

PROBLEMS IN ANAPHORAL THEOLOGY: “WORDS OF CONSECRATION” VERSUS “CONSECRATORY EPICLESIS”

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- 1 I am indebted to Sr Dr Vassa Larin for proofreading the text of this paper and suggesting valuable corrections. Abbreviations used in this article are:

BAS = *The Byzantine Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great.*

CHR = *The Byzantine Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom.*

CPG = *Clavis patrum Graecorum*, 5 vols., ed. M. Geerard, F. Glorie; vol. 3A ed. J. Noret; *Supplementum*, ed. M. Geerard, J. Noret, J. Desmet (*Corpus Christianorum*, Turnhout, 1974–2003).

CSEL = *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.*

DOL = International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *Documents on the Liturgy 1963–1979. Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts* (Collegeville, 1982). References are to paragraph numbers in the margin.

EDIL = R. Kaczynski (ed.), *Enchiridion documentorum instaurationis liturgicae*, 3 vols. (Turin, 1976–1997). References are to paragraph numbers in the margin.

Flannery = A. Flannery, O.P., *Vatican Council II. The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* (Collegeville, 1975). All references (§§) refer to the document section numbers in the text.

Hussey-McNulty = Nicholas Cabasilas, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, tr. J. M. Hussey & P. A. McNulty (London, 1960).

JLW = *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft.*

JTS = *The Journal of Theological Studies.*

Mansi = J. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, 53 tomes in 58 vols. (Paris/Leipzig, 1901–1927).

OCA = *Orientalia Christiana Analecta.*

OCP = *Orientalia Christiana Periodica.*

OKS = *Ostkirchliche Studien.*

PE = A. Hänggi, I. Pahl, *Præx eucharistica, vol. 1: Textus e variis liturgiis antiquioribus selecti*, 3rd ed. by A. Gerhards & H. Brakmann (*Spicilegium Friburgense* 12, Friburg, Switzerland, 1998).

PG = Migne, *Patrologia Graeca.*

PL = Migne, *Patrologia Latina.*

SC = *Sources chrétiennes.*

SL = *Studia Liturgica.*

TS = *Theological Studies.*

- 2 This study, an extract from part of Chapter XII of my forthcoming book, *A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, vol. 3, The Anaphora* (OCA, Rome, in press), ex-

Prologue

The 1963 document “Worship and the Oneness of Christ’s Church. Report of Section IV of the Montreal Conference,” of the World Council of Churches, affirms:

The study of worship has often been regarded as one of the “compartments” of ecumenical conversation. Frequently it has been controlled by theological assumptions not directly related to the actual worshipping life of the Church. But if theology is to reflect the whole faith of the Church, and if it is in *leitourgia* that the Church is to find the fulfillment of its life, as we believe, then it is essential that we let the *leitourgia* speak for itself. It is of crucial importance that we should investigate its forms and structures, its language and spirit, in the expectation that this process may throw new light upon various theological positions and affirmations, perhaps even lend new meaning to them, and thus open new possibilities in ecumenical dialogue. Clearly, this is one of the main tasks facing the churches in the coming decades.³

A similar spirit will inspire the following reflections.

plots material from some of my earlier writings: R. F. Taft, “The Epiclesis Question in the Light of the Orthodox and Catholic *Lex orandi* Traditions,” in Bradley Nassif (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Theology. Essays in Memory of John Meyendorff* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996) 210–37; id., “Understanding the Byzantine Anaphoral Oblation,” in N. Mitchell, J. Baldovin (eds.), *Rule of Prayer, Rule of Faith. Essays in Honor of Aidan Kavanagh, O.S.B.* (Collegeville, MN: A Pueblo Book, 1996), 32–55; id., “Ecumenical Scholarship and the Catholic-Orthodox Epiclesis Dispute,” *OKS* 45 (1996): 201–26. On the topic see also the valuable study of Michael Zheltov, “The Moment of Consecration in Byzantine Thought,” in Maxwell E. Johnson (ed.), *Issues in Eucharistic Praying in East and West. Essays in Liturgical and Theological Analysis* (Collegeville, MN: A Pueblo Book, 2012), 263–306.

3 *SL* 2 (1963): 243–44.

A. An Ecumenical Approach to Catholic-Orthodox Theological Problems

I. Ecumenism

Throughout history the nomenclature of religious discourse has been understood differently, and terms like revelation, salvation, grace, faith, sacrifice, worship—even God—have had widely divergent meanings. That is why definition has always been a basic task of theology. That is especially true today of the modern term “ecumenism,” which is not univocal but analogous, meaning different things to different exponents or opponents of it within different Christian communities today. For some it is a heresy to be condemned and avoided. They see it as a movement that seeks a least common denominator of Christian doctrine everyone can agree on as the basis for solving the divisions of a badly splintered Christianity, thereby giving the impression to its critics that there is no solid common doctrine essential to Christian belief.

II. Catholic Ecumenism

Whether or not that is a fair assessment is not for me to judge, since my interest as a Catholic is in Catholic ecumenism. It is a free world, and one can agree or disagree with the Catholic view of things. But one does not need to guess what it is, because one merit of modern Catholicism is *documentation*. The Catholic Church documents what its position is on just about everything. *So don't guess—just google!* And you will find online the official documentation in which the Catholic Church explains unequivocally what it means by ecumenism and just about everything else. The current principal document defining and guiding the Catholic approach to ecumenism is the official *Directory Concerning Ecumenical Matters* Part I (1967), Part II (1970). Further significant official documents are, in chronological order:⁴

1. The decrees and documents of the 1963–1965 Vatican II Council, in particular the December 4, 1963 Constitution on the

4 The documents are all found in English translation and given in chronological order in Flannery, who also indicates where the official Latin text can be found.

Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*; the November 21, 1964 Decrees on Ecumenism *Unitatis redintegratio*, and *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* on the Catholic Eastern Churches.

2. Various authoritative post-Vatican II Papal and/or Vatican decrees and pronouncements.⁵
3. CCC = The official *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana/Washington, DC: USNCCB, 1994).
4. Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), *Nota sull'espressione "Chiese sorelle"* (Note on the Expression "Sister Churches"), December 6, 2008, accompanied by a letter signed by then Prefect of the CDF, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI.⁶

III. Sister Churches

That final document, §4 cited above, provides the key to the basis of Catholic ecumenism vis-à-vis the Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox Churches. The Catholic Church considers them "Sister Churches," which, despite their rejection of communion with Rome, are ancient Churches tracing their roots, like those of the Roman Communion, to Apostolic Christianity, and are recognized by Rome as possessing the full panoply of what makes them merit the title "Church" as Catholics understand it: a valid apostolic episcopate assuring their apostolic heritage of valid Baptism, Eucharist, and other sacraments and means of salvation to sanctify their flocks.

Note that this new "Sister Churches" designation describes not only how the Catholic Church views those Orthodox Churches. It also represents a startling revolution in how the Catholic Church views itself. Previously, the Catholic Church saw itself as the original one and only true Church of Christ from which all other Christians had separated for one reason or another in the course of history and held, simplistically, that the solution to divided Christendom consisted in all other Christians returning to her maternal bosom.

5 Those up to 1975 are listed in Flannery 1020–21; later ones are usually available online or found in English translation in *Origins* (NCCB, Washington, DC); and in French in *La Documentation catholique. Textes et documents* (Paris).

6 I cite it from the original Italian text in my possession.

But the Vatican II Council, with an assist from those Council Fathers with a less naïve view of their own Church's past, managed to put aside this self-centered, self-congratulatory perception of reality.

