62.

⁵⁴ P. Evdokimov, *L'Orthodoxie* (Neuchâtel, 1959) p. 251.

⁵⁵ Cf. Tillard, "L'Eucharistie" p. 378; also Bobrinskoy, "Présence réelle," p. 414.

permissible, even necessary at times, to concentrate on one or the other for the purpose of obtaining a better theological grasp of their distinct roles in the Eucharist. One should, however, never lose sight of the fact that the Eucharist is inseparably an action of the Kyrios, the glorified Lord, and of the *Pneuma tou Kyriou*, the Spirit of the Lord. It is the risen Lord exercising his Lordship in the Spirit; put another way, it is the Spirit of the Lord at work.⁵⁶

Holy Spirit and Epiclesis

The effort to view the epiclesis against the broader context of the Holy Spirit's activity in saving history and in the Eucharist has a number of important consequences for the epiclesis question. First, a glance at the Spirit's activity in saving history indicates the value of attempts to parallel the epiclesis with the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and Pentecost. As long as such attempts do not lose sight of the basic unity of the Spirit's activity in saving history, as long as they avoid an either-or exclusivity in regard to the Spirit's role in the Incarnation, Resurrection, etc., they can shed much light on the Spirit's role in the Eucharist by situating this role in the broader perspective of saving history; for the Holy Spirit forms a unifying thread between the Incarnation, as we have explained it above, the death, Resurrection, Ascension, and the crown of all these, Pentecost. He does so by "Spiritizing" Christ, by transforming Christ into a "life-giving Spirit"⁵⁷ for his fellow men and by carrying this life-giving function of Christ to its fulfilment.

It is, moreover, the epiclesis proper which (1) gives voice to the Spirit's role in the accomplishment of Christ's life-giving function in the Eucharist; (2) makes it clear that without the Holy Spirit the Eucharistic, "pneumatic"⁵⁸ body and blood of Christ are not present; (3) underscores the Holy Spirit's role in "Spiritizing" the bread and wine and making them objective means of salvation for those who properly partake of them. Furthermore, it is the epiclesis proper, especially the Antiochene type, which invokes and expresses the Spirit's activity not only upon the Eucharistic gifts but also upon the assembled faithful. The Eucharistic epiclesis thus makes it clear that the Eucharist is there so

⁵⁶ Cf. Tillard, *ibid.*, pp. 369, 375-77; also Bobrinskoy, "Le Saint-Esprit dans la Liturgie," pp. 58, 56; J. G. Davies, *The Spirit, the Church and the Sacraments* (London, 1954) pp. 136-40; R. N. S. Craig, "Nicholas Cabasilas: An Exposition of the Divine Liturgy" in *Studia patristica* 2 (Berlin, 1957) 22, 25-28, who points out that Nicholas took this complementarity into account. Cf. also Verheul, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.

⁵⁷ Cf. Rom 1:4 and the accompanying footnote (d) in *The Bible of Jerusalem*; also Rom 8:11, Acts 2:32-36, 2 Cor 3:18, as well as Adams, *art. cit.*, pp. 37 ff.

⁵⁸ Cf. Tillard, *The Eucharist*, pp. 105 ff.

that the Holy Spirit may fill, may "Spiritize" the faithful as he has already "Spiritized" Christ and the gifts. In fact, it would be hard to find a better expression of the Spirit's role in the Eucharist than a fully developed epiclesis proper.

To raise the objection that such a stress on the role of the Holy Spirit downgrades Christ's role in the Eucharist is to miss the interplay of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the saving economy. To ask "Is it Christ or is it the Holy Spirit who consecrates?" is to ask a false question. The very fact, however, that this question has been asked in conjunction with the epiclesis indicates the need to place the epiclesis in the context of a "pneumatological Christology."⁵⁹ It also indicates the truth of Evdokimov's contention that what separates East and West in this area is not the fact of the epiclesis but rather the theology of the Holy Spirit to which the epiclesis gives voice.⁶⁰

IS AN EPICLESIS PROPER NECESSARY?

We have pointed to the epiclesis as an expression of the fact that God realizes the Eucharist for the assembly, through the whole assembly, and through the praying assembly. We have also treated the epiclesis as an expression of the Holy Spirit's role in the realization of the Eucharist. In view of all this, the question of the need for an epiclesis proper is bound to arise.

As is so often the case, much depends on how one poses the question. One may ask: "Is an epiclesis proper absolutely necessary for the realization of the Eucharist?" The intervention of the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary; of this there can be no question. Nor can there be any question that the assembly, while playing a necessary role in the realization of this sacramental encounter, must always approach the Eucharist as a praying assembly, acknowledging its own helplessness, appealing for the realization of God's promises here and now, and believing firmly that God will answer its appeal. In other words, the "epiclesis attitude" is also absolutely necessary in the realization of the Eucharist, even when it is not made explicit.⁶¹ But the question is whether it is absolutely necessary to make explicit the intervention of the Holy Spirit and the total dependence of the assembly.

