

EUCCHARISTIC EPIKLEISIS: NEW EVIDENCE AND A NEW THEORY

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THE FAMOUS PRAYER in the *Acts of Thomas* (Syriac and Greek, from before 250) which turned up doing duty as a Eucharistic epiklesis in the Irish palimpsest Sacramentary of ca. 650 has so far escaped the attention of theologians, no doubt on account of its many problems.

Behold, we venture to come to thy Eucharist and to invoke thy name. Come, then, and commune with us. Come, perfect compassion. Come, fellowship of the (Son of) Man. Come, thou who knowest the chosen mysteries. Come, thou who wast companion of all the combats of the noble athlete. Come, dear charity of the elect. Come, thou silence that dost reveal the mysteries of all greatness. Come, thou who dost reveal what is hidden and make manifest what is obscured, thou holy dove that hast begotten two nestlings. Come, thou who though hidden art made manifest in thy works, thou who dost provide joy and bread for all who adhere to thee. Come and commune with us in thy Eucharist which we carry out in thy name and with thy love, since we are gathered together at thy word. To thee be all glory and honor for ever.¹

In this prayer the Irish have omitted a distinct invocation of the Holy Spirit which is found (in third place) among the invocations of the Syriac *Acts of Thomas*.² The Irish prayer is directed to the Son, with one mention of the Father. Irenaeus compared the Son and the Spirit to the two hands of the Father³ (as did Justin before him), and the more daring comparison of the dove with two nestlings is not to be thought outlandish in the country of Ephraem. That the Godhead of Christ came upon him at the baptism was said by Gnostics, as Clement and Irenaeus bear witness.⁴ If both Son and Spirit can be called doves, then the Father must be the parent dove with the two nestlings. Irenaeus could insist that "what is begotten of God is God,"⁵ even while using language about the two hands of God. Ignatius of Antioch spoke of the Logos coming forth

¹ A. Dold and L. Eizenhofer, O.S.B., eds. *Das irische Palimpsestsakramentar im CLM 14429 der Staatsbibliothek München* (Texte und Arbeiten 53-54; Beuron, 1964). The epiklesis is printed on p. 44 as the *post-pridie* prayer for the feast of the Circumcision.

² The Syriac *Acts of Thomas* in an English version were edited by A. F. J. Klijn as Supplement 5 to *Novum Testamentum*, Leiden, 1962. The epiklesis here cited is found p. 91, par. 50.

³ On the two hands of God, see Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* (in Harvey's counting of the chapters) 4, 24, 1; 5, 1, 3; 5, 6, 1; 5, 28, 3; *Epideixis* 11.

⁴ Clement, *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 16 (GCS 17, 112), and Irenaeus, *AH* 3, 16, 1.

⁵ Irenaeus, *Epideixis* 47.

from the silence of God,⁶ and this hieratic language, which the Irish received from Visigothic Spain as a treasure of great antiquity, may well have been largely beyond their comprehension. That the divine Christ was the companion of the martyrs in their combat is an idea that underlies the various *Loricæ* of Celtic origin. The idea of communing with Christ in his Eucharist (which is twice repeated) would be comprehensible, since it was what was said by the single word *communicantes*, which the Irish knew from the Canon of Pope Gelasius that was already circulating among them.⁷

The Irish version of this epiklesis agrees in some nine places with the Greek text of the same that is found in the *Acts of Thomas*, while in two places it follows the Syriac.⁸ Those who have studied the relationship of the Greek and Syriac versions of the *Acts* have come to the conclusion that the Syriac is primary, but that the Greek version was made from an earlier and better Syriac text than the one that has come down to us.⁹ From these facts one might infer that the Irish Latin version has been made from this earlier Syriac text; for, in spite of its many agreements with the Greek, the Irish version has omitted an invocation to "the hidden Mother" which is found in the Greek but not in the Syriac. This distinctively Gnostic invocation would obviously have to be dropped by anyone who was adapting the prayer for orthodox Christian use, whether in Syria or in Visigothic Spain. It must be added that in the Latin version of the whole *Acts of Thomas* this epiklesis is omitted *in toto*.¹⁰ The excerpt made for liturgical purposes must have originated before a full translation of the *Acts* into Latin had been made. One is therefore dealing with a very early stage of Latin liturgy.

A fragment of Origen informs us that the bread of the Eucharist had invoked over it the name of God and of Christ and of the Holy Spirit.¹¹ Origen was writing these words at the time when the *Acts of Thomas* were beginning to circulate. Their Gnostic author, if his work was to be widely accepted, would have to shape his epiklesis to resemble in some measure what was usual in orthodox liturgies. When he had to frame an epiklesis for a baptism liturgy,¹² he could string together some rather

⁶ Ignatius, *Magnesiensians* 8.

⁷ On the meaning of the word *communicantes*, I have written in the *Downside Review* 86 (1968) 40-44. For the circulation of the Gelasian Canon in Ireland, see *Vigiliae christianae* 12 (1958) 45-48.

⁸ The Greek text of the *Acts of Thomas* was edited by M. Bonnet in *Acta apostolorum apocrypha* 2/2 (Leipzig, 1903). The main epiklesis is on p. 186, par. 50.

⁹ F. C. Burkitt, "The Original Language of the *Acts of Judas Thomas*," *JTS* 1 (1899-1900) 280-90.

¹⁰ K. Zelzer, ed., *Die alten lateinischen Thomasakten* (TU 122; Berlin, 1977) par. 50.