How they managed to do this is a history whose details remain to be written, but it is known that in doing so they had a strong assist from the Council Fathers of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church, whose concrete experience of the realities of the Christian East made them spokesmen and defenders of that reality.⁷ The first reference to this revolutionary "Sister Churches" ecclesiology appears, as far as I can determine, in the already mentioned Vatican II Decree on Ecumenism, Chapter III.1 §14, which says the Communion of Orthodox Churches is a model "of the preservation in a communion of faith and charity of those family ties which ought to exist between local Churches, as between sisters."⁸

This vocabulary was taking its cue, if timidly, from earlier uses of the term of 2 Jn 13 and earlier, largely Eastern Christian uses of it, all briefly noted in paragraphs §§2–6 of the CDF *Note on the Expression "Sister Churches"* listed above under §4; then giving in paragraphs §§7–8 its more recent use by Catholic authorities for the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches in a variety of Papal Declarations and Documents, first in 1965 by Pope Paul VI⁹ (1963–1978), then repeatedly by Pope John Paul II during his long pontificate (1978–2005).

This has not only remained Catholic teaching on the hierarchical level but is now also enshrined in the universal Catechism of the Catholic Church as Catholic doctrine for all Catholic clergy and faithful world-wide. Though it does not use the term "Sister Churches," what CCC §838 declares to be Catholic teaching is its theological equivalent:

7 See R. F. Taft, "Introduction" to *The Greek-Melkite Church at the Council*, in press, due to appear in 2012.

8 Flannery, 464 (emphasis added).

9 Paul VI to Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I of Constantinople: Dec 18, 1965 Common Declaration of Recognition §3, and cancelling of past sentence of excommunication, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 58 (1966): 20 and 40–41; Athenagoras, *Tomos Agapis* (Rome/Istanbul, 1970), 388–90.

Those “who believe in Christ and have been properly baptized are put in a certain, although imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church” (*Unitatis redintegratio* §3). *With the Orthodox Churches* this communion is so profound “that it lacks little to attain the fullness that would permit a common celebration of the Lord’s Eucharist” (*Lumen Gentium* §16).

B. Ecumenical Scholarship

The above teaching of the Catholic Ecclesial Communion is what justified my consideration of apparent Catholic and Orthodox divergent doctrine on the Eucharistic Consecration by what I practice and call “Ecumenical Scholarship.” Since I coined this expression,¹⁰ let me define its components.

I. Scholarship

In today’s academic world, true scholarship is historico-critical, objective, fair, and representatively comprehensive: anything else is pseudo-scholarship. *Historico-critical* means that one deals with texts and facts in context, and that theories cede to historical data, not vice-versa. *Objective* means evidence must be presented not tendentiously slanted to support a position, but without bias, to find an answer to the question whatever that answer might turn out to be. Though no study can ever pretend to cover all the evidence, the selection and presentation of the evidence must be *comprehensive*, i.e., sufficiently representative to avoid glossing over or explaining away whatever does not fit comfortably into some preconceived theory. Finally, one must be scrupulously *fair* in presenting and evaluating the evidence, sedulously avoiding caricature, and without substituting rhetoric for the facts.

In a word, the true scholar seeks to find and present the truth wherever it is found, regardless of whom it pleases or displeases, or

10 See R. F. Taft, “Ecumenical Scholarship and the Catholic-Orthodox Epiclesis Dispute,” *OKS* 45 (1996): 201–26. I am of course not the inventor of ecumenical scholarship, nor its only practitioner. For another example on the same topic, see Reinhard Meßner, “Die eucharistische Epiklese und die Offenbarung der neuen Schöpfung,” *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 127 (2005): 203–14.

whose pet theories it confirms or contradicts. Scholarship, therefore, is the opposite of confessional propaganda, which marshals evidence to support a predetermined doctrine. In our case, the question will be, not what arguments can we find to support the common Catholic teaching that the Words of Institution alone comprise the form(ula) of the eucharistic Consecration—to do that is to begin with the answer—but rather, what does the tradition of the undivided Church have to say about that Consecration regardless of what today's Catholics or Orthodox think?

II. Scholarship as Ecumenical

So much for plain scholarship. But *ecumenical* scholarship is not content with these purely natural virtues of honesty and fairness, virtues one should be able to expect from any true scholar. Ecumenical scholarship takes things a long step further. I consider ecumenical scholarship a new and specifically Christian way of studying Christian tradition in order to reconcile and unite, rather than to confute and dominate. Its deliberate intention is to emphasize the common tradition underlying differences that, though real, can be the accidental product of history, culture, language, rather than essential differences in the doctrine of the faith. Of course to remain scholarly, this effort must be carried out realistically, without in any way glossing over real differences. But even in recognizing differences, this ecumenical effort must remain a two-way street where each side in the dialogue judges itself and its tradition by *the exact same criteria and standards* with which it judges the other. Eschewing all scapegoating and the double-standard, ecumenical scholarship seeks to describe the beliefs, traditions, and usages of other confessions in ways their own objective spokespersons would recognize as reliable and fair. Such a method renounces all caricature or “oblique criticism,” in which the not-always-realized ideal of one Church is compared to the not-always-glorious realities of another.

So ecumenical scholarship rejects the very notion of contest or debate. Seeking not confrontation but agreement and understanding, it strives to enter into the other's point of view, to understand it

insofar as possible with sympathy and agreement. It takes seriously the other's critique of one's own tradition, seeking to incorporate its positive contributions into one's own thinking. It is a contest in reverse, a contest of love, one in which both parties seek to understand and justify not their own point of view, but that of their interlocutor.

Such an effort and method, far from being baseless romanticism, is rooted in generally accepted evangelical and Catholic theological principles. Let me sum up the principal ones, beginning with the three theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity:

1. The theological foundation for this method is our faith that God's Holy Spirit is with his Church, protecting the integrity of its witness above all in the millennium of its undivided unity. Since some of the issues that divide us go right back to that first millennium, one must ineluctably conclude that these differences do not affect the substance of the apostolic faith. For if they did, then contrary to Jesus' promise (Mt 16:18), the "gates of hell" would have indeed prevailed against his Church.
2. The next principle is based on ecclesiology. The Catholic Church recognizes the Orthodox Churches to be the historic apostolic Christianity of the East, and Sister Churches of the Catholic Church. Consequently, no view of Christian tradition can be considered anything but partial that does not take full account of the age-old, traditional teaching of these Orthodox Sister Churches. Any theology must be measured not only against the common tradition of the undivided Church of the first millennium, but also against the ongoing witness of Orthodoxy as the Spirit-guided apostolic christendom of the East. That does not mean that East or West has never been wrong. It does mean that neither can ever be ignored.
3. An authentic Magisterium cannot contradict itself. Therefore, without denying the legitimate development of doctrine, in the case of apparently conflicting traditions of East and West, preferential consideration must be given to the witness of the undivided Church. This is especially true with respect to later polemics resulting from unilateral departures from or narrow-

ing of the common tradition in the divided Christendom of the second millennium.

4. Those who have unilaterally modified or narrowed a commonly accepted tradition of the first millennium of the undivided Church bear the principal responsibility for any ecclesial divisions caused thereby. So it is incumbent first of all on them to seek an acceptable solution to that problem.
5. Within a single Church, any legitimate view of its particular tradition must encompass the complete spectrum of its witnesses throughout the whole continuum of its history, and not just its presently accepted expression.
6. Doctrinal formulations produced in the heat of polemics must be construed narrowly, within the strict compass of the errors they were meant to confute. When the Council of Trent (1545–47, 1551–63) said the bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ after the consecration (Dz 1640, 1654) it was combating those who denied that transformation, not making a statement about the “moment” or “formula” of consecration.

