

A REPLY TO SARA BUTLER

Since, as St. Thomas observed, truth comes to light in the to and fro of disputation, "as iron sharpens iron" (Prov 27:17),<sup>1</sup> I welcome Sara Butler's critique as an opportunity to clarify not only what I said (and did not say) about the serious issues at hand, but more importantly, the issues themselves. Following her lead, I will respond to her critique first of my views on the relation between the Church's tradition and its theological meaning, then of my reading of St. Thomas. While I will strongly dispute her individual charges and claims, what will emerge overall is a fundamental difference in theological mentality.

*The Church's Tradition and Its Inner Meaning*

A first point has to do with the relation between the extrinsic and intrinsic arguments against the ordination of women. Citing the standard truth that theology relies on the analogy of faith and human reasoning to discover the reasonableness of what we receive through the gift of revelation (63–64), Butler accuses me of failing to "appreciate that [the extrinsic argument] forms the *basis* of the intrinsic argument" (ibid.), adding that "this fact of revelation may, in the end, be the source of a proper anthropological theory" (64).

The obvious flaw in this criticism is that it equates, without further ado, a tradition of the Church and divine revelation. For the authority in question is not that of God but of tradition and the magisterium. Butler may rightly speak of a "normative tradition, proposed with authority by the magisterium" (62), but the questions "how normative?" and "with what degree of doctrinal authority?" remain. *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* notwithstanding, it is still not unequivocally clear whether the ban against women priests is a purely historical and changeable tradition or a dogmatic and immutable tradition. The chief merit of leaving this question open is that it frees us from the rigid presumption that the arguments put forth by the magisterium are theologically coherent and thereby enables us to subject them to a historical and theoretical critique.

In a sharper version of the foregoing, Butler imputes to me the position that "the extrinsic argument cannot claim our assent unless it can be shown to be reasonable on some prior grounds, i.e., the meaning of the natural differentiation of the sexes" (64), to the point that it would be "naturally intelligible independent of the history of salvation" (ibid.). Sara Butler has seriously misconstrued my words and attributed to me a position tantamount to rationalism. I spoke neither of assent nor of the grounds for assent, but rather contrasted the in-

<sup>1</sup> "On the Perfection of the Spiritual Life," concl., cited by Josef Pieper, *The Silence of St. Thomas* (Chicago: Regnery-Logos, 1965) 4–5

herent, not antecedent, intelligibility of *doctrines*, especially those which, like the ban against women priests, correlate a constitutive element of the Church with a constitutive element of the natural order, with *actions* that proceed from God's inscrutable election (e.g. the call of Abraham) to argue that the former find their formal basis in the divine intellect and not in the elective divine will stressed by Pope John Paul II in *Ordinatio sacerdotalis*.

A third point concerns the relative importance of the argument from Christ's institution and the arguments from theological reason in the Church's tradition. Butler charges me with neglecting important evidence of the "dominical foundation of the tradition" (64) and with considering the appeal to Christ's institution as having "first appear[ed] in the late scholastic period" or even as a "new tradition" inaugurated by the Vatican" (65). My argument (admittedly somewhat imprecisely stated) was not that the appeal to Christ's institution is absolutely new, but that as it exists in the pre-modern tradition it lacks the dominant force attributed to it by *Inter insigniores* and *Ordinatio sacerdotalis*. This becomes clear when we examine the early texts to which Butler and *Inter insigniores*, generally without actually presenting them, refer.

Two of the texts are from the *Didascalía*. As in its treatment of the scholastics, *Inter insigniores* limits its references to these texts in keeping with its own ends. In regard to the *Didascalía*, the Declaration references a passage which argues from Christ's institution but foregoes reference to the preceding lines which intimate that what is really being inculcated is the "faulty intrinsic argument" from women's inferiority. This artificial separation disappears when the text is read as a consecutive whole:

#### That Women Ought Not to Baptize

Behold we declare unto you that great is the condemnation of those that thus do these deeds. We command you not to do this, for this thing is a transgression of the law. For the head of the woman is the man [cf. 1 Cor 11:3], who is appointed to the priesthood. We then ought not to transgress against the Creator, (and) leave the head and follow the member. For the woman is the member of the man, and came forth from him; and from her children are born. Because He said unto her, "He is thy lord" [cf. Gen 3:16], as we have already said, suffer not the women to admonish or teach, or execute the office of the priesthood, which is not commanded in the law. And he that doeth thus hath transgressed against God, and is as those that are without knowledge, even those that appoint women to be priestesses to graven images of women. Such women keep far away from the institution of Christ. Wherefore women ought never to baptize anyone. If it were lawful for women to baptize, our Lord Jesus Christ would have been baptized by his Mother, and would not have been baptized by John; and He would not have sent us (only) into the world to baptize, but would have sent women to baptize along with us. We too command you that they do no such thing. Even if they are very wise, and have faith, and

know the Scriptures, we do not permit them to baptize or preach the Gospel.<sup>2</sup>

Another of the cited texts prohibits women from teaching. Here again, to catch the full import of the text, which is principally concerned with the behavior of widows, we have to begin the citation a few lines earlier, where we read:

But on the matter of the destruction of idols and the fact that there is but one God, on torment and peace, on the kingdom of Christ's name and on his Lordship, no widow and no layperson is obliged to speak. For inasmuch as they speak without knowledge of the teaching they bring calumny upon the Word. . . . If the heathens who are converted hear the Word of God, unless it is proclaimed to them in an orderly fashion for the building of eternal life, especially if it is taught to them by a woman how our Lord was clothed in a body and about the passion of Christ, they laugh and jest instead of praising the word of teaching, and each makes himself guilty of the great Judgement.<sup>3</sup>

At this point, the passage referred to by *Inter insigniores* begins:

It is thus not necessary or even urgently demanded that women be teachers, especially in reference to the name of Christ and the Redemption by his passion. For you women and especially you widows are not installed to teach but to pray and to entreat the Lord God. For He, God, the Lord, Jesus Christ, our Teacher, sent forth us twelve to teach the people and the heathens. There were women disciples with us: Mary Magdalene . . . ; nevertheless, he did not send them to teach the people. For if it had been necessary that women teach, then our Teacher would have commanded them to instruct with us.

The U.S. Catholic Conference Commentary on *Inter insigniores* adds a reference to the *Pseudo-Apostolic Canons*, which presents the following apocryphal dialogue on the subject of women and the celebration of the Eucharist:

John: You have forgotten, brothers, when our Master asked for bread and the cup and blessed them, saying, 'This is my body and blood', that He did not enjoin them [the women] to stand with us.

Martha: It was because He saw Mary snickering (*subridetem*).

Mary: No, not because I laughed, but [because of what] He said to us earlier, when he taught us that what is weak shall be saved through what is stronger.

Cephas: Also recall that He ordered that women pray not standing upright, but sitting on the ground.<sup>4</sup>

Except for the case noted below, none of the other texts cited by *Inter insigniores* appeals to Christ's will. Origen, commenting on 1 Cor

<sup>2</sup> *The Ethiopic Didascalia: Translations of Christian Literature, Series IV. Oriental Texts*, tr. J. M. Harden (New York: Macmillan, 1920) 91.

<sup>3</sup> As cited in Haye van der Meer, *Women Priests in the Catholic Church? A Theological-Historical Investigation* (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1973) 51.

<sup>4</sup> *Didascaliae Apostolorum: Canonum Ecclesiasticorum Traditionis Apostolicae Versiones Latinae*, ed. E. Tidner (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1965) 111-13 (author's translation).

14:34, insists on literal obedience to its stricture, for "women cannot have permission to speak in the Church,"<sup>5</sup> while Tertullian is outraged by the "boldness and audacity" of women who "dare" to "preach, teach, argue, undertake exorcism, perhaps even baptize"<sup>6</sup>—in short, to exercise the public and official ecclesiastical functions reserved to men. Chrysostom rejects all women and most men on the grounds that the immense responsibility of the pastoral office requires those who surpass others in excellence of spirit as Saul overtopped the Hebrew nation in bodily stature, indeed, as rational man surpasses irrational creatures.<sup>7</sup> The texts cited by *Inter insigniores* from Irenaeus<sup>8</sup> and Firmilian of Caesarea<sup>9</sup> also fail to mention the will of Christ.