¹¹ These fragments of Origen are in *JTS* 9 (1908) 502.

¹² The baptismal liturgy is found in par. 27 in both versions, but in the Latin it is much abbreviated.

strange phrases, but he took care to end with the words: "Come . . . and seal them in the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit." Irenaeus reported that Marcus the Gnostic used a protracted epiklesis for his magical performance at the Eucharist with his women priests, thus showing that he was himself familiar with a short epiklesis.¹³ More than a century later than Origen, Cyril of Jerusalem was still aware of the practice: "Before the invocation of the adorable Trinity, the bread and wine of the Eucharist are merely bread and wine; but after it, they are the body and blood of Christ."¹⁴

The catecheses of Athanasius have perished, save for a precious fragment which describes the liturgy that he knew: "Let us come on to the perfecting of the Mysteries. This bread and this cup, while yet the prayers and supplications have not been performed, are plain bread and wine. But when the great prayers and holy supplications have been sent up, the Logos comes down on the bread and the cup and it becomes His body."¹⁵ After this it is not surprising that the liturgy of Serapion of Thmuis should have a Logos-epiklesis, or that it should have, near its beginning, these words: "May the Lord Jesus speak within us, and the Holy Spirit, and hymn thee by our means." It is true that the ascription of this liturgy to Serapion has been challenged by Dom Botte, but his arguments were answered by anticipation in Bishop Wordsworth's edition of the work long ago.¹⁶ Serapion directed the priest to pray in his epiklesis: "God of truth, let thy holy Word come upon this bread, that the bread may become body of the Word, and upon this cup that the cup may become blood of the Truth. . . ." He used the language of *epidēmia*, which is found in the *Acts of Thomas* also, when Thomas prayed: "Lord, come, abide upon this oil, as thou didst abide upon the tree. . . . Let thy Gift come . . . and let it abide upon this oil. . . ." ¹⁷ Jerome, when he wanted to describe the office of a bishop, wrote: "They grant baptism; at the Eucharist they pray for the advent of the Lord; they make chrism and impose hands."¹⁸ Jerome's "advent" was Serapion's *epidēmia*. This

¹³ On Marcus see Irenaeus, *AH* 1, 7, 2.

¹⁴ Cyril, *Catecheses mystagogicae* 1, 7. Cyril's authorship is not really open to question. Since 1973 we have a sermon by John of Jerusalem, the other candidate for the authorship, and his style of preaching is altogether different from that of the *Catecheses*. The suggestion made some years ago that they really were the work of John thus falls to the ground. That one or other codex ascribed them to Cyril and another to John merely implies that the same set of discourses, written by Cyril, went on being used each year with an ever-changing audience.

¹⁵ The fragment is cited by Eutychius of Constantinople (512-82), who was obviously in a position to consult a surviving copy of the work. His citation is in PG 86, 2401.

¹⁶ Botte's arguments are in *OrChr* 48 (1964) 50-56, but in Bp. John Wordsworth's *Bishop Sarapion's Prayerbook* (2nd ed., London, 1910) the section on orthodoxy (pp. 14-19) answers these by anticipation.

¹⁷ *Acta Thomae*, par. 157 in all editions.

¹⁸ Jerome, *On Sophonias* 3 (PL 25, 1377).

idea of an invocation for an advent points back to the primitive Maranatha of the Corinthians.

The newly recovered commentary of Didymus of Alexandria on Genesis speaks of Abraham's epiklesis of Yahweh: "This invoking is not mere words but a reality, where the mind effects an encounter with God."¹⁹ Didymus also comments on the LXX reading of the action of Enos, who hoped (or took courage) to invoke the name of the Lord: "Real hope is this, to be assimilated to God as far as may be. To hope to call upon the name of the Lord God is the work of one who has submitted himself under power and under the divine *didaskalia*."²⁰ Didymus seems to be saying that epiklesis is only for the man who has been ordained "under power" and who follows the Church Order that comes from God. Coming from a layman, who was head of the catechetical school, this is a notable testimony. A distinction between naming and invoking such as Didymus made was observed also by Ambrose, who said: "The Trinity is named in baptism, and in the offerings is invoked." To use the Trinitarian formula in baptism is to name the Trinity over the candidate. The candidate himself at first professes faith in Christ, and in later baptisms an articulated Trinitarian creed is pronounced by him, but this was not an epiklesis. The only baptismal epiklesis was the blessing of the font at the Easter vigil. By reciting this, the bishop "granted baptism," as Jerome said, while the ministerial acts were left to the priests.

The distinction between naming and invoking is brought out very clearly in yet another Eucharistic prayer in the *Acts of Thomas*. After the baptism of Sifur, Thomas places bread and wine on a table and prays: "Bread that fillest hungry souls with thy blessing: thou art worthy to receive the Gift and to be for the remission of sins, that those who eat thee may not die. We name the name of the Father over thee; we name the name of the Son over thee; we name the name of the Spirit over thee, the exalted name that is hidden from all." And he said: "In thy name, Jesus, may the power of the blessing and the thanksgiving come and abide upon this bread, that all the souls which partake of it may be renewed and their sins may be forgiven them."²¹ Thus the Syriac text, but the Greek, which (as noted above) is a version of a still earlier Syriac text, has a naming of the Mother and of Jesus, and then prays for the coming of a power of blessing. This is the Gnostic original, which has been rectified in the traditional Syriac text to conform to what was thought orthodox in the third century. The Gift is another title for the Holy Spirit, and "the power of the blessing," which is invoked as being at the command of Jesus, is again a title of the Spirit. What this epiklesis gives us, then, is an invocation of Jesus to send the Spirit after the

¹⁹ Didymus, *On Genesis* 12, 8 (SC 233; Paris, 1977).