With these principles in mind, let us look anew at the so-called epiclesis dispute.

C. Ecumenical Reflections

I. Two Liturgical Expressions of Two Compatible Liturgical Theologies

Since one must reject any attempt to press texts beyond what they can bear, the most one can say is that the anaphoral texts surrounding the Institution Narrative and Epiclesis in BAS and CHR neither confirm nor exclude any particular theological thesis of when or by what particular part of the anaphoral prayer the consecration is effected.¹¹ My own view is that later precisions, in the sense in which they are sometimes posed today as the result of confessional disputes, are sterile and pointless. They were in no

11 I discuss these issues at greater length in Taft, “Understanding the Byzantine Anaphoral Oblation.” (cit. note 2 above).

one's mind in the 4th c. Early Christian liturgical language—I call it an expression of *theologia prima*—is metaphorical and evocative, not philosophical and ontological. Only later doctrinal problems will lead to the sorting out of what, exactly, this language meant in the more dogmatically precise terms of *theologia secunda*. When that sorting out does occur, I think it fair to say that the overall flow, the thrust and sequence of idea and expression, of the old Roman *Canon Missae* on the one hand, and BAS/CHR on the other, are more patient of the distinct consecration theologies of the Latin and Byzantine traditions respectively.

As in other dogmatic or theological issues thought to divide Catholics and Orthodox today, what we are dealing with here are two distinct but complementary and equally ancient liturgical expressions of what the Church does in the eucharist. The eagerness with which some theologians, even today, attempt to magnify these issues into major doctrinal differences, even dire portents of defective dogma at the very heart of Trinitarian faith, is reflective of little more than their need to bolster their self-identity by showing how different they are from everyone else.

For the Orthodox to denigrate the Roman view because its ancient *Canon Missae* has no Holy-Spirit epiclesis is simply untenable, for the old Roman Canon is a prayer more primitive than any Anaphora with an explicitly consecratory Spirit epiclesis. The textual evidence for such an epiclesis is no earlier than the second half of the 4th c., and it would have been unthinkable before the developments in pneumatology in the 3rd c., when we first see the sanctification of the eucharist attributed to the Holy Spirit in Christian writings. Anyone who would wish to argue that such an epiclesis is of the essence of a Christian eucharist must ineluctably conclude that no eucharist could have existed before the 3rd or 4th c.

Equally fatuous would be any Catholic attempt to dismiss the consecratory epiclesis by arguing that it is a 4th c. innovation, whereas the Institution Narrative is found in the New Testament itself.¹² For the consecratory Spirit epiclesis simply explicates a

12 However, this sort of thing caused problems for the 16th c. Reformers. See D. N.

theology already implicit in more primitive anaphoral epicletic invocations, and is a logical, indeed, perhaps inevitable development, given the later evolution of pneumatology and sacramental theology. Furthermore, today few if any reputable Catholic historians of the Anaphora would hold it for certain that the earliest eucharistic prayers included, necessarily, an Institution Narrative.¹³

Is there any way out of the impasse created by the later hardening of different liturgical systems into doctrinal disputes? It is not the task of the liturgical historian to sort such things out. It is the historian's duty, however, to *draw attention to the facts* insofar as they can be attained. And on the basis of the facts, neither Western Catholics nor Eastern Orthodox can sustain, without appearing simply ridiculous in the face of their own history, a position that their view is the only legitimate one. In Christianity, tradition is the gauge of legiti-

Power, "The Priestly Prayer: The Tridentine Theologians and the Roman Canon," in: G. Austin (ed.), *Fountain of Life. In memory of Niels K. Rasmussen, O.P.* (NPM Studies in Church Music and Liturgy, Washington, DC, 1991) 133–38.

- 13 See the discussion and relevant literature in R. F. Taft, *Il Sanctus nell'anaphora. Un riesame della questione* (Rome: Edizioni Orientalia Christiana, 1999); id., "The Interpolation of the Sanctus into the Anaphora: When and Where? A Review of the Dossier" Part I, *OCP* 57 (1991): 281–308; Part II, *OCP* 58 (1992): 82–121 = repr. id., *Liturgy in Byzantium and Beyond* (Variorum Collected Studies Series CS494, Aldershot/Brookfield, 1995), chapter IX; and esp. the works of the two masters of the question today: C. Giraud, *Eucaristia per la Chiesa. Prospettive teologiche sull'eucaristia a partire dalla «lex orandi»* (Aloisiana 22. Pubblicazioni della Pontificia Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Meridionale—Sezione «S. Luigi», Napoli, Rome/Brescia, 1989); id., *Preghiere eucaristiche per la Chiesa di oggi. Riflessioni in margine al commento del canone svizzero-romano* (Aloisiana 23. Pubblicazioni della Pontificia Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Meridionale—Sezione «S. Luigi», Napoli, Rome/Brescia, 1993); id., "Le récit de l'institution dans la prière eucharistique a-t-il des antécédents? Quelques aperçus sur la prière liturgique et la dynamique de son embolisme," *Nouvelle revue théologique*, 106 (1984): 513–36; id., "I santi nella messa o la messa dei santi? Riflessioni sulla spiritualità della Chiesa," in M. Goia (ed.), *Teologia spirituale. Temi e problemi* (Saggi 29, Rome, 1991) 159–63; id., *La struttura letteraria della preghiera eucaristica. Saggio sulla genesi letteraria di una forma. Toda veterotestamentaria, Beraka giudaica, Anaphora cristiana* (Analecta Biblica 92, Rome, 1981); E. Mazza, *L'anaphora eucaristica. Studi sulle origini* (Bibliotheca Ephemerides liturgicae, Subsidia 62, Rome, 1992); id., *The Celebration of the Eucharist. The Origin of the Rite and the Development of Its Interpretation*, tr. M. J. O'Connell (Collegeville: A Pueblo Book, 1999); id., *The Eucharistic Prayers of the Roman Rite* (New York, 1975); id., *The Origins of the Eucharistic Prayer* (Collegeville, 2005).

macy. Both the Catholic and Orthodox liturgical expressions of the Anaphora or eucharistic prayer of blessing over the bread and wine, and the implicit theologies they unselfconsciously express, coexisted peacefully for centuries not only in the liturgical celebrations of the one undivided Church. These theological views were also explicitly formulated in the theologies of "Catholic" St Ambrose of Milan and "Orthodox" St John Damascene, still revered as saints and Fathers of the Church by both East and West. This means, I would think, that each Church must accept both expressions as legitimate, or render their pretense to orthodoxy untenable for having remained in ecclesial communion for well over a millennium with a Church, and for continuing even today to venerate in their liturgical calendars its saints, that held, celebrated, and professed heretical views on so fundamental an issue as the eucharist.

In the less-irenic past as well as in our somewhat more ecumenical today, Catholic liturgical theologians with a modicum of historical knowledge and common sense have adopted a balanced, non-polemical view of this issue. As early as the 17th c., no less a savant than the famous Bossuet (1627–1704) raised his voice in favor of sanity: "without inquiring about precise moments" in this issue, he writes:

The intent of liturgies, and, in general, of consecratory prayers, is not to focus our attention on precise moments, but to have us attend to the action in its entirety and to its complete effect ... It is to render more vivid what is being done that the Church speaks at each moment as though it were accomplishing the entire action then and there, without asking whether the action has already been accomplished or is perhaps still to be accomplished.¹⁴

Dom Charles Chardon, O.S.B., in his *Histoire des sacrements* (Paris, 1745), expressed a similarly balanced view of the situation:

14 J.-B. Bossuet, *Explication de quelques difficultés sur les prières de la messe à un nouveau catholique*, ed. F. Lachat, *Oeuvres* 17 (Paris: L. Vives, 1864) 74–75, tr. in R. Cabié, *The Eucharist* = A. G. Martimort (ed.), *The Church at Prayer*, vol. II (new edition, Collegeville, 1986), 147.