The one exception is the *Panarion* of Epiphanius, composed to refute the Collyridians, who so worshipped the Mother of God as to show her divine honor by "offering bread to her name." Though chiefly concerned to combat female deities, Epiphanius takes the occasion to inveigh against women priests, perhaps because in his mind the latter were an inevitable harbinger of the former. In any case, he compiles long lists of priests from both the Old and New Testaments to show that "never since the foundation of the world has a woman been a priest," adding that if God had wanted women to be priests or hold "the administration of any office" in the Church, then Mary would have had to a priest. "But He did not will it." Not even baptism was entrusted to her, for Christ was baptized by John.<sup>10</sup> Of this argument, i.e. from Christ's unwillingness to ordain Mary, Butler says that with it the argument from Christ's institution "begins to take the form that would be classical in the West" (65). I can only say I find it difficult to attribute classical status to an argument which first emerges in a few scattered and contentious texts of the third and fourth century, e.g. the *Panarion* and the *Didascalia*, and then resurfaces after a millenium in the attempts by a handful of later scholastics (e.g. Scotus and Durandus) to defend the Church's justice towards women in the matter of priestly ordination.<sup>11</sup>

It is the foregoing texts, only one of which is actually presented and none of which is examined in its historical purpose and *Denkform*, much less assessed as to its doctrinal authority, that provide the cited basis for Butler's contention that "admission to priestly and episcopal office is consistently identified with admission to the office of the Twelve" (*ibid.*). When the texts are actually examined, however, the

<sup>5</sup> "Fragmentum [no. 74] in 1 Cor.," *Journal of Theological Studies* 10 (1909) 41–42; van der Meer, *Women Priests* 60.

<sup>6</sup> *De praescriptione haereticorum* 41.5; van der Meer, *Women Priests* 52.

<sup>7</sup> *On the Priesthood* 2.2.

<sup>8</sup> *Adversus haereses* 1.13.

<sup>9</sup> As cited in Cyprian, *Epistle* 75; van der Meer, *Women Priests* 58.

<sup>10</sup> *Panarion* 79.2–4; van der Meer, *Women Priests* 47–49.

<sup>11</sup> John Hilary Martin, O.P., "The Injustice of Not Ordaining Women: A Problem for Medieval Theologians," *TS* 48 (1987) 303–16, at 312–14.

weak and sporadic nature of their appeal to Christ's institution, as well as their "traditional" view of women, becomes palpable.

In reference to Scripture, the passages most frequently cited, as Butler herself notes, are 1 Cor 14:34–35 and 1 Tim 2:12, two of the most notoriously subordinationist texts in the entire canon. I have found no citations in the earlier tradition of the texts cited in *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* of Christ's historical call of the Twelve. From a purely exegetical viewpoint, then, I do not consider it improper to view the link between the Scriptural texts cited by Pope John Paul II and the question of women's ordination as "tenuous at best."

Finally, unless a more convincing refutation is forthcoming, I stand by my argument from the "voluntaristic" spirit of post-1277 theology for the sudden emergence in that period of the appeal to Christ's institution. First, Butler's attempt to include Thomas and Bonaventure as upholders of the extrinsic argument because of their acceptance of church tradition on the ordination of women is clearly not to the point, since the external argument in question is the appeal to the authority not of the Church but of Christ himself. Second, a historical fact, the effects of which in other theological areas has been documented, seems a far more plausible explanation of the scholastic appeal to Christ's institution after, and not before, 1277 than does a theological question (that of the Church's justice towards women) the historical provenance of which is left unexplained.

### *The Teaching of St. Thomas*

My response to Sara Butler's critique of my reading of Thomas will begin with the general and non-problematic question of "natural resemblance" in Thomas's theology of the priesthood and conclude with the specific and textually debatable question of *in persona Christi*.

#### The Notion of Natural Resemblance

Sara Butler interprets Thomas's notion of "natural resemblance" along the lines of a "gender symbolism" (76–80) that assimilates it to the thought of Bonaventure (68–69), though her argument is, I must say, not easily grasped. As far as I can see, her point is that although Thomas, in treating women's ordination, does interpret the "natural gender symbolism" inherent in the sacramental sign in a hierarchical sense and does not explicitly link it to representation of Christ, it is possible to interpret this natural symbolism non-hierarchically in order to illuminate the reasonableness of refusing ordination to women (80). By this non-hierarchical interpretation she seems to have in mind a nuptiality rooted in a "complementarity oriented to self-gift" (68). A retrieval of Thomas along these lines would presumably enable us to link Thomas's thought to that of Bonaventure on the basis of their "common presupposition that the priest symbolizes Christ" (*ibid.*).