²⁰ Didymus, *On Genesis* 4, 26 (ibid.).

²¹ *Acta Thomae*, par. 133.

Trinitarian names have been named over the bread. It was a very early Christology which treated the name of Jesus as the equivalent of the name of Yahweh, and this epiklesis seems to have retained some idea of this name-Christology after its Gnostic elements have been removed.²²

Another Gnostic source, the *Gospel of Philip*, which is strong in sacramental ideas, repeats the idea that in the Eucharist Christ descends upon the bread: "The Eucharist is Jesus, for he is called in Syriac Pharisatha, which is, he who is spread out. For Jesus came, crucifying the world."²³ The editors of this text report that Pharisatha was indeed used to denote the breaking of bread, as well as meaning "he who is spread out." That Jesus by his crucifixion set his mark upon the whole world was said by many early Fathers, from Justin through Irenaeus and Gregory of Nyssa;²⁴ the Greek letter chi pointed north, south, east, and west, as did the arms of the Cross. Thus the spreading-out of Jesus on the Cross was somehow carried over into the Eucharist, where the bread is broken and distributed to many, for the remission of their sins.

The first appropriation of the epiklesis to the Holy Spirit which can be assigned a sure date is the letter of Peter II of Alexandria written to describe the dreadful happenings that followed the death of Athanasius there in 373.²⁵ Palladius, the *praefectus Aegypti*, who was a pagan, allowed an Arian mob to take possession of the church of the Theonas. A youth, made up as a woman with rouge and eyeshade, danced on the raised sanctuary, "where we are wont to call down the advent of the Holy Spirit." If Christ speaks within the priest, as Serapion had already said, then it is natural for an epiklesis of the Logos to be transferred to one that invoked the Spirit directly. Cyril of Jerusalem in his *Catecheses* had indeed taught that "There are not different gifts from the Father, different from the Son, and different gifts of the Holy Spirit; one is our salvation, one the power, one our faith."²⁶ Yet the idea of appropriating acts or missions to different Persons of the Trinity was considered legitimate

²² There is a good account of Name-Christology in J. Daniélou, *History of Early Christian Doctrine* 1 (London, 1964) 147-63. But since then there has been detailed study of the use of abbreviations for *nomina sacra* in New Testament papyri, a practice taken over by the Jewish-Christian Church from Hebrew practice with the name of Yahweh. The uniformity observable in more than a hundred papyri of abbreviations for Jesus, Christ, Spirit, Lord, suggests strict control of the copyists from early times.

²³ The *Gospel of Philip* was first published in an English version by C. J. de Catanzaro in April 1962 (*JTS* 13, 35-71). Later that year R. McL. Wilson published his own version with a commentary (London, 1962), and in 1964 J. E. Ménard edited a French version. The passage cited is par. 53.

²⁴ The marking of the world by the cross is proposed by Justin (*Apol.* 60, 1), by Irenaeus (*AH* 5, 18, 2 and *Epideixis* 34), and by Gregory of Nyssa, *Orat. catech.* 32.

²⁵ Peter's letter is cited by Theodoret (PG 82, 1169).

²⁶ Cyril, *Catecheses* 16, 24 (PG 33, 953).

where Scripture or tradition supported it. That Christ should send the Spirit upon the bread is a fair inference from such prayers as the epiklesis performed by Thomas when he said: "In thy name, Jesus, may the power of the blessing . . . come and abide upon this bread. . . ." ²⁷

Chrysostom, in his recently recovered catecheses, compared Christ at the Eucharist to Moses striking the rock: "Our new Moses has the Spirit consubstantial with himself, and just as the first Moses struck the rock and drew forth streams of water, so Christ touches the spiritual table and causes to spring forth streams of the Spirit. That is why the altar is in the midst, like a spring, so that the flock may gather round it from all sides to enjoy the saving waters."²⁸ In a later sermon he varies this idea, using now the image of the rivers of Paradise: "From the table there comes forth a spring which sends out spiritual streams. . . . Many are the rivulets of this spring which the Paraclete sends out. And the Son of God becomes their provider, not now with a spade opening up channels, but opening up the attitude of our hearts."²⁹ Adam may have irrigated Paradise before the Fall, but the Second Adam is here depicted as controlling the flow of the Spirit on the Eucharist to make it fruitful for the partakers. Alongside this work of the Spirit upon the partakers of the Eucharist was the work of transforming the elements. Chrysostom says that the Spirit does this work, but he also says that it is the words of Christ (i.e., the words of consecration) which perform it.³⁰ The two statements are not contradictory, but, if they are to be reconciled, the only logical way would be to say that Christ by his words sends the Spirit to effect the transformation.

Thus far the topic of epiklesis has been discussed without any reference to the so-called *Traditio apostolica* ascribed to Hippolytus. It seemed, as a matter of method, more logical to present the early evidence that was fairly certain in its dating before trying to assess the bit of liturgy in the *Traditio* which has been used by some as the primary evidence about the earliest form of the epiklesis. What this document presents, in its various versions, Latin and Ethiopic in chief, is a brief invocation after the words of institution which asks: "We beseech thee to send thy Holy Spirit upon this oblation of the Church, that in joining together thou mayst grant to them—to all of them—to those who take it, that it may be to them for holiness and for filling with thy Holy Spirit and for

²⁷ This epiklesis is from par. 133 of *Acta Thomae*, cited n. 21 above.

