# The Trinitarian Dimensions of Cistercian Eucharistic Theology

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A dissertation

submitted to the Faculty of

the department of Theology

in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Boston College
Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences
Graduate School

March 2017

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William of Saint-Thierry, Isaac of Stella, and Baldwin of Forde created a distinctly Cistercian body of Eucharistic theology in the twelfth century. But despite one article that examines none of the Eucharistic treatises and omits Isaac and Baldwin, there is no scholarly account of Cistercian Eucharistic theology. Nor is there more generally a historical work that examines the connection between medieval Trinitarian and Eucharistic theology. This dissertation seeks to fill both lacunae.

The introduction of the dissertation sets the historical and scholarly context for investigation. Chapter 1 examines the thought of William of Saint-Thierry, who has the most developed understanding of Eucharistic presence, conversion, and reception. It also treats the connections William draws between Eucharistic reception and meditation on scripture and the passion of Christ. Chapter 2 treats Isaac of Stella, who uses more intellectualist imagery and imagery of the mystical body of Christ. Chapter 3 studies Baldwin of Forde, who argues that the term *transubstantiation* best describe Eucharistic conversion. Baldwin emphasizes reception by faith in the truth about Christ. Chapter 5 offers a brief conclusion.

These Cistercian authors thought that the character of God as a Trinity of persons united in essence provides the form or structure of the economy of salvation—especially its turning point or climax, the Eucharist. This emphasis on Trintiarian dimensions is the hallmark of Cistercian Eucharistic theology. They saw the Eucharist as an analogue to the

Incarnation, a site where the economic missions of the Trinity take place. In the Eucharist, God the Father draws those who receive to himself by uniting them to the body and blood of the Son. This unity brings an increase of unity with the Holy Spirit. Once united to the Son and Spirit, the faithful are united to the Father and to the unity that all three persons share. The Eucharist is, then, not only a site of God's movement toward human beings, but of human movement back toward God. It acts as a kind of pivot point in the economy of salvation: the moment where the outpouring of the Son and Spirit join most deeply with the faithful and draw them back to the Father. The Eucharist also binds the members of the Church, the body of Christ, to each other and to their Head in his act of self-offering to the Father. It connects the meditation, sacrifices, and offering of their own lives to that of Christ, with which they are offered to the Father.

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*Jesu quem velatum nunc aspicio*
*Oro fiat illud quod tam sitio*
*Ut te revelata cernens facie*
*Visu sim beatus tuae gloriae*

# Acknowledgements

My theological studies began at the University of Notre Dame, where I benefited from the guidance of Joseph Wawrykow, Cyril O'Regan, Fr. Brian Daley, S.J., and Sr. Ann Astell. The Boston College Department of the Theology has been my home now for six years. My colleagues and professors offered me much along the way, especially Fr. Robert Imbelli, Stephen Pope, Dominic Doyle, Fr. Khaled Anatolios, Fr. John Paris, S.J., Jessica Coblentz, Kate Ward, Aaron Taylor, Clifton Stringer, Ty Monroe, and Katherine Wrisley Shelby. Special thanks go to Jonathan Bailes for great groomsmanship and even greater friendship. Burke Thompson and Gregory Floyd provided philosophical and domestic support. The staff of the BC libraries, especially the intrepid office for interlibrary loans, made my research possible. For the past year, Marquette University's Department of Theology has been a welcome place to work, and I thank my new neighbors there for their hospitality. Throughout my doctoral studies I received fellowships from Boston College, the H.B. Earhart Foundation, the Rumsfeld Foundation, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, and the Bradley Foundation, for which I remain deeply grateful. The late Fr. Richard John Neuhaus has been a source of inspiration and encouragement. Sr. Diana Marie of Christ Jesus, O.P., and the nuns of the Dominican Monastery of Our Lady of the Rosary offered many prayers for me and my work. Stephen Brown and Ian C. Levy's assistance as readers and mentors helped refine the manuscript. None of this work could have happened without the guidance of Boyd Taylor Coolman, who has been a superb adviser and mentor. My parents, Eric Peters and Elizabeth C. Peters, offered much encouragement along the way. Last, I thank my wife Jane for her love, support, and delight in my work and in me.