In all this, Butler ignores the fundamental relation between nature and grace that governs Thomas's conception of the sacraments. For Thomas, the natural sign which serves as the *matter* of any sacrament bears a natural likeness to the *effect* of that sacrament in sanctifying its recipient:

among sensible things, that one is used for the sacramental signification which is most commonly employed for the action by which the sacramental effect is signified: thus water is most commonly used by men for bodily cleansing, by which the spiritual cleansing is signified: and therefore water is employed as the matter of baptism.<sup>12</sup>

This "natural resemblance" between the sacrament's matter and its grace-effect is spelled out in detail in *ST* 3, q. 65, a. 1, where Thomas explains the sevenfold number of the sacraments in light of the analogy between the spiritual life and the natural life, according as the recipient is considered as an individual or in relation to the larger community. Thus:

As an individual, one is perfected in the bodily life either directly, by acquiring some vital perfection, or indirectly, by removing some impediment to life such as sickness or the like. Direct perfection is threefold: (1) by generation, whereby one begins to exist and live, the spiritual counterpart to which is baptism, which is a spiritual regeneration . . . (2) by growth, whereby one attains perfect size and strength, the spiritual counterpart of which is confirmation, in which the Holy Spirit is given as a strengthening; (3) by nourishment, whereby one's life and strength are preserved, the spiritual counterpart to which is the Eucharist. [In regard to indirect perfection, Thomas uses the analogy of bodily sickness to explain penance and last anointing as spiritual healings.] In regard to the whole community, a person is perfected in two ways: (1) by receiving power to rule the community and exercise public acts, the spiritual counterpart to which is the sacrament of order . . . ; and (2) in regard to natural propagation, which is perfected in both the bodily and spiritual lives by marriage, since it is not only a sacrament but a function of nature.

Perhaps nothing so clearly exemplifies Thomas's synthesis of nature and grace than this teaching. For Thomas explains the number and nature of the sacraments on the basis neither of their historical origin nor an alleged "direct reference to the mysteries of Christ," but on the basis of that human nature which they elevate and perfect. This approach is the very opposite of an imaging of grace by nature. The natural signs do not image an already existing Christian world—even if that world be taken as the "constitutive events of Christianity"—any more than, as Thomas insists in his Aristotelian critique of the Platonic *eidōs*, the concept in the mind images an idea existing in some supersensible realm. Rather, the natural signs represent the basic structure and dynamism of human existence which the grace of Christ presupposes, redeems, and elevates; indeed, only on this basis can the

<sup>12</sup> *Summa theologiae* (*ST*) 3, q. 65, a. 1 c.

sacraments appear not as a reduplicative and hence alienating superstructure, but as the incarnation of grace in human existence itself.

With specific reference to the sacrament of order, *ST* 3, q. 65, a. 1 makes it clear beyond even unreasonable doubt that for Thomas the sacrament of order perfects natural “eminence” in the public order of society by granting the recipient preeminence in the ecclesial community. For Thomas, it is precisely and only women’s inability to signify public eminence in the natural order that make them congenitally unfit for the reception of orders,<sup>13</sup> a point underscored by his identification of this “natural resemblance” with woman’s natural (as contrasted with a slave’s merely historical) “state of subjection” in the one text where he speaks of “natural resemblance,”<sup>14</sup> a text which Butler fails to discuss and the interpretation of which by *Inter insigniores* I rightly characterized as “completely bowdlerized.” I repeat, then, without qualification, what I said in my article: “None of this has to do in any way, shape, or form with a ‘natural resemblance’ to Christ himself.”

It is important to add that the nuptial image, far from transcending the subordinationist framework, as Butler would have it, is simply a variant of it. The “self-giving” and “complementarity” of which she speaks could only transcend subordinationism if they signified a reciprocity of equals in the modern sense. But then they could no longer image the relation of Christ to the Church. For Christ is the Bridegroom of the Church not in the modern sense but as its head and life-giving source, as Eph 5:22–32 makes abundantly clear. It is, moreover, precisely this grace of headship which the ministerial priesthood cannot directly represent, since it is itself part of the graced totality of the Church and is itself a grace deriving from the head.