²⁸ Chrysostom, *Catecheses*, ed. A. Wenger in SC 50 (Paris, 1957). The passage about the new Moses (3, 26) in the reading of the Athos codex says that he has the Spirit consubstantial with himself. This phrase was eliminated by the scribes of later mss., who thought that Chrysostom was talking about Bishop Flavian of Antioch as the new Moses.

²⁹ Chrysostom, *Homily 46 on Jn* (PG 59, 261).

³⁰ The emphasis on the words of Christ is in *Serm. 1 de proditione Iudae* (PG 49, 380), while the emphasis on the Spirit is found in *Homily 45 on Jn* (PG 59, 253).

strengthening of faith in truth, that they may glorify thee. . . .” Thus the Ethiopic version; the Latin (which was probably made for an Arian church in North Italy ca. 500) is quite in accord with this. The central part of the sentence, “in joining together thou mayst grant,” was written off by Gregory Dix as so much incoherence. “Joining what with what?” he asked.³¹ But the accord of the Latin version with the Ethiopic should have warned him that sense was not far away. The word *communico* is applied to God in the Irish liturgy quoted at the outset of this article: “Veni, comunica nobiscum.” The Greek verb *koinōneō* is used in the same way absolutely, not requiring an object that expresses what is communicated.³² The Roman Canon with its prayer that begins *Communicantes* has defied the attempts of translators to give it good sense, though there ought to have been no great mystery there. If the root meaning is “to do what someone else is doing,” and thus “to share,” then what priest and people, for whom the Roman Canon is spoken, assert is that they are doing the Lord’s thing or sharing with him. Here, in the epiklesis of the *Traditio*, he is being asked to share with us.

Professor Henry Chadwick, when he revised Dix’s edition of the *Traditio apostolica*, quoted with approval Hugh Connolly’s judgment: “I am unable to find [in the epiklesis of our prayer] a petition for any action of the Holy Spirit on the oblation itself. The only action of the Holy Spirit which it speaks of or implies, has for its object the minds and hearts of the faithful. . . .”³³ Thus, whatever was the source of the Greek original of these Latin and Ethiopic prayers, it betrayed as yet no anxiety to invoke the Spirit for a transformation of the elements. Dix himself was inclined to view the Latin and Ethiopic versions as having suffered interpolation at this point, because the *Testamentum Domini*, which was elsewhere in agreement with Latin and Ethiopic versions of the liturgy of the *Traditio*, has here no trace of the main part of the epiklesis, but substitutes a quite different prayer. After invoking the three Persons one by one, it says: “We have brought this drink and this food of thy holiness; cause that it may be to us not for condemnation, not for reproach, not for destruction, but for the medicine and support of our spirit.”³⁴ After many intercessions, it resumes with the ending of the *Traditio* prayer: “Grant that all those who partake and receive of thy holy things may be filled

³¹ Dix’s edition of the *Traditio apostolica* (London, 1937) was reprinted as it stood in 1968, but with a long new introduction by H. Chadwick. The remark cited is on p. 9 in both editions.

³² Jerome used *communicare* as the equivalent of *koinōneō* in his version of Sir 13:2, where the sense required is “associate” or “share.”

³³ The pages of Chadwick’s introduction to Dix are denoted by Roman numerals. The passage cited is on page L.

³⁴ The version is that of J. Cooper and A. J. Maclean, *The Testament of Our Lord* (Edinburgh, 1902).

with the Holy Spirit, for the confirmation of the faith in truth. . . ." Dix was not very consistent in his reasoning; for, if the Latin and Ethiopic of the *Traditio* had been following a Greek text which was like the *Testamentum Domini* at this point, why did they not preserve the petition "Cause that it may not be to us for condemnation . . ."? This petition is found in the Leonine Sacramentary and in the Stowe Missal.³⁵ There is evidence that the *Testamentum Domini* was known in a Latin version at the Abbey of St. Matthias at Trier by 719, and it must have circulated widely.³⁶ It could have been available at Verona in 500, when the Latin version of the *Traditio* was copied, and it could have been used to check the text of the epiklesis in that document, if it was thought to have suffered interpolation.

If, then, the idea of a descent of the Spirit alone at the Eucharist is evidenced not earlier than 375 (as shown above), it is hard to see that the *Traditio apostolica* could have included such a prayer. No one would want to place its composition after 375. The union of hearts at the liturgy and their union with Christ is fittingly demanded of God through the Spirit at a date in the third century, but not consecration. That would only come when there was a developed concept of the "legitimate Eucharist." Pinell has made a valuable study of this term³⁷ and takes the evidence for it back to the Mone Masses.³⁸ These date from 500 onwards and may be Spanish in origin. In the fifth of these Masses there is the explicit statement that "The Holy Spirit subsists by a mystical procession from Father and Son." In this same Mass the *post-pridie* prayer runs: "Being mindful of and obedient to the commands of thy only Son, we beg, almighty Father, that thou wouldst shower down the Spirit of holiness upon these created gifts placed upon thy altar, so that by the outpouring of a heavenly and unseen mystery this bread may be changed into flesh and this cup into blood; may there be grace for all, may there be healing for those who receive, through our Lord Jesus Christ." The third and fourth Masses have a similar prayer after the words of institution: "We ask that thou wouldst bless this sacrifice with thy blessing and bathe it with the dew of the Holy Spirit, that it may be to all who receive it a pure, true, and lawful Eucharist."³⁹ The codex which contains these

³⁵ For the Leonine, see L. Mohlberg, O.S.B., ed., *Sacramentarium Veronense* (Rome, 1956), in the prayers numbered 876 and 1131. For the Stowe Missal, see the edition for the Henry Bradshaw Society by Sir George Warner (London, 1915) 2, 19.