Despite this diversity [over the form or moment of consecration] there was formerly no dispute over this subject. The Greeks and Latins were convinced that the species [of bread and wine] were changed into the body and blood of our Savior in virtue of the words of the Canon of the Mass, without examining the precise moment at which this change occurred, nor just which of the words [of the anaphora] effected it as over against other [words]. One side said the change was effected by the prayer and invocation of the priest; the others said that it was the result of the words of Our Lord when he instituted this august sacrament. And they in no way believed that these different ways of expressing themselves were opposed to each other (and indeed they are not, as would be easy to show). But we shall leave that to the theologians to treat ...¹⁵

Since that time a steady stream of Catholic theologians have moved toward the view that the formula of eucharistic consecration comprises the prayer over the gifts in its entirety.¹⁶ I do not have space to list these theologians here—those interested can find their teaching in McKenna’s painstakingly thorough review of the question.¹⁷ The most recent study by Dom Burkhard Neunheuser, O.S.B., monk of Maria Laach and professor emeritus of the Pontificio Istituto Liturgico Sant’Anselmo, furnishes the most explicit and emphatic justification of this return to the original tradition of the undivided Church. And it does so with full respect for traditional Catholic teaching on the centrality of the Words of Institution within the anaphoral context.¹⁸ For Neunheuser is careful to point out that this renewal is already found reflected in official Catholic texts in the aftermath of the Vatican II Council. For instance, Para-

15 I translate it from the re-edition of J.-P. Migne, *Theologiae cursus completus*, 28 vols. (Paris, 1839–1843) 20:249.

16 See esp. Yves Congar, *Je crois en l’Esprit Saint*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1979–1980) III, 309ff.

17 J. H. McKenna, *The Eucharistic Epiclesis. A Detailed History from the Patristic to the Modern Era* (2nd ed. Chicago/Mundelein, 2009).

18 B. Neunheuser, “Das Eucharistische Hochgebet,” in A. Heinz & H. Rennings (eds.), *Gratias agamus. Studien zum eucharistischen Hochgebet. Für Balthasar Fischer* (Pastoralliturgische Reihe in Verbindung mit der Zeitschrift “Gottesdienst,” Freiburg/Basel/Vienna, 1992), 315–26.

graph §54 of the November 18, 1969 *Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani*, the reformed Roman Missal, says of the eucharistic prayer: "Now begins the summit and center of the whole celebration, namely the Eucharistic Prayer itself, *that is, the prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification ...*"¹⁹ "Sanctification" of course means in this context "eucharistic consecration." The May 25, 1967, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium* reflects the same return to tradition. And although Paul VI continues to use the outdated scholastic terminology of matter and form of the sacrament in his June 18, 1968, Apostolic Constitution *Pontificalis Romani recognitio*, he does so in a broad, non-scholastic context: the "matter" of the sacrament is the imposition of hands;²⁰ the "form" is the entire ordination prayer and not some isolated formula within it: "the form ... consists in the words of the very prayer of consecration."²¹

This renewal found ecumenical agreement in Part I §6 of the July 1982 Munich Statement of the Orthodox-Catholic Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue:

... [T]he eucharistic mystery is accomplished in the prayer which joins together the words by which the word made flesh instituted the sacrament and the epiclesis in which the church, moved by faith, entreats the Father, through the Son, to send the Spirit ...²²

II. Two Irreducible Expressions of One Common Faith

Are these two liturgical expressions, Roman and Byzantine, reconcilable? Or are they rather two irreducible if equally ancient and legitimate ways of expressing what everyone agrees is the same

19 "Prex eucharistica. Nunc centrum et culmen totius celebrationis habet, ipsa nempe Prex Eucharistica, prex scilicet gratiarum actionis et sanctificationis ...": EDIL 1449 (emphasis added), cf. 1450; DOL 1444, cf. 1445; Neunheuser, "Das Eucharistische Hochgebet," 321.

20 EDIL 1084 = DOL 2608.

21 EDIL 1085-6 = DOL 2609-11: "forma ... constat verbis eiusdem precationis consecratoriae."

22 *The Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity Information Service* no. 49 (1982/II-III), 108; *Origins* 12 (April 12, 1982), 158; French text in *La documentation catholique* 79 (1982 = No. 1838, 17 oct.), 942; *Episkepsis* no. 277 (juillet-août 1982), 13.

underlying reality? By “irreducible” I mean that one cannot simply be reduced to, identified with, or combined with the other without eroding each tradition’s distinct and proper system. For the two systems are not identical, and neither is reducible to a least common denominator without distortion. Still, I do not think there can be any doubt about the reconcilability of the *eucharistic doctrine* of the two traditions as expressed in their liturgies and interpreted by their moderate exponents. Much has been made of the fact that long before the dispute began, John Chrysostom attributes consecratory efficacy both to the Words of Institution and to the epiclesis.²³ For Chrysostom, what happens in the eucharist happens by the power of the Holy Spirit, a teaching common to both the Greek and Latin Churches.²⁴ In *De coemet. et de cruce* 3, Chrysostom is clearly speaking of the epiclesis.²⁵ But in *De proditione Judae hom.* 1–2, 6, he attributes the consecration to Christ in the Words of Institution:

It is not man who causes what is present to become the body and blood of Christ, but Christ himself, who was crucified for us. The priest is the representative when he pronounces those words, but the power and the grace are those of the Lord. “This is my body,” he says. This word changes the things that lie before us; and just as that sentence, “increase and multiply,” once spoken, extends through all time and gives to our nature the power to reproduce itself; likewise that saying, “This is my body,” once uttered, from that time to the present day, and even until Christ’s coming, makes the sacrifice complete at every table in the churches.²⁶

23 See Salaville in SC 4bis:314–15.

24 *De sacerdotio* III, 4:40–50; VI, 4:34–44; SC 272 (Paris, 1980) 142–46, 316 = PG 48:642–45, 681 (= CPG §4316); *Oratio de beato Philogonio* 3, PG 48:753 (= CPG §4319); *De resurr. mortuorum* 8, PG 50:432 (= CPG §4340); *In pentec. hom.* 1, 4, PG 50:458–59 (= CPG §4343); *In Iob. hom.* 45, 2, PG 59:253 (= CPG §4425); *In I Cor hom.* 24, 5, PG 61:204 (= CPG §4428).

25 PG 49:397–98 (= CPG §4337).

26 PG 49:380, 389–90 (= CPG §4336); English adapted from J. Quasten, *Patrology* 3 vols. (Utrecht/Antwerp, 1975) III, 481. This teaching of Chrysostom influenced the consecration theology of the East-Syrian liturgical commentator Gabriel Qatraya bar Lipah (ca. 615): E. J. Kilmartin, “John Chrysostom’s Influence on Gabriel Qatraya’s Theology of Eucharistic Consecration,” TS 42 (1981): 444–57.