# Introduction

## I. The Trinity, the Eucharist, and the Economy of Salvation

Three lancet windows sit in the western wall of Chartres Cathedral. Having survived the fire of 1194 that destroyed most of the building, they contain some of the best stained glass that remains from the twelfth century. The Incarnation Window in the center recounts the story of Christ's life from the Annunciation through his baptism in the Jordan and culminates in his entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. The third panel of the window, in the bottom right corner, depicts the Nativity. Joseph sleeps on the side, and Mary reclines on a bed in the front, pointing up to the Christ Child, guarded by ox and ass, visible through drawn curtains while the star of Bethlehem shines above. It is a conventional depiction in every respect except one: Christ lies not in a manger, but on an altar. The same depiction is found on a fragment from a thirteenth-century choir screen, now in the cathedral's museum. Here Christ's bed has straw, which the ass has begun to eat, but the bed's resemblance to an altar is unmistakable. A similar image appears in a thirteenth century Missal made for the Cathedral of Noyon, now in Harvard's Houghton Library.[1] The illuminated R of the Easter introit "Resurrexi et adhuc tecum sum" depicts the resurrected Christ stepping forth from the tomb and unto an altar.

These works of devotional art represent a profound connection that their medieval creators recognized between the Eucharist and the events of Christ's life. The Eucharist was not simply a reenactment or memorial supper, but an important event in the economy of salvation like the Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection—the moment in which the fruits of those events were most closely joined to the life of those who receive it. If the

[1] Houghton pf MS Typ 120.2.

Noyon missal's initial signifies to the reader that the resurrected Christ is present on the altar, the Christmas scenes from Chartres go one step further. The infant Christ on the altar represents not just the doctrine that the same Christ who was a baby in Bethlehem is present on the altar, but the teleological argument that Christ became incarnate in Bethlehem in order to be consumed on the altar. The purpose of the economy of salvation is the union between God and human beings, which attains its earthly climax in the Eucharist.

Medieval thinkers also recognized that the persons of the Trinity, while acting in the economy in one action, had distinct roles within that action. These roles were determined by their relations—the procession, generation, filiation, and spiration that make Father, Son, and Spirit distinct from one another. Medieval theologians offer a later example of Khaled Anatolios' thesis that for early Christian thinkers, Trinitarian theology was not a solitary line of doctrinal speculation. Rather, it entailed an interpretation of Christian doctrine and practice as a whole. In *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine*, Anatolios writes: "Trinitarian doctrine emerged not from some isolated insight into the being of God . . . Rather, orthodox Trinitarian doctrine emerged as a kind of meta-doctrine that involved a global interpretation of Christian life and faith and indeed evoked a global interpretation of reality."[2] The line of causation works the other way, too. The doctrine of the Trinity provides the interpretive key for understanding the way in which God acts in salvation history into the present time in the life of the Church's faith and sacraments, in particular the Eucharist. As Edward J. Kilmartin puts it: "There is a real correspondence between the way God exists

[2] Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 8.

in God's self and the way God reveals self in the economy of salvation, through the life, death, and glorification of Christ and the sending of the Spirit to establish the Church."[3]

This insight was not limited to patristic and medieval authors. In the early twentieth century, M.V. Bernadot wrote, "Each time we approach the holy table, it augments the presence of the Three Divine Persons. There is thus a fresh influx of the Divine Life—which, in theological language, would be called a new 'invisible mission.'"[4] Eugene Vandeur calls the Eucharistic Christ "the open door to the Trinity. The Father recognizes the one who receives in Christ and as united to Christ. Then, by uniting him in the Son to the Holy Spirit, the Father brings him into fellowship with the infinite outpourings of their mutual love."[5] He also writes that the fruit of the Eucharist is "an ever deeper immersion in this mystery of the essential Unity of the blessed Trinity" and that the Trinity and the Eucharist each constitute an "unfathomable abyss."[6] In a more recent textbook of dogmatic theology, James T. O'Connor writes that by the Holy Spirit, Mary conceived and the bread and wine are changed to body and blood:

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[3] Edward J. Kilmartin, *Christian Liturgy: Theology and Practice: I. Systematic Theology of Liturgy* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1988), 101.

[4] M.V. Bernadot, *The Eucharist and the Trinity* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1977), 47. He continues: "After Communion, the soul's capacity to receive God is expanded. Our Lord said that He, the Father, and the Holy Spirit would come to anyone who loves them. 'And we will make our home with him' (John 14:23). The Three do more than visit us. They actually make their home with us. Our soul becomes a heaven; our life becomes a beginning and prelude of the eternal happiness. . . . In this temple [the body], the three Divine Persons do not remain inactive. They act unceasingly, each according to his own character. The mystery of the Trinity is realized in the activity and love which the Three Persons bring to the soul. The soul is loved differently by each of them—yet, with a single love. This love is single because, each time the Three Persons act exteriorly to themselves, they act as one. At the same time, it is a triple outpouring of love which reveals something of the characteristics proper to each of the Three Persons. The Father comes as the source of life and peace. The Creator, after making the creature, establishes it in its appropriate surroundings. The Father encircles His child with goodness and inexpressible tenderness. The Word is a source of light. The Father's thought, His living Word, His Image, He unites Himself with my mind—thus giving me a supernatural knowledge of the divinity. The Holy Spirit is the source of love. He is the love of the Father and the Son, their mutual embrace, the eternal expression of their love, and the consummation of their life. He unites himself to my will, in order to introduce me to the supernatural love of the Father and the Son" (48–49).