³⁶ This curious link with the West was noted by M. R. James in *Apocrypha anecdota* (TextsS 2/3; Cambridge, 1893) 151.

³⁷ J. Pinell, in *Mélanges liturgiques* (Festschrift for Dom Botte; Louvain, 1972) 445-60.

³⁸ The Mone Masses are most conveniently accessible in L. Mohlberg, *Missale Gallicanum vetus* (Rome, 1958), where they are regrouped in seven Mass texts. Each prayer is numbered, and it is the Preface or *contestatio* of Mass 5 that has the assertion of the *Filioque* (n. 317). The *post-pridie* is n. 321.

³⁹ Mone 297 and 312.

Masses was written at Reichenau ca. 750, but was copied from a Burgundian *libellus* of ca. 650. The fact that the first of the Masses is in hexameter verse points to an earlier date still. No Burgundian of 650 could write metrical hexameters.

In a former study on the theology of Eucharistic consecration I had occasion to deal with the liturgical evidence for a moment of consecration in the sixth and seventh centuries.⁴⁰ I linked with this a development, as it seems to me, in theological thinking about the creative words of Christ that were used by the priest at the consecration. I now find that a Maltese Dominican has been wrestling with some of the same liturgical texts drawn from Gallican and Irish sources.⁴¹ He wisely put out the *Missale Gothicum* in the forefront of his work, since it has a number of prayers labeled *post mysterium* or *post secreta* which put into words contemporary ideas about what happens in the Eucharist. He used also the Mone Masses and glanced at the Irish Sacramentary, but he failed to consult the Schabcodex at Milan,⁴² which is most probably a Breton Mass book. Frendo thinks that the role of the Holy Spirit is not very well defined in the Gallican epiklesis. One of the prayers from the Mone Masses he emends to make it ask that by the power of the Holy Spirit the body and blood of Christ become for the faithful grace and healing. Now it is true that the Mone Masses (a palimpsest) show a wilful disregard of Latin grammar on the part of their copyist, but they were taken from a work written in a good Latin style. It is much more likely that this prayer should be rendered: "We beg that thou wouldst pour down thy Spirit of holiness upon these created gifts that have been laid on thy altar, so that by the outpouring of a heavenly and invisible mystery this bread may be changed into flesh and this cup, changed into blood, may be thanksgiving for all and may be healing for those who partake."⁴³ The word *gratia* was sometimes used for Eucharist, in the sense of thanksgiving. The prayer was drafted at a time when there was already a distinction between the whole assembly and those who communicated. As for emending the text, it is easier to suppose that the scribe wrote down *mutatur* when he had *mutetur* in front of him than that he put *mutatur* for *mutatus*. Elsewhere he often changes the tense of a verb and is weak on his vowels generally.

⁴⁰ "The Theology of Eucharistic Consecration," *TS* 40 (1979) 334-43.

⁴¹ J. A. Frendo, O.P., *The post secreta of the Missale Gothicum and the Eucharistic Theology of the Gallican Anaphora* (Malta, 1977).

⁴² A. Dold, *Das Sakramentar im Schabcodex M 12 sup. der Bibliotheca Ambrosiana* (Beuron, 1952).

⁴³ This is the prayer already cited at n. 38 above: "Deprecamur ut his creaturis altario Tuo superpositis Spiritus sanctificationis infundas, ut per transfusione caelestis atque invisibilis sacramenti panis hic mutatur in carne et calex translatus in sanguine sit totius gratia, sit sumentibus medicina: per Dominum..." The wording is not quite grammatical. *Gratia* is used for the Eucharist by Optatus, *De schismate* 5, 7 (PL 11, 1059).

What Frendo has not taken into account is the remarkable statement in the Preface (there called *contestatio*) of the third Mone Mass, which emphasizes the moment of consecration. After deploring that in the liturgy we have not the harping of the saints to aid us nor the canticle of Moses, though we are still wading through the waters of the present age, the priest continues: "There is no voice of angels, unless indeed they can praise us and be present to us when we hallow the body and blood of thy beloved Son."⁴⁴ This idea is illustrated by the pseudo-Germanus in his *Expositio antiquae liturgiae Gallicanae*, where the Easter vigil is being explained: "An angel of God comes down to the mystery upon the altar as upon the sepulchre, and he blesses the host itself, after the pattern of that angel who proclaimed the resurrection of Christ."⁴⁵ The *Missale Gothicum* and the *Missale Gallicanum vetus* both have a *post-secretum* prayer in the Mass for the *Traditio symboli* which runs: "Look down with open face, merciful and compassionate Lord, upon these gifts, thou who art ever inclined to giving, and by thy very gaze through thy majesty of nature sanctify our offering, for thou art for ever holy and givest holy things, through our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son."⁴⁶ The theology behind these words might be elaborated as follows: God the Father is thought to attend to the offering which by consecration has become the body and blood of Christ. His glance ratifies by "majesty of nature" what has been done at the earthly altar. The contrast between what we hallow and what the Father sanctifies is best explained in that way.