In regard to Bonaventure, my failure to include the portion of his text which speaks of woman’s incapacity to signify Christ as mediator stemmed not from some kind of “cover-up,” as Butler seems to imply (67), but from quite different reasons. First, not only is the text in question less than blazingly clear (since the priest’s alleged resemblance to Christ is filtered through the notion of mediatorship), but it is more or less stray and nontechnical in nature, as is the passage cited by Butler in which Bonaventure uses nuptial imagery to describe the bishop’s relation to the Church. The marginality of these symbolic perspectives for Bonaventure’s teaching on the subject seems confirmed by the fact that neither appears in his treatment of order in the *Breviloquium*.<sup>15</sup> Second, in failing to note such texts I was simply following *Inter insigniores*, which cites Bonaventure in Section 1 as a witness to the extrinsic argument from Christ’s institution, but not in Section 5 to support its claim of “natural resemblance.” If, as Butler

<sup>13</sup> *ST* Suppl. q. 39, a. 1.

<sup>15</sup> *Breviloquium* 6.3.

<sup>14</sup> *ST* Suppl. q. 39, a. 3 ad 4.

contends (68), the authors of *Inter insigniores* based their view of natural resemblance on Bonaventure (by way of Rezette's article), they failed to mention it.

### "In Persona Christi"

The opposition between Butler's interpretation and mine on this central theological issue is best explained, I think, by radical differences in theological methods and aims. On a purely exegetical level, our opposing interpretations seem to me to reflect the difference between what Lonergan called undifferentiated and differentiated consciousness, the tool of differentiation being *theoria*, a tool uniquely applicable in the case of Thomas. For Thomas's genius was precisely theoretical in nature, as is apparent in the characteristic dominance of technical vocabulary that, introduced and applied by the ubiquitous *distinguendum est*, continually lifts his discourse above the rhetorical, the descriptive, or the merely metaphorical to the level of theoretical differentiation and allows him to speak, as is so wonderfully said, *formalissime*. It is precisely such a theoretically differentiated and technical level of analysis which the *in persona Christi* axiom demands, and this level which I pursued in my original article. Such a perspective, I would strongly underscore, provides a firm basis for subjecting the lingering "common sense" representationalism that clings to Thomas's treatment of the priesthood to theoretical scrutiny and thereby frees us from the hopeless task of trying to harmonize horizons which remain incommensurate and unreconciled in Thomas (as perforce in any mind), and so enables us to retrieve what is truly original, fecund, and forward-looking in his thinking from those elements of the past which, left unassimilated, retard its momentum towards the future.

My "apophatic" interpretation of *in persona Christi* in Thomas was an attempt at such a retrieval. I did not, or at least did not intend to, claim that Thomas consciously and thematically espoused such an apophatic view. I did claim that the horizon of instrumental causality with which he views the priesthood and the priestly character (the stated source of the power to consecrate *in persona Christi*) in general, when thematized and applied to his mature exposition of the word of Christ as the form of the Eucharist, moves in a direction opposite to that of representation. I then used the rubric of anamnesis inherent in Thomas's *recitative* to advance this retrieval a step further.

In attempting thus to retrieve what Heidegger would call the "unspoken" in Thomas's thought on this matter, I acknowledged and tried to account for the presence of conflicting and disparate elements, two in particular. The first was Thomas's occasional use of representational language in treating the priest's relation to Christ. Butler lays great stress on these texts. The question, however, is whether their marginality and inherently metaphorical nature can withstand theo-



retical scrutiny, as the technical texts can, especially when they concern a dimension of the Eucharist (e.g. sacrifice) which Thomas himself did not clearly correlate with his more predominant view of the Eucharist as meal.

Second, I used the centrality of the Eucharist in Thomas's sacramental theology to critique Thomas's own subordinationist argument, detailed above, for refusing the priesthood to women. In this, I called explicit attention to the unresolved duality of Thomas's views on the priest's hierarchical and sacramental powers respectively, an irresolution which Butler ignores by conflating the two (79–80) in an effort to advance her symbolic retrieval of Thomas.