[5] Eugene Vandeur, *Pledge of Glory: Meditations on the Eucharist and the Trinity*, trans. the Dominican Nuns of Corpus Christi Monastery, Menlo Park, CA (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1958), 33.

[6] Ibid., 34–35.

> And it is the Holy Spirit, breathed into the communicant by the Eucharistic Lord, that binds the members of the Church to Jesus and to each other. Indeed, it can be said that Christ feeds us with his very Flesh and Blood *in order* to give or deepen our share in his Spirit. Through the Sacrament, the physical Presence of Christ remains with us for only a brief time; it perdures only as long as the sacramental species of bread and wine remain. This union in Flesh is intended, however, to bind us to him in the Spirit, the Lord's Flesh serving as instrument for the bestowal of the Spirit. One can see here the mediatorial role of his Flesh. God the Son uses his very humanity for a purpose beyond itself, namely, to unite us to the divinity and, in him, to each other so that our fellowship may be with the Father as well as with the Son. . . . The reception of the Eucharistic Flesh of Christ and our share in the offering of the sacrifice is intensely Trinitarian. By the Flesh of Christ, we are united to and in his Spirit so that we might be a pleasing offering to the Father.[7]

Likewise, Kilmartin and Robert Daly have sought to articulate the role of the persons of the Trinity in the Eucharist, particularly that of the Holy Spirit. Kilmartin writes:

> In the Eucharistic celebration the Holy Spirit is manifested both as the source of the faith in which the Eucharistic Prayer was formulated as memorial of the death of the Lord, and the source of the response of the assembly to the content of this performative form of the act of faith. The Holy Spirit "anoints" the prayer of the Church and "anoints" the participants of the liturgy so that, through the medium of the prayer, Christ comes to the assembly and the assembly to Christ. The Holy Spirit is also the source of the sanctification of the Eucharistic gifts of the Church and of the sanctification of the communicants of the sacraments of Christ's body and blood. In this way also the Spirit is seen as the one who brings Christ to the communicants and the communicants to Christ in such a way that spiritual unity between Christ and the communicants and between the communicants themselves is deepened.[8]

It is clear that for Kilmartin, as for the contemporary authors mentioned before him, that, as much as they are part of one simultaneous divine action, the Son and the Spirit play different roles in the Eucharist. These roles are reflective of the roles that they play more

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[7] James T. O'Connor, *The Hidden Manna: A Theology of the Eucharist* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 334–335.

[8] Edward J. Kilmartin, *The Eucharist in the West: History and Theology*, ed. Robert J. Daly (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1988), 370. See also Robert J. Daly, "Sacrifice Unveiled or Sacrifice Revisited: Trinitarian and Liturgical Perspectives," *Theological Studies* 64 (2003): 24–42.

broadly in the economy of salvation, which are in turn determined by the relations that distinguish the persons of the Trinity.

In sum, these modern authors connect the Eucharist and the Trinity in four ways. First, they see the Eucharist as another sending of the Son and the Spirit into the world for its redemption, a site where the economic missions of the Trinity take place. As such, the Eucharist is similar to the Incarnation or Pentecost; it is an act essential to the plan of redemption whereby God enters the world to draw it to God's own self. Second, God the Father draws those who receive to himself by uniting them to the body and blood of the Son. This unity brings an increase of unity with the Holy Spirit. Once united to the Son and Spirit, the faithful are united to the Father and to the unity that all three persons share. The Eucharist is, then, not only a site of God's movement toward human beings, but of human movement back toward God. It acts as a kind of pivot point in the economy of salvation: the moment where the outpouring of the Son and Spirit join most deeply with the faithful and draw them back to the Father. Third, the Eucharist binds the members of the Church, the body of Christ, to each other and to their Head in his act of self-offering to the Father. Fourth, it connects the sacrifices and offering of their own lives to that of Christ, with which they are offered to the Father.