In the Gelasian Canon (of which the primitive form is found in the Stowe Missal) the prayer for ratification is the *Iube perferri*. The text of this prayer in Stowe differs in two important details from the text familiar in the Roman Canon. The word *hoc* was added later between *Iube* and *perferri*, when the scribes could not construe the impersonal verb *perferri*: "Bid that it be enacted. . . ." The words about the heavenly altar were originally devoid of all idea of motion, being in the ablative. It was not the original intention of the prayer to ask for the removal of the offering before there had been the opportunity to communicate. In the Middle Ages Pope Innocent III put the question why the offering should be taken away before the communicants have received,⁴⁷ and since then no liturgist has been able to give him a satisfactory answer. What in fact Gelasius

⁴⁴ Mone 293: "Nulla vox angelorum, nisi laudare nos possunt, qui adesse nobis possent, cum Filii Tui dilectissimi corpus sacramentum et sanguinem."

⁴⁵ *Expositio antiquae liturgiae Gallicanae*, ed. E. C. Ratcliff (London, 1971) 2, 13: "Angelus enim Dei ad secreta super altare tanquam super monumentum descendit et ipsam hostiam benedicit; instar illius angeli qui Christi resurrectionem evangelizavit."

⁴⁶ *Missale Gothicum* 202 and *Missale Gallicanum vetus* 18: "Aspice sincero vultu, pie miserator, haec munera, qui semper es propensus ad dona ut ipsa contemplatione oblata sanctifices naturali maiestate qui perpetue sanctus es et sancta largiris; per Dominum. . . ."

⁴⁷ Innocent III, *De officio missae* 5 (PL 217, 891).

was asking for was the ratification at the heavenly altar of what was being done at the earthly altar. He was praised for composing prayers *cauto sermone* and had his head full of Roman law. Christ through his priest has sent the Spirit upon the created elements, just as Adam with his spade sent the streams of Paradise coursing through his garden. This act is ratified in heaven by the Father's majesty of nature, and all three Persons have been invoked in what must be regarded as a lawful Eucharist.

It is perhaps worth pointing out that in 1966 the present writer was able to give an outline explanation of the prayer *Iube perferri* and its changes in this journal. At the request of the president of the English bishops' liturgy commission, copies of the article were provided for those working at the time in Rome on the revision of the Roman Missal. They had intended to produce a critical text of the Roman Canon, but abandoned the idea and opted instead for the introduction of three new Canons as alternatives. Perhaps they feared that it would be too difficult to introduce the verbal changes which would be required. As I showed at the time, it is not only Stowe that has the correct reading of the prayer, but also the *Missale Francorum* and the Bobbio Missal, while the Liturgy of St. Peter in Greek and Slavonic (which has a version of the Roman Canon) agrees with these sources.⁴⁸ The revisers of 1966-70 did not think of the problems they were leaving to the makers of vernacular versions by not bending to their task.

That the priest at Mass is acting in the person of Christ was affirmed more than once in the Introduction to the Roman Missal of 1970 (I:7, 16). One may find the idea expressed, though somewhat curiously, in the pseudo-Germanus' *Expositio antiquae liturgiae Gallicanae*. At the outset of his interpretation of the Mass, he says that the singing of an entry antiphon symbolizes the voice of the patriarchs: "When the patriarchs spoke out, the hand of the Lord was over the ark so that He might give to the uncondemned a portion of the land, and even so, while the clerics sing psalms, the priest goes forth from the sacristy in the appearance of Christ, as if coming from heaven to the ark of the Lord which is the Church, so that by his warnings and his prayers he may foster in the people what is good and blot out the evil."⁴⁹ The scene could be that of

⁴⁸ *The Liturgy of St. Peter* was edited by H. W. Codrington (London, 1936).

⁴⁹ The Roman Missal of 1970 in its *Institutio generalis* begins with the words "Celebratio missae ut actio Christi et populi Dei hierarchice ordinati..." In 1:7 this is made more precise: "In missa populus Dei in unum convocatur, sacerdote praeside et personam Christi gerente." In 1:10 the prayers of the Mass are described: "Hae preces a sacerdote, qui coetui personam gerens Christi praesest, ad Deum diriguntur nomine totius plebis." The pseudo-Germanus passage runs: "Sicut enim prophetantibus patriarchis venit manus Domini super arcam ut non damnatis daret reliquias terrae, ita psallentibus clericis procedit sacerdos in

Joshua before Jericho. The manna has ceased; the ark is going across Jordan; Israel is now cleansed from sin, and the land will be theirs. One may see the scene depicted in the mosaics of S. Maria Maggiore at Rome which have stood on the walls of that church since 400 or before; Joshua is there with the Levites who carry the ark. A little further on, there is a panel which shows a heavenly figure watching over the fortunes of the Israelites. Joshua was called Jesus in Greek, as Origen is fond of pointing out, and the symbolism that the pseudo-*Germanus* records can be seen on the ivory missal-cover from a Carolingian missal now preserved at Cambridge.⁵⁰