On the basis of our study we would be reluctant to answer "yes" to such a question. This reluctance stems from two sources. The first is the historical data. If one understands "epiclesis proper" as a Spirit epiclesis, one would have to admit that the evidence in favor of such an epiclesis being primitive and universal is far from certain. If one

⁵⁹ Nissiotis, "Pneumatological Christology," esp. pp. 235-36, 239, 240-44.

⁶⁰ Evdokimov, *L'Orthodoxie*, p. 250.

⁶¹ Cf. Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament*, p. 87.

understands "epiclesis proper" as *some* form of appeal for the sanctification of the gifts and/or the faithful, then the evidence for its primitive and universal character is much more favorable. One must admit, however, that this is not the ordinary understanding of the term "epiclesis proper." Moreover, although this admittedly does not prove the point, one must take into consideration the fact that even an epiclesis so understood was not considered absolutely necessary by some of the major Christian traditions. The Roman Catholic tradition is a case in point. The second source of this reluctance is simpler but perhaps more important. It is the fear of making a god out of any formula, be it the institution narrative *or* the epiclesis.

To pose the question in terms of absolute necessity, however, is to chance tending in the direction of a sacramental minimalism. And one should build one's theology, and practice, not on the minimum required but upon the ideal or, at least, the normal. Perhaps, then, one should pose the question of the epiclesis' necessity in another form: "Is an epiclesis proper a *practical* necessity in the realization of the Eucharist?" In the face of such a formulation, the reluctance to give an affirmative answer vanishes. For it belongs to the nature of man to give some expression to his deepest beliefs and feelings or to risk having them stagnate. It is not enough simply to believe or intend something; it is necessary to express this belief or intention in some word or gesture. The wife, for instance, who demands "If you really love me, why don't you ever show it and say it?" may be doing more than simply nagging. She may, quite legitimately, be questioning whether a deep feeling or conviction which never finds expression is still there at all. A recent statement of the United States Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy seems apropos here:

People in love make signs of love and celebrate their love for the dual purpose of expressing and deepening that love. We too must express in signs our faith in Christ and each other, our love for Christ and for each other, or they will die. . .

From this it is clear that the manner in which the Church celebrates the liturgy has an effect on the faith of men. Good celebrations foster and nourish faith. Poor celebrations weaken and destroy faith.⁶²

Similarly, it is a practical necessity for the Eucharistic assembly to express its awareness, for instance, of the necessary intervention of the Holy Spirit and of its own need for a praying or epiclesis attitude. If it

⁶² Statement on "The Place of Music in Eucharistic Celebrations" by the United States Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, in the Committee's *Newsletter* 4 (Jan.-Feb. 1968) pp. 1-2. Cf. Ledogar, *art. cit.*, pp. 13-14, 19-22, and Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament*, pp. 92-95.

fails to do so, the assembly runs the risk of having this awareness stagnate or fall into the oblivion of forgetfulness. It pertains, moreover, to symbolic activity to express and deepen man's, and in this case the assembly's, beliefs and feelings. Within this symbolic activity it is often the spoken word which best gives voice to these beliefs.⁶³

In view of all this, we would maintain that an epiclesis proper is a practical necessity in the realization of the Eucharist. The epiclesis is not the only means of expressing the role of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist, the total dependence of the praying assembly, the unity between "consecration" and Communion, etc. It is, however, a pre-eminent means of expressing these important aspects of the Eucharistic celebration.⁶⁴

Before closing, it would be well to touch on a question allied to the need for an epiclesis proper in the Eucharistic prayer: the position one should give to such an epiclesis in relation to the institution narrative. It goes without saying that when one views the entire Eucharistic prayer as consecratory, the positioning of the epiclesis automatically becomes less problematic. In any case, the position of an epiclesis proper is not essential to the epiclesis question as a whole.

It is possible to opt for a position before the institution narrative, at least for the portion of the epiclesis which appeals for the transformation of the gifts into Christ's body and blood. This is the course which the Roman Catholic tradition has chosen for the new Eucharistic prayers introduced in 1968.⁶⁵ In favor of this position one can point out that it parallels to some extent the events of saving history. The invocation of the Holy Spirit on the bread and wine recalls his descent upon Mary in the Incarnation. The Holy Spirit first brought about Christ's presence in the world and made Christ into a saving instrument capable of sanctifying those who come into contact with him. Only then did He sanctify the faithful through contact with Christ.⁶⁶ In addition, one can argue that a "consecratory" epiclesis before the institution narrative corresponds to the Western theology on the consecratory value of the institution narrative,⁶⁷ and that there is some ancient precedent for such an arrangement.⁶⁸

⁶³ Schillebeeckx, *ibid.*, pp. 117-22.

⁶⁴ Cf. J. von Allmen, *Worship: Its Theology and Practice* (London, 1965) pp. 242-44, 288, and Vischer *art. cit.*, pp. 302 ff.

⁶⁵ Cf. *Notitiae* 40 (1968) 156 ff.

⁶⁶ Cf. Thurian, *Le pain unique*, pp. 50-53.