St Nicholas Cabasilas (ca. 1350) and numerous Orthodox theologians after him have attempted to weaken the force of this text by arguing that Chrysostom assigns consecratory power not to the priest's *liturgical repetition* of Jesus' words now, but to the *historical institution itself*, i.e., to the original utterance of Jesus whose force extends to all subsequent eucharistic celebrations.²⁷ But is this saying anything different from the position of the Latins, who obviously attribute the efficacy of these words not to the prayer of the priest, as Cabasilas accuses them, but to the indefectible effectiveness of the Word of God? Certainly not, as is perfectly clear in Ambrose, *De sacramentis IV*, 4.14–17:²⁸

14. ... ut conficiatur uenerabile sacramentum, iam non suis sermonibus utitur sacerdos, sed utitur sermonibus Christi. Ergo sermo Christi hoc conficit sacramentum. ...

15. Quis est sermo Christi? Nempe is quo facta sunt omnia. Iussit dominus factum est caelum, iussit dominus facta est terra, iussit dominus facta sunt maria, iussit dominus omnis creatura generatus est. Vides ergo quam operatorius sermo sit Christi. Si ergo tanta uis est in sermone domine Iesu ut inciperent esse quae non erant, quanto magis operatorius est ut sint quae erant et in aliud commutentur ...

14. ... to produce the venerable sacrament, the priest does not use his own words but the words of Christ. So it is the word of Christ which produces this sacrament. ...

15. Which word of Christ? The one by which all things were made. The Lord commanded and the heavens were made, the Lord commanded and the earth was made, the Lord commanded and the seas were made, the Lord commanded and all creatures were brought into being. You see, then, how effective the word of Christ is. If then there is such power in the word of the Lord Jesus that things which were not began to be, how much more effective must they be in changing what already exists into something else! ...

27 *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, chapter 29, SC 4bis:178–90; cf. the commentary of Salaville, *ibid.*, 314–15; and McKenna, *Epiclesis*, 59.

28 SC 25bis:110 = CSEL 73:52–53; English trans. adapted in part from E. Mazza, *Mystagogy* (New York, 1989), 183; cf. *De mysteriis IX*, 52: “The sacrament you receive is produced by the word of Christ,” SC 25bis:186 = CSEL 73:112.

17. Accipe ergo quemadmodum sermo Christi creaturam omnem mutare consueverit et mutet quando uult instituta naturae ...”

17. Hear, then, how the word of Christ is accustomed to change all creatures and to change, when it will, the laws of nature ...

So it seems to me that Latin theology would be in full agreement with what Chrysostom says on other occasions: the same Jesus accomplishes the same eucharist, the same marvels, in the liturgy as at the Last Supper.²⁹ For instance, Chrysostom, In 2 *Tim hom.* 2, 4, affirms:

The gifts which God bestows are not such as to be the effects of the virtue of the priest. All is from grace. His part is but to open his mouth, while God works all. He [the priest] only completes the sign (σύμβολον οὗτος πληροῖ μόνον) ... The offering is the same whoever offers it, Paul or Peter. It is the same one Christ gave to his disciples, and which priests now accomplish. The latter is in no way inferior to the former, because the same one who sanctified the one, sanctifies the other too. For just as the words which God spoke are the same as the ones the priest pronounces now, so is the offering the same, just like the baptism which he gave.³⁰

Here we find all the elements of the classic Eastern Orthodox theology of consecration, which, except in some of its extreme polemical expressions, does not attribute the sanctification of the gifts to the Holy Spirit epiclesis *alone*, i.e., *sensu negante*, in deliberate exclusion of Jesus and his Words of Institution. In his *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, Chapters 26 and 29, St Nicholas Cabasilas, for instance, says of the Words of Institution:

26. Repeating those words, he [the priest] prostrates himself and prays and beseeches, while applying to the offered gifts these divine words of his Only-Begotten Son, the Savior, that they may, after having received his most holy and all-powerful Spirit, be transformed (μεταβληθῆναι)—the bread into his

29 In *Mt hom.* 50 (51), 3 and *hom.* 82 (83), 5, PG 58:507, 744 (= CPG §4424).

30 PG 62:612 (= CPG §4437); trans. adapted from NPNF ser. 1, vol. 13:483.

precious and sacred Body, the wine into his immaculate and sacred blood.³¹

29. Here [in the liturgy] we believe that the Lord's words do indeed accomplish the mystery, but through the medium of the priest, his invocation, and his prayer.³²

So for Cabasilas, neither epiclesis nor Institution Narrative stands alone; they are interdependent, woven together in the context of the Anaphora. If one prescind from the polemical context of some of Cabasilas' remarks, forced on him by Latin impugning of the Byzantine consecratory epiclesis, one will see a balanced view of the anaphora and of the interrelatedness of its constituent parts: "The words [of institution] do not take effect simply of themselves or under any circumstances, but there are many essential conditions, and without those they do not achieve their end."³³ Reputable Catholic theologians today would say the same thing, rejecting theologies that would isolate the Institution Narrative from its essential setting within the Anaphora.³⁴

Nor is that a novelty in Catholic thought. Similar views can be found in the Latin Fathers in the period anterior to the 14th C. epiclesis dispute between Byzantines and Latins. St Isidore (ca. 560–d.636), bishop of Seville from 600/601–636, says in his treatise *De officiis ecclesiae* I, 15:3, that the consecration occurs in the Canon. Isidore calls it the "sixth prayer" of the "Ordo ... missae et orationum quibus oblata Deo sacrificia consecrantur—ordo of the Mass and prayers by which the sacrifices offered to God are consecrated" (I, 15:1).³⁵ From the context it is clear that he is referring to that section of

31 SC 4bis:174; tr. adapted from Hussey-McNulty, 70.

32 SC 4bis:182; tr. Hussey-McNulty, 72.

33 Ibid.

34 For an excellent, fresh Catholic discussion of these issues, see E. J. Kilmartin, "The Active Role of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the Sanctification of the Eucharistic Elements," TS 45 (1984): 225–53; earlier views are summarized both excellently and in truly ecumenical and irenic fashion by McKenna, *Epiclesis*, the standard work on the topic. See also his more recent "Eucharistic Prayer: Epiclesis," in Heinz-Rennings, *Gratias agamus*, 283–91, which, I think, is in basic agreement with the point of view I develop in this chapter.

35 PL 83:732.

the anaphora following the Latin Preface or Presanctus that extends from the Sanctus to the Our Father inclusive (I, 15:2):³⁶

Porro *sexta* [oratio] exhinc succedit conformatio sacramenti, ut oblatio, quae Deo offertur, sanctificata per Spiritum sanctum, Christi corpori et sanguini conformetur. Harum ultima est oratio, qua Dominus noster discipulos suos orare instituit, dicens: *Pater noster, qui es in coelis.*

Then [comes] *the sixth* [prayer of the eucharist], from which results the formation of the sacrament as an oblation that is offered to God, sanctified through the Holy Spirit, formed into the body and blood of Christ. The last of these is the prayer by which our Lord instructed his disciples to pray, saying: "Our Father who art in heaven."

St Isidore is usually considered the "last of the Latin Fathers," so right through to the end of the patristic period the view was current in Latin theology that the eucharistic consecration was the work of the Holy Spirit, and that the prayer which effected it was the *Canon Missae* or anaphora without further specification of one of its component parts as the "form" of the sacrament. Fulgentius of Ruspe (†533) is another Latin author clearly to be understood in this sense.³⁷ Nor is this view much different from that of the medieval Latin commentators, as Cabasilas himself recognized when in

36 PL 83:773. For a full exposition of Isidore's views on this question, see J. R. Geiselman, *Die Abendmahlslehre an der Wende der christlichen Spätantike zum Frühmittelalter. Isidor von Sevilla und das Sakrament der Eucharistie* (Munich, 1930), 180–97, 244–47; also S. Salaville, "Épiclese," DTC 5:246.