Beyond these hermeneutical issues, Butler and I diverge on two substantive systematic points. First, she accuses me of espousing the "inherently problematic" view of an "apophatic sacrament" (75 n. 62), and counters this "central flaw in [my] argument" by insisting that for Thomas the priest recites the words *simul et recitative et significative* (71) in such a way that "the person of the priest, in a certain manner, enters into the form of the sacrament" (72), i.e., by "taking Christ's role" (73). Thomas's *significative*, however, does not concern the priest's alleged representation of Christ, but his referencing of the historical words of Christ, the true form of the sacrament, to the sacramental matter here and now present. This referencing is completely explainable by way of the priest's intention to use his instrumental power to direct the words of Christ to the bread and wine before him, a kind of intentional "pointing." That it involves no imaging of Christ for Thomas seems clear from the fact that he does not invoke this notion to explain the *significative*.<sup>16</sup> Nor should we expect him to. For the sole form of the Eucharist is the word of Christ: "This is my body, this is my blood." It is this form which, uttered anamnistically over the bread and wine, gives sacramental visibility to Christ as the true speaker of the form and thereby gives the Eucharist its sacramental visibility as the body and blood of Christ. What is apophatic is not the sacrament, but the ministerial priest's self-distancing utterance of its form so that Christ's speaking may appear in its effective power. Butler's statement that the priest "pronounces the words of consecration both materially (as the words of another) and formally (as his own) at one and the same time" (72) reverses the truth of the matter exactly. For the sole *formal* speaker of the words—as is made uniquely clear in a concelebrated Mass—is the one whose body and blood is signified by these words: Christ.

The second and even more far-reaching point concerns Butler's entire notion of symbolic or sacramental representation. For Butler, it is "clear to any onlooker that . . . the priest is ritually enacting Christ's part in relation to the other worshippers," reciting his words, repeating his gestures, serving as host at the sacrificial meal (74). Such a view

<sup>16</sup> ST 3, q. 78, a. 5.

represents what I, for my part, consider the "central flaw" in Butler's analysis: a naive parallelism between the Last Supper and the Mass which essentially bypasses the primarily ecclesial form of the Mass as act of the Church. It is only within and not outside of this ecclesial form that the role of the priest and the meaning of *in persona Christi* can legitimately be determined. In Thomist terms, to view the Mass as a direct image of the Last Supper is to confuse the ontic with the epistemological relation between image and exemplar and thus relapse into an uncritical Platonism that ignores the exigencies of the a posteriori way.

In the matter at hand, thematic insistence on this way introduces a clarity and discipline that dispels the naivete which pervades Butler's analysis, surprisingly, I would add, because the basis for applying the a posteriori method to the sacraments was laid over 30 years ago by Rahner and Schillebeeckx. As Schillebeeckx put it: "Each sacrament is a personal saving act of the risen Christ himself, but realized in the visible form of an official act of the Church as such. . . . Just as Christ through his risen body acts invisibly in the world, he acts visibly in and through his earthly body, the Church, in such a way that the sacraments are the personal saving acts of Christ realized as institutional acts of the Church."<sup>17</sup> It is precisely these ecclesial acts, in all their concrete specificity and density, that provide the ineluctable "phantasm" for our attempts to elucidate the meaning of the priest's transcendental relation to Christ. Butler's analysis bypasses this ecclesial concreteness.

Finally, Butler's and my differing interpretations of the issues at hand reflect sharply divergent purposes. Her main concern is to justify the teaching of the magisterium and the tradition of the Church on the question of women's ordination, whereas mine is to uphold the intellectual integrity of theology and to clarify the purely ministerial nature of the Church's priesthood vis-a-vis the absolute priesthood of Christ, the question of women's ordination being instrumental to these concerns. If I criticize the Church's tradition on the latter, it is only to highlight the greatness of its tradition on the former. For there are traditions and there is Tradition, and it is a disservice rather than a service to the Church to mistake the one for the other. As to the "burden of proof" (63 n. 9), I believe that the weakness of foundation that appears when the historical tradition against women priests is actually examined shows this burden to fall on the magisterium, a situation which does not obtain in the case of other traditions which are "in possession," e.g. the virginity of the Mother of God, a doctrine incomparably rich in theological, spiritual, and existential meaning.

Greater still, I would conclude, is the Church's tradition, indeed,

<sup>17</sup> E. Schillebeeckx, *Christ, the Sacrament of the Encounter with God* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963) 59.

confession, of the primacy of Christ. For it is he—"Ipse, the only one, Christ, King, Head," as Hopkins so powerfully invokes him<sup>18</sup>—whose glory alone may shine in the Church, he before whom we all, confessing and serving, can be nothing but "apophatic." Unless Catholic sacramental theology makes this primacy unequivocally clear, it gives continuing credence to the not wholly unjustified Protestant charge that Catholicism impedes rather than mediates the relation between Christ and his people.

Washington, D.C.

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<sup>18</sup> Gerard Manley Hopkins, "The Wreck of the Deutschland," Stanza 28, in *Poems and Prose*, ed. W. H. Gardner (Baltimore: Penguin, 1966) 21.

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