The Irish palimpsest Sacramentary has a *post-Sanctus* for the feast of Epiphany which has a long litany of praise of Christ, ending with: "He is the salvation of the living; he is the life of the dying; he as true priest of the Lord set up a new law of sacrificing. He offered himself to thee as a pleasing victim and ordered this victim to be offered by us, Jesus Christ, who the day before he suffered. . . ." ⁵¹ The *Missale Gothicum* has a similar form of words in a Preface among its Sunday Masses. The Mozarabic Missal has it also. From these one may see how the role of Christ as priest was understood to be in some way duplicated by the Massing priest at the earthly altar. The Arians of the West made great play with the fact that offering was made to the Father alone, and argued thence that the Son was therefore subordinate. Augustine had given the answer to this cavil in characteristic style: "Christ prays for us as our priest; he prays in us as our head; he is prayed to by us as our God."⁵² Christ praying in his earthly priest as head of the Church was what happened at the consecration, for Augustine continued in the same passage: "Recognize, then, our words in him and his words in us." One can see that there was plenty of theologizing about the role of the priest and the Trinitarian aspect of the Mass from 400 onwards. Hincmar of Rheims cited this text of Augustine⁵³ and also appealed to a sermon on

specie Christi de sacrario tanquam de caelo in arca Domini quae est ecclesia, ut tam admonendo quam exorando nutriat in plebe bona opera et extinguat mala." Cf Josh 5:13—6:16.

⁵⁰ The ivory is in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge, alongside a plaster cast of its counterpart which is at Frankfurt. In the Cambridge ivory the bishop stands with arms out; in one hand he holds open the missal at the Introit for the first Sunday of Advent. He is surrounded by seven open-mouthed clerics, while behind him follow five priests carrying scrolls.

⁵¹ *Das irische Palimpsestsakramentar*, par. 49; *Missale Gothicum* 514; Mozarabic Missal (PL 85, 250).

⁵² Augustine, *Enarratio in ps. 85* (PL 36, 1081): "Orat pro nobis ut sacerdos noster, orat in nobis ut caput nostrum, oratur a nobis ut Deus noster. Agnoscamus ergo et in Illo voces nostras et voces Eius in nobis."

⁵³ Hincmar, *De una et non trina deitate* (PL 125, 607–10).

the unity of Father, Son, and Spirit that was probably by Fulgentius of Ruspe, where Arian arguments from liturgical texts were countered. Mercati's Arian fragments have shown the way in which liturgical prayers were used by the Arians in an attempt to confound the orthodox.⁵⁴

The fact that Christ speaks in his priest when the words of consecration are pronounced, and that only then is the priest acting in the person of Christ, puts in a different light the supreme importance of that moment in the Mass. It has too often been decried in recent times as an effect of mere Scholasticism and as something that may easily be discarded. When it is realized that such ideas were familiar in the Burgundy that Columbanus and his disciples were reconverting before 600, it cannot be written off as Scholasticism. The tradition goes back to Chrysostom and further still.⁵⁵ The dialogue *De recta fide* which dates from around 300 has the vital sentence: "Christ hallows the material of his body by the bestowal of the Spirit."⁵⁶ Now there is no way in which one may conceive of this act of Christ at Mass save by the words of consecration. Chrysostom saw the words of Christ echoing down the ages every time a Mass was said. What Scholasticism developed out of that idea was the doctrine of a temporal mission of the Spirit in virtue of the words of Christ. It would be idle to pretend that the earthly priest of himself can command the Spirit of God, but that Christ can and does send the Spirit is a doctrine long forgotten but now revived in Vatican II, though in a different context.

The decree *Ad gentes* of Vatican II deduced that the Church was a missionary Church from the fact that it originated from a mission of the Son and a mission of the Holy Spirit. The mission of the Spirit was later described in the same document as a mission that "throughout time made the whole Church into one in communion and ministry."⁵⁷ Here a phrase had been picked up from *Lumen gentium*. The subsequent reasoning of theologians that the Church is where there is the Eucharist could be said to be a deduction from this fact of the divine missions, once it is

⁵⁴ G. Mercati, *Antiche reliquie liturgiche* (Rome, 1902), deals with a fragmentary Arian work that argued inconsistency on the part of the orthodox, who insist on the equality of the Son with the Father while in their liturgical prayers they make the Son subordinate. The work dates from ca. 390-430.

⁵⁵ The tradition is met in the West during Carolingian times. The *Vera confessio* attributed to Alcuin (PL 101, 1087), which is certainly prior to 900, says this of Christ: "Ipse in suis sacerdotibus cotidie loquitur. Illius sermo est qui coelestia sacramenta sanctificat. . . Ipse ea Spiritus Paracliti virtute et coelesti benedictione sanctum corpus et sanguinem suum esse perficit." Chrysostom in his first sermon on the betrayal by Judas (PG 49, 380) says that the words of Jesus, "spoken once for all, carry out the sacrifice on each altar in the churches from that time until now and until his own parousia."

⁵⁶ Adamantius, *De recta fide* 2, 20 (GCS 4, 109): "Christus. . . materiam corporis Spiritus sancti largitione sanctificat."

⁵⁷ Cf. *Ad gentes* 2 and 4; *Lumen gentium* 4.

understood that they are invisible missions. A man cannot send the Holy Spirit, said St. Thomas, because he cannot produce the effect of grace.⁵⁸ But a man who acts in the person of Christ can. When he uses the words of Christ that are spirit and life, he is doing more than his human status warrants. Why, then, did Christ not give to the apostles a form of words that would express the fact of this mission of the Spirit? One may think that the variety of epikleses which the primitive Church produced (and which have been cited above) points to a tradition going back to the apostles that there had to be something in the nature of an epiklesis at the Eucharist, if only to make plain what the words of Christ were doing.