37 *Ad Monimum* II, 6 & 9–10, PL 65:184–85, 187–88. Geiselman, *Abendmahlslehre*, 198–224, cites as reflecting this view numerous other Latin exponents, but many of the texts he adduces are far from probative. One is the much-discussed fragment of Pope Gelasius I (492–496), *Letter to Elpidius, bishop of Volterra* 2: "Nam quomodo ad divini mysterii consecrationem coelestis Spiritus invocatus adveniet, si sacerdos, et qui eum adesse deprecatur, criminosis plenus actionibus reprobetur?—For how can the Holy Spirit come who is invoked for the consecration of the divine mystery, if the priest, who calls upon him to be present, stands condemned because he is filled with wicked deeds?" = Frag. 7, *Gelasius Elpidio episcopo Volaterrano* 2: ed. Thiel (ed.), 461–523 = PL 59:143A; tr. McKenna, *Epiclesis*. But a posthumously published study of C. Callewaert has demonstrated that this text does not necessarily refer to the *Canon Missae*: "Histoire positive du Canon romain. Une épiclese à Rome?" *Sacris erudiri* 2 (1949): 95–110, esp. 95–98.

chapter 30 of his commentary he cites the *Supplices* prayer following the Words of Institution in the Roman Canon as saying basically the same thing as the Orthodox epiclesis.³⁸

Two of these Latin commentators are especially pertinent here:

1. Peter Lombard (ca. 1095–†1160), speaking of the *Supplices*, says in his *Sentences* IV, 13:³⁹

Missa enim dicitur eo
quod caelestis nuntius ad
consecrandum vivificum corpus
adveniat, juxta dictum sacerdotis:
Omnipotens Deus, jube haec
perferri per manus sancti Angeli
tui in sublime altare tuum . . .

It is called “*Missa*” that the
heavenly messenger might come
to consecrate the life-giving body,
according to the expression of
the priest: “Almighty God, bid
that this be borne by the hand of
your holy angel to your altar on
high . . .”

2. Even more explicitly, shortly after 1215, John Teutonicus’ comment on the same prayer in the *Glossa ordinaria ad Decretum Gratiani*—and its inclusion in such an anthology shows how common and acceptable such a view must have been—says:⁴⁰

“Jube, id est: *fac*. Perferri, id est:
transsubstantiari. Vel: perferri, id
est sursum efferri, id est *converti*
. . .”

“Bid,” that is: *make*. “Be borne,”
that is: *be transubstantiated*. Or:
“be borne,” that is, be assumed,
that is: *be changed* . . .”

Note, please, that these two authoritative medieval Latin commentators on the Mass *are speaking here of a prayer said after the Words of Institution in the Roman Canon Missae*.

A modern Catholic classic on the eucharist, Maurice de la Taille’s *Mysterium fidei*, while rejecting some of Cabasilas’ affirmations made in the heat of anti-Latin polemics, accepts his identification of the *Supplices* prayer as “a Roman epiclesis that corresponds both in the place it occupies and in its meaning—though not in its exter-

38 SC 4bis:190–99; trans. Hussey-McNulty, 76–79.

39 PL 192:868.

40 *Decretum de consecratione* 2, 72, in *Glossa ordinaria* (Rome, 1582), II, 1813, cited by Salaville in SC 4bis:322. Salaville cites numerous other 9th to 16th C. Latin authors in his classic (if one-sided) study “Epiclèse,” DTC 5:265–70.

nal form—to the eastern epicleses.”⁴¹ So if the classic Latin doctrine on the Words of Institution as the “form of consecration” can be traced back to Ambrose, who states the teaching unambiguously in his *De sacramentis* IV, 4.14–17, 5.21–23, and *De mysteriis* IX, 52–54,⁴² not until the 12th c. do the scholastics formulate the hylomorphic thesis that the Words of Institution are the essential “form of the sacrament” that alone effect the consecration of the bread and wine.⁴³

This, of course, poses a problem of method. As Hughes notes, if the idea that the eucharistic consecration takes place through the recitation of the Words of Institution alone did not become general in the West until well into the Middle Ages, centuries after the Roman Canon was first formulated, it is illegitimate to read into its prayers a meaning that was unknown when those texts originated.⁴⁴ The new Latin theology was sanctioned, doctrinally, in the *Decretum pro Armenis* (Dz 1321, cf. 1017) and *Decretum pro Jacobitis* (Dz 1352) in the aftermath of the Council of Florence,⁴⁵ at which the Greeks were fully justified in refusing to exchange their age-old tradition for the new scholastic theories.

I leave to the dogmaticians what “theological note” they wish to assign this Latin teaching, construed in its narrowest popular

41 “... épîclèse romaine, répondant, pour la place qu’elle occupe et pour le sens qu’elle a, quoique non par sa forme extérieure, aux épîclèses orientales.” M. de la Taille, *Mysterium fidei* (3rd ed., Paris, 1931), 276; cf. Salaville, SC 4bis:319-20, for similar modern Latin views.

42 SC 25bis:110, 114, 186–88 = CSEL 73: 51–53, 55–56, 112–13.

43 Geiselmann, *Abendmablslehre* 192–94, 144–47; J. J. Hughes, “Eucharistic Sacrifice. Transcending the Reformation Deadlock,” *Worship* 13 (1969): 540; J. A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite. Missarum sollemnia*, 2 vols. (New York, 1951, 1955), II, 203–04, note 9: “In general Christian antiquity, even until way into the Middle Ages, manifested no particular interest regarding the determination of the precise moment of the consecration. Often reference was made merely to the entire Eucharistic prayer. It is Florus Diaconus, *De actione missae*, c. 60 (PL 119:52f.), in the Carolingian period, who with particular stress brought out the significance of the Words of Institution as “words of consecration”: *ille in suis sacerdotibus quotidie loquitur*—He [Jesus] speaks daily in his priests.”

44 Hughes, “Eucharistic Sacrifice,” 539.

45 See J. Gill, *The Council of Florence* (Cambridge, 1959), 116, 265–67, 272–78, 280–81, 284–86, 292.

Catholic understanding still in vogue, that the *Verba Domini*, they alone, and nothing else, are the so-called “words of consecration” of the Mass (cf. Dz §2718). Certainly the *Decretum pro Armeniis* does not recommend itself by the fact that it also proclaims the *traditio instrumentorum* or conferral of the liturgical vessels and other instruments of priestly office (chalice, etc.), to be the sacramental “matter” of Holy Orders or ordination to the priesthood (Dz §1326), a teaching not only no longer held today (Dz §§3858–3860), but one that *even in its own day* contradicted the clear facts of liturgical history. More important, it also conflicted with age-old Catholic teaching, which never impugned the validity of ordination rites of Eastern Churches with no *traditio instrumentorum* like the Latins.

So one must either reject that decree, or, if your theory of magisterium obliges you to squirm to salvage the decree by arguing that it envisaged only the medieval Latin ordination rite in which the *traditio* had assumed a significant place, then intellectual honesty would require saying the same for its teaching on the Words of Institution. For the decree assigns them an exclusive consecratory importance in the eucharist that they had acquired only in the West. More significant for me is the fact that the decree sanctions a culturally and temporally conditioned medieval scholastic hylomorphic theology of the sacraments that can in no wise claim to be traditional to the teaching of the undivided Church. Here we are talking not about magisterial teaching but the undeniable facts of history available to anyone able to read Latin and Greek.