⁶⁷ Cf., e.g., Brunner, "Zur Lehre" pp. 356-57; Thurian, *Le pain unique*, pp. 48-49, and his "La théologie des nouvelles prières eucharistiques," *Maison-Dieu* 94 (1968) 82-83, 91.

⁶⁸ Cf. Thurian, *Le pain unique*, pp. 50-51, and Cipriano Vagaggini, *The Canon of The Mass and Liturgical Reform* (Staten Island, N.Y., 1967) pp. 67-69, 92, 140.

Once again, there is no question of an either-or. One cannot exclude the possibility of placing the epiclesis before the institution narrative. Nevertheless, we would tend to side with those preferring a position after the institution narrative. A number of arguments seem to favor such an arrangement. It would seem to reflect the stronger of the ancient traditions. It would also reflect the Trinitarian and saving economy: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Pentecost and the gift of the Holy Spirit as the seal of the paschal mystery.⁶⁹ Moreover, the arrangement which places the epiclesis or a part of it before the institution narrative interrupts the narration of God's wonder deeds, among which belongs the Last Supper.⁷⁰

Two arguments appear particularly forceful in favor of an arrangement which places the entire epiclesis after the institution narrative. First, such an arrangement would seem to stress better the basic helplessness of the assembly in the realization of the Eucharist and thus help avoid any "magical" understanding of the words of institution. Secondly, such an arrangement would avoid a "split epiclesis," i.e., one in which the appeal for the transformation of the gifts is separated from the appeal for the sanctification and unification of those partaking in those gifts. Since one of the advantages of an epiclesis proper in the traditional sense lies in its ability to underscore the unity of "consecration" and Communion, such a "split epiclesis" hardly seems desirable.⁷¹ For all these reasons it seems that the placing of the entire epiclesis after the institution, while not the only solution, is the preferable one.

By now it should be evident that with the epiclesis question, as with so many other questions in theology, it is not a question of either-or. The epiclesis proper can be an expression of the faith *and* the divine intervention necessary for the realization of the sacrament. It can be an expression of the fact that the Eucharist is realized for the communicating assembly *and* also through the assembly. It can express the fact that it is only by praying and believing, i.e., as absolutely dependent on God's sovereign intervention that the *whole* assembly, not just the ordained minister, shares in the realization of the Eucharist. Finally, the epiclesis proper can underscore the unique role of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist.

At the very beginning of this article we cited what at first glance appeared to be a flat contradiction between the viewpoint of Tillard and that of Bishop, Vischer, and Evdokimov on the epiclesis question. We are inclined to consider the contradiction as only apparent. Both viewpoints are correct.

⁶⁹ Cf. Salaville, "Épiclese eucharistique," pp. 293-95, and Adams, *art. cit.*, pp. 42 ff.

⁷⁰ Cf. Kavanagh, "Thoughts on the New Eucharistic Prayers," p. 9.

⁷¹ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 6, 9-12; also Bobrinskoy, "Le Saint-Esprit," p. 189.

Tillard is right in regarding the epiclesis question, seen in itself, as very secondary. He is also correct in saying that the epiclesis question can stifle theological reflection and make us myopic in regard to the Eucharist. This is especially so when one lets the "moment of consecration" problem overshadow one's treatment of the epiclesis. Unfortunately, this is just what has happened in a great deal of the writing on the epiclesis in the twentieth century. To allow one's gaze to become fixed almost exclusively on one aspect of the epiclesis is to be indeed myopic and fail to do justice to the epiclesis' many-faceted nature.

On the other hand, it is precisely because of this many-faceted nature of the epiclesis that Bishop, Vischer, and Evdokimov are correct in considering the epiclesis question extremely important. Seen in itself, it is secondary. When one realizes, however, that the various facets of the epiclesis make it a sort of microcosm of important theological issues, then it takes on added dimensions. Any thorough treatment of the epiclesis forces us to confront theological issues such as the role of faith, of the praying assembly, of the ordained and universal priesthood, and of the Holy Spirit in the realization of the Eucharist, as well as the question of the Eucharistic "real presence." The epiclesis question thus involves us simultaneously in some of the basic issues of Christology, pneumatology, ecclesiology, and sacramental theology; therein lies its importance as well as its ecumenical significance.

Finally, our study of the Eucharistic epiclesis has led to the conclusion that often there are no simply either-or answers to the questions the epiclesis raises. The epiclesis thus mirrors the tension in theology between the role of God and that of the ordained priesthood, between the activity of Christ and that of the Holy Spirit, etc. Some would seek to remove that tension by stressing one aspect at the expense, or even to the exclusion, of the other. It seems to us that this tension will always be present; we have to learn to live with it.

This tension would be eased greatly, however, if the various traditions shared their characteristic and complementary insights, instead of using those insights to deepen painful divisions. Perhaps, this study has been able to reflect such a sharing. Perhaps, too, such a sharing will lead us closer to that day when we shall no longer squabble over the when and how of the Eucharist but simply celebrate together the wonder of what the Father has done for us through Jesus Christ and in his Holy Spirit.