If there is in the Mass a sending of the Spirit through the words of Christ, that can be looked upon as a ratification by the Father of what Christ, through his priest, has said. Such an idea seems to underlie what St. Isidore meant by the *conformatio sacramenti*, "where the offering that has been made to God, having been sanctified by the Holy Spirit, is established as the body and blood of Christ."⁵⁹ This is the description that he gives of the purpose of the *post-pridie* prayer in the liturgy. These *post-pridie* prayers of the Mozarabic Missal have been examined very carefully.⁶⁰ There are some 240 of them, of dates that vary between 600 and 950, but of these less than ten ask for the Spirit to effect a change in the elements. Five of these latter take up Isidore's word *conformis* and thus specify the role of the Spirit as that of "establishing" the offering as the body of Christ.⁶¹ This notion may have come to Spain from the East and may represent the *anadeixis* which is called for by the epiklesis in the earliest form of the liturgy of St. Basil.⁶² There it is asked that "the Spirit may come upon the gifts, may sanctify them, and *show them forth*

⁵⁸ *Sum. theol.* 1, 43, 8, corp.

⁵⁹ Isidore, *De ecclesiasticis officiis* 1, 15 (PL 83, 753): "Conformatio sacramenti, ut oblatio quae Deo offertur, sanctificata per Spiritum sanctum Christi corpori ac sanguini conformetur." There is a wide variety of readings here, since *confirmatio* is frequently found, along with *confirmetur*. If this reading is true, then Isidore regarded the action of the Spirit as accessory, just as the deacon's act was *confirmatio* when he administered the chalice to those who had already received the body of Christ.

⁶⁰ W. S. Porter, "The Mozarabic post-pridie," *JTS* 44 (1943) 182-94.

⁶¹ Porter's examples 1, 4, 6, 8, and 9 all have phrases like *conformia faciat*. His second example is a prayer to Christ for the consecration of the elements. His third example is a prayer that the Spirit would bring forgiveness of sins through the Eucharist. His fifth example is a prayer that the Eucharist may be *legitima*; this is asked for in the name of all three Persons of the Trinity. The seventh is a prayer for ratification, and reads as if it were a rewrite of the *Supplices* in the Roman Canon. His tenth is a rewrite of Mone 321, which has been discussed above. Porter claimed that this last example was probably written by Julian of Toledo, who died in 690. The Mone Masses were circulating long before then.

⁶² J. Doresse and E. Lanne, *Un témoin archaïque de la liturgie copte de s. Basile* (Louvain, 1960) 20. The parchment mentions Benjamin as archbishop, and he was the Monophysite patriarch of Alexandria 622-62. Erik Petersen discussed "*Anadeixai* in der Basiliusliturgie" in *Festgabe für Adolf Deissman* (Berlin, 1927), 302-26.

as holy things of holy people." This "establishing" of the gifts is something sacral, as Peterson has shown, but it is not to be confounded with consecration. In the Godward line it is almost the equivalent of ratification, a presenting to the Father of what has been done on earth. In the earthward line it is the bringing to realization in the hearts of the worshipers that they are in the presence of Christ. It is not enough that Christ should be upon the altar, but it must be realized that he is there. Only when the dispute about the *Filioque* broke out in the time of Photius would there be developed in Byzantium the idea that the action of the Spirit alone was consecratory.

In the New Testament there are three descents of the Spirit upon Christ and his Church: at the Incarnation, where his human nature comes into being; at the baptism, where he is made manifest; at Pentecost, where, following upon his blessing of the apostles by his extended hands at the Ascension, the Church comes into being. It is not unnatural to see in the *anadeixis* that is asked for in some of these epikleses a counterpart to what happened at the baptism. John the Baptist was aware (Jn 1:31) that this was the purpose of that descent of the Spirit. Bernard Schultze, who has discussed this threefold descent of the Spirit, sees a parallel between the epiklesis of the *Apostolic Constitutions* and the descent at Jordan.⁶³ The *Traditio apostolica* is more inclined to look to the descent at Mount Sion on Pentecost for its parallel. The parallel with the Incarnation at Nazareth would come later in liturgical development.

The ideas which have guided the present writer in this article may be found expressed in a Sedro from the Maronite liturgy in the fifth or sixth century. "By thy Spirit, Jesus, the word of priests becomes a key to open the door and call thy Spirit, and He comes without hesitation. By thy Spirit thou dost incorporate thyself in simple bread, and it becomes body, and by thy descent the mixed chalice becomes blood. May He come, Lord, and sanctify for us this bread and wine."⁶⁴ The Maronites probably took over an Antiochene liturgy which had been in use at the Abbey of St. Maro, where they first rallied at the time of the Monothelite heresy. They were untouched (in 680-700) by the denial of the *Filioque*, which was to come later in Constantinople. They could see the action of the Mass as a sending of the Spirit through the power of Christ, when his words were used by the ministerial priest. The Father can be asked to ratify the sacrifice of His Son and to make thus a lawful Eucharist, but the Son can be asked, equally with the Father, to send the Spirit upon the gifts.

⁶³ B. Schultze, "Die dreifache Herabkunft des heiligen Geistes in den östlichen Hochgebeten," *Östkirchliche Studien* 26 (1977) 105-43.

⁶⁴ M. Breydy, "Maronite Liturgy on Priesthood," *OrChr* 48 (1964) 57-76. The codex came to Munich from the Lebanon ca. 1550, but its Syriac script can be dated to the period 450-600. It thus antedates practically all the documents of the Greek liturgy.