Nonetheless, it is equally clear that we are dealing with two distinct liturgical traditions both then and now. Following long Catholic tradition, the prayers of the “split” or “double” epiclesis in which the traditional Roman anaphoral structure embeds the Institution Narrative—prayers which, in Cabasilas’ words, “apply” the words of Jesus to the gifts—place the overtly consecratory petition *before* the Institution Narrative, giving a more explicit “formulary” character to Jesus’ words. This cannot be said of the BAS and CHR anaphoras, which tell the story and *then* ask for the consecration of the gifts. Hence when Orthodox authors say that the Institu-

tion Accounts of CHR and BAS are pronounced *narratively, not significantly*,⁴⁶ they are simply affirming what is perfectly clear from the text of their prayers, as H.-J. Schulz's recent serenely objective Catholic commentary, devoid of all polemics, admits, *pace* earlier Catholic apologists.⁴⁷

D. Conclusion

So I believe that there are *irreducible local differences in the liturgical expression of what I would take to be the fully reconcilable teaching* of both Churches on the eucharist: that the gifts of bread and wine are sanctified via a prayer, the anaphora, which applies to the present gifts of bread and wine the words of Jesus narrated in the Biblical Institution Account. *How* the individual anaphoras make this application has varied widely across the traditions. Broadly speaking, that reality is expressed:

1. by narrating the story of the Last Supper—the Institution Account—which provides the biblical warrant for what is being done;
2. and by asking in some way or other that God receive, or accept, or bless, or sanctify the gifts or oblation, so that they may be unto salvation for the communicants, and for the benefit of all the living and dead.

Just how these two pieces are arranged and articulated, and how they

46 Cabasilas' commentary 29.22: SC 4bis:190; tr. Hussey-McNulty, 76.

47 H.-J. Schulz, *Ökumenische Glaubenseinheit aus eucharistischer Überlieferung* (Paderborn, 1976); id., "Liturgischer Vollzug und sakramentale Wirklichkeit des eucharistischen Opfers," OCP 45 (1979): 245–66; OCP 46 (1980): 5–19. Also id., "Ökumenische Aspekte der Darbringungsaussagen in der erneuerten römischen und in der byzantinischen Liturgie," *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 19 (1978): 7–28; id., "Orthodoxe Eucharistiefeyer und ökumenisches Glaubenszeugnis," *Der christliche Osten* 34/1 (1979): 10–15; id., "Das frühchristlich-alkirchliche Eucharistiegebet: Überlieferungskontinuität und Glaubenszeugnis," *Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 70 (1980): 139–53; id., "Patterns of Offering and Sacrifice," SL (1982): 34–48. On BAS see also the recent study of R. Meßner, "Prex Eucharistica. Zur Frühgeschichte der Basileios-Anaphora. Beobachtungen und Hypothesen," in E. Renhart & A. Schnider (eds.), *Sursum Corda. Variationen zu einmen liturgischen Motiv*. Für Philipp Harnancourt zum 60. Geburtstag (Graz, 1991), 121–29.

express what they express, is a matter of local tradition, particular history, the doctrinal concerns of time and place, etc. These should not, indeed in my view cannot with any historical legitimacy be seen in conflict with parallel but divergent expressions of the same basic realities in a different historico-ecclesial milieu.

Orthodox theologies that attempt to restrict the consecration to the epiclesis only; Catholic theologies that wish to isolate the Institution Narrative as a “form of consecration” independent of its context in the anaphoral setting in which it is embedded, and which reveals its meaning and applies the Words of Institution to the rite being celebrated; Orthodox or Catholic theologies that attempt to identify within the anaphora a particular “moment of consecration” not merely as an explanation of the most significant portions of their prayer tradition, but in polemical opposition to another “moment” in another tradition; and which they then interpret in function of this “moment” whatever precedes and follows it in the anaphoral text—none of these tendencies represent the best of the common tradition of the undivided Church of the first millennium, and are to be resolutely rejected.

This modern view that the prayer of consecration is the anaphora in its entirety, not just some segment of it set apart as an isolated “formula,” is, I think, more faithful to the earlier common tradition of the undivided Church. Several patristic texts lend themselves to this interpretation, using the term “epiclesis” for the whole prayer over the gifts. Among the earliest 2nd c. witnesses to the eucharist in the period following the New Testament, Justin Martyr’s *Apology* I, 65–67,⁴⁸ written ca. AD 150, testifies to a prayer over the gifts that may have included the Institution Narrative (I, 66). After that prayer, the gifts were no longer “ordinary food or ordinary drink but ... flesh and blood of that same Jesus who was made flesh” (I, 66). From the same period (ca. 185), Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* IV, 18.5, calls this consecration prayer “the invocation (ἐπικλησις) of God.”⁴⁹ Indeed, the term “epiclesis” is commonly used for the entire prayer over the

48 PE 68–72.

49 SC 264:611; cf. also *Adv. haer.* I, 13.2: SC 264:190–91.

gifts even in sources as late as the 4th c.⁵⁰ For although Cyril/John II of Jerusalem, *Mystagogic Catechesis* 3, 3 and 5, 7 (post 380), also use the term “epiclesis” in its present, restricted sense,⁵¹ in another passage, *Mystagogic Catechesis* 1, 7, the word is usually interpreted as referring to the entire anaphora: “Before the holy epiclesis of the adorable Trinity the bread and wine of the eucharist was ordinary bread and wine, whereas after the epiclesis the bread becomes the Body of Christ and the wine the Blood of Christ.”⁵²

But is there not a contradiction in Cyril/John II, at one time seeming to consider the entire anaphora as the consecration, at another assigning this role to the “epiclesis of the Holy Spirit”? We saw something similar in Chrysostom, who in one text attributes the consecration to the epiclesis, in another to the Words of Institution. Odo Casel is probably closest to the truth when he asserts:

We have to make it much clearer to ourselves ... that the Epiclesis of the Trinity, which was common to all the sacraments, required a definition of its purpose for each particular consecration. In the Mass this occurred via the words of institution. Hence one can ascribe the consecration now to the whole eucharistic prayer, now to the epiclesis, now to the words of institution, *without contradicting oneself*.⁵³

50 Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium (Philosophoumena)* VI, 3 9:2, PG 16.3:3258 (= CPG §1899; on its disputed authenticity cf. CPG §1870); Firmilian of Caesarea, cited in Cyprian, *Ep.* 75, 10, CSEL 3.2:818 (tr. and discussion of this text JTS 5 (1954): 215–20); *Didaskalia* VI, 22:2, Connolly, *Didascalia* 252–53; cf. J. W. Tyrer, “The Meaning of ἐπικλησις,” JTS 25 (1923–1924): 139–50; esp. 142–45, 148; Casel, “Neuere Beiträge,” esp. 170–71. Some authors would also include in this list Basil, *De Spiritu sancto* 27, SC 17bis:480 = PG 32:188 = CPG §2839. But I would agree with A. Gelston, *The Eucharistic Prayer of Addai and Mari* (Oxford, 1992), 15–17, that Basil is probably referring to the epiclesis in the narrow sense of the term.

51 SC 126bis:124, 154.

52 *Ibid.*, 94.

53 “Wir *müssen* uns vielmehr ... klarmachen, daß die E. der Trinität, die allen Mysterien gemeinsam war, je nach der speziellen Weihe eines näheren Zweckbestimmung bedurfte; diese erfolgte in der Messe durch die Einsetzungsworte. Man kann dem nach bald der Eucharistia, bald der Epiklese, bald den Einsetzungsworten die Konsekration zuschreiben, ohne sich zu widersprechen”: O. Casel, “Neuere Beiträge zur Epiklesenfrage,” JLV 4 (1924): 169–78, here 173; cf. id., “Zur Epiklese,” JLV 3 (1923): 101–2.

In short, one and the same early Father of the Church—Chrysostom is the perfect example—might speak now of the anaphora, now of one or another or even both sections of the anaphora wherein its consecratory purpose was stated most explicitly, as the prayer of consecration without seeing any contradiction in his assertions. For he was not identifying a scholastic hylomorphic *forma sacramenti* or isolating a “moment of consecration,” but simply affirming that before the gifts are blessed they are not blessed, and after they have been blessed, they are. Hence I think it anachronistic to interpret Ambrose as meaning that *only* the Words of Institution are consecratory; or to maintain that such early Greek Fathers as Cyril/John II of Jerusalem and St Basil the Great, or the early anaphoras, considered the epiclesis as consecratory in the negative sense of *ante quem non*, rather than affirmatively, *post quem sic*. In other words, their affirming that the gifts are consecrated after the epiclesis does not justify inferring they meant that the *epiclesis alone* is consecratory, and that the gifts remained ordinary bread and wine until just before it. That precision is not seen in Greek theology until the dispute over, and ultimate rejection of, the primitive understanding of “antitype” and “symbol” by St John Damascene (ca. 675–753/4),⁵⁴ and the iconodule Council of Nicea II in 787, which condemned the iconoclast Council of 754.⁵⁵

54 John Damascene, *Expositio fidei* 86:163–66, interprets BAS thus: “Moreover, although some may have called the bread and wine *antitypes* of the body and blood of the Lord, as did the inspired Basil, they did not say this as referring to after the consecration, but to before the consecration, and it was thus that they called the [unconsecrated] offertory bread itself.” Kotter 2:197 = *De fide orthodoxa* IV, 13, PG 94:1152C–53B; tr. Saint John of Damascus, *Writings*, tr. F. H. Chase, Jr. (*The Fathers of the Church. A New Translation*, Washington, DC/New York, 1947), 37 (Washington, DC, 1981), 360–61. “Prospora (offering)” is the ordinary Byzantine Greek term for the unconsecrated eucharistic loaves used at the liturgy.

55 Cf. the debate at Nicea II, Session 6 (Mansi 13:261E–268A), where the relevant texts of the Council of 754 are preserved because they were read into the Acts of Nicea II and condemned. A complete English trans. of these texts, with the sections from the Acta of 754 set off in italics, is conveniently provided in D. J. Sahas, *Icon and Logos: Sources in Eighth-Century Iconoclasm* (Toronto Medieval Texts and Translations 4, Toronto/Buffalo/New York, 1986), 92–96. For the debate on the use of “antitype” for the eucharistic species, see Mansi 13:265C = Sahas 95.

But as I have shown elsewhere, John Damascene's interpretation of the term "figures" or "antitypes" (*ἀντίτυπα*) for the gifts in BAS before the epicletic consecratory petition is simply wrong.⁵⁶ And the Nicea II definition was the fruit of the iconoclastic troubles, and not directly concerned with the later 14th c. formula of consecration dispute between East and West.

That, in my view, should suffice for a common profession of our faith in the eucharistic consecration. The rest can be left to theology. But does what I have said above solve all problems in a centuries-old theological dispute? Of course not, nor was that my pretense. I have tried only to clear the air by a review of the history of this controversy in the context of a "seamless garment approach," the only one with any intellectual or ethical respectability for anyone living in the modern world. The "seamless garment (Jn 19:23) approach" is a phrase coined by U.S. Catholic bishops and ethicists in the controversy over abortion. It expresses the need for a coherent ethic in the struggle for life, against the selective approach of the pretended "politically correct" left that will demonstrate angrily against vivisection or to "save the whales," but do not oppose the abortion of human fetuses; or of those on the right who resolutely oppose abortion but see no problem with the invasion of Iraq or the death penalty. The "seamless garment" approach means that your ideology, to be taken seriously, must be consistent: you can't have it both ways.

I have tried here to take the same approach to Church, magisterium, and dogma, reasoning as follows:

1. The whole undivided Church of East and West held that the eucharistic gifts were consecrated in the eucharistic prayer.

56 In Taft, "Reconstituting the Oblation of the Chrysostom Anaphora:," (cit. note 3 above) and in Chapter XII of my forthcoming book cited in the same note, I bring forward textual evidence proving beyond any doubt that "type" or "antitype" were used for the consecrated gifts. On "antitypes" in BAS see also the discussion in Meßner, "Præx Eucharistica" (cit. note 47 above) 123–25; M. Jugie, "L'épiclèse et le mot antitype de la Messe de Saint Basile," *Echos d'Orient* 9 (1906): 193–98, with references to later Greek authors on the topic, though Jugie, as usual, exaggerates on the other side of the issue.

2. The *theologia prima* in the eucharistic prayers of East and West expressed this differently from as early as the 4th c.
3. The *theologia secunda* or theological reflection on these prayers in East and West also was different. The West stressed the *Verba Domini*. The East stressed the *Epiclesis*, while not denying the necessity of the Words of Institution.
4. Problems arose only in the Late Middle Ages when the Latin West *unilaterally* shifted the perspective by attempting to dogmatize its hylomorphic theology of the sacraments.

The above four points are not theory but demonstrable historical facts.

5. Since this western innovation narrows the earlier teaching of the undivided Church it was rejected by the East—and in my opinion it should have been rejected.
6. Since the Latin *Decreta* following the Council of Florence that canonized this view are highly questionable, I offered above some elements for their reinterpretation.
7. Finally, I showed how Catholic teaching has for over a century been moving toward recovery of the view that what an earlier theology was pleased to call the “form” of a sacrament is the central prayer of the ritual, and not some single isolated formula.
8. This prayer can be understood and interpreted only within its liturgical context. As the late Edward J. Kilmartin, S.J. (1923–1994), my brilliant seminary Professor of Eucharistic Theology and later my colleague as Professor of Theology at the Pontifical Oriental Institute used to say in response to the old *casus-conscientiae* joke about what to do if a disaffected priest goes into a bakery and says, “This is my body,” sacrilegiously intending to consecrate all the bread in the store, the answer is: “Do nothing,” because there was no Consecration. The Words of Institution are not some hocus-pocus magical formula but part of a prayer of the Church operative only within its worship context.
9. In East and West this context was and is and will remain diverse within the parameters of our common faith that Jesus,

through the ministers of his Church, nourishes us with the mystery of his Body and Blood.

Epilogue

That, at least, is what I think, having passed my life trying to build bridges to our Orthodox Sister Churches, not dynamite the ones that already exist. But some might ask, why bother? For the greatest enemy of such an ecumenical approach to ecclesial divisions is the indifference of many of those engaged in church leadership: they may not be opposed to Orthodox-Catholic reconciliation—they just do not care.

Why should we/they care? Well for starters they might reflect on Jesus' parting prayer expressing his will for his followers in Jn 17:21:

I ... pray ... also for those who believe in me,
that they may all be one,
even as you, Father, are in me and I in you,
that they also may be in us,
so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

One would think that Christians praying daily in all the major Byzantine liturgical offices the *aiteseis* or "Angel of Peace" litany that calls "for a good answer before the dread judgment seat of Christ" might wish to reflect on what they will say in this context when they stand before the dread tribunal of the Last Judgment so grimly depicted in Mt 25. For in the last analysis, there is only one basic question in life each one must answer: "Am I part of the problem, or part of the solution?"