Although medieval theologians did not call the Eucharist an "intensely Trinitarian" act, they saw that these Trinitarian dimensions are present in it. This is true in particular of the Cistercians who treat the Eucharist extensively: William of Saint-Thierry, Isaac of Stella, and Baldwin of Forde. Other Cistercian authors mention the Eucharist, but none as comprehensively. Caesarius of Heisterbach recounts many Eucharistic miracles, for example, but his systematic theological account of the Eucharist

does not have the depth of his predecessors, nor is he interested in writing a serious theological treatise on the subject.[9] William, Isaac, and Baldwin, by contrast, probe the mystery of the Eucharist in treatises specifically devoted to it and in their other writings. Their work constitutes medieval Cistercian Eucharistic theology. But despite one article that examines none of the Eucharistic treatises and omits Isaac and Baldwin, there is no scholarly account of Cistercian Eucharistic theology.[10] Nor is there more generally a historical work that examines the connection between medieval Trinitarian and Eucharistic theology. This dissertation seeks to fill both lacunae.

These gaps in scholarship are no doubt due to the ways in which scholars study medieval theology. First, they tend to focus on particular topics of theological investigation or doctrinal controversy: debates between Dominicans and Franciscans over the nature of the relations and essence of the Trinity, for example, or conflicts over transubstantiation and the nature of Eucharistic presence. However, medieval thinkers saw theology as less discrete than we do and examined the connection between doctrines more readily. Second, scholars of medieval Eucharistic theology tend to focus on debates about the Eucharist—the controversy with Lanfranc or later scholasticism—and more popular forms of devotion and writing, such as accounts of mystical experiences, miracles, and devotional practices. Monastic authors get short shrift, but are no less

[9] Caesarius of Heisterbach, *The Diagloue on Miracles*, trans. H. von E. Scott and C.C. Swinton Bland, vol. 2, 2 vols. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1929); Victoria Smirnova, "Narrative Theology in Caesarius of Heisterbach's Dialogus Miraculorum," in *The Art of Cistercian Persuasion in the Middle Ages and Beyond: Caesarius of Heisterbach's Dialogue on Miracles and Its Reception*, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions 196 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 121–42. For a more detailed account of Cistercian sources for Eucharistic theology, including Cistercian influence on the grail legend, see M. Camille Hontoir, "La Dévotion au saint sacrement chez les premiers cisterciens (XXIIe–XIIIe siècles)," in *Studia Eucharistica: DCC Anni a Condito Festo Sanctissimi Corporis Christi 1246-1946* (Brussels: Uitgeverij Paul Brand, 1946), 1932–56.

[10] Marsha L. Dutton, "Eat, Drink, and Be Merry: The Eucharistic Spirituality of the Cistercian Fathers," in *Erudition in God's Service*, Cistercian Studies Series 98 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987), 1–31.

worthy of scholarly attention. As Jean Leclercq observes, they are occupied less with "the mode according to which the mysteries are accomplished and made known to us than their end, which is the loving union with the Lord in this life and in the hereafter."[11] But that makes them no less worthy of scholarly investigation—especially those like the Cistercian authors examined here, who studied both mode and end.

**II. Historical Review of Eucharistic Theology**

In order to situate this dissertation, a brief review of medieval Eucharistic theology and contemporary scholarship on it is in order. The development of Eucharistic theology from the patristic to high medieval period is tied to three pairs of figures: Augustine and Ambrose, Ratramnus and Paschasius Radbertus, and Berengar and Lanfranc. The first two pairs were not seen as contrary to one another, but as complementary; the latter provoked one of the great debates of the Middle Ages. In his *De sacramentis*, Ambrose argues that the bread is bread before the words of consecration, but afterwards becomes the body of Christ.[12] The fact that the faithful do not see the outward appearance of blood after the consecration is to spare them the horror, but the value of that blood remains efficacious for their redemption.[13] Ambrose does not otherwise explain how this conversion takes place, or get into questions of substance and accidents. The emphasis, Ian Levy notes, is on the fact of the real presence effected by "divine power exhibited in the words of the Lord; the one who created heaven and earth

[11] Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, trans. Catharine Misrahi (New York: Fordham University Press, 1982), 222.
[12] "Tu forte dicis: Meus panis est usitatus. Sed panis iste panis est ante uerba sacramentorum; ubi accesserit consecration de pane fit caro Christi" (*De sacramentis*, *SC* 25, IV.14.82). "Antequam consecratur panis est; ubi autem uerba accesserint, corpus est Christi" (*De sacramentis* IV.22.85).
[13] *De sacramentis* IV.20.84.

can surely effect this miraculous conversion."[14] Augustine, on the other hand, was less concerned with the conversion and more focused on the symbolic value of the sacrament, bread and food, as distinct from its power, the grace received in consuming such food. This takes place in a communal context, for the reality (*res*) conveyed in the sacrament includes incorporation into the mystical body of Christ.[15] Scholars have characterized these emphases as the "metabolic" or "somatic" approach of Ambrose and the "symbolic" approach of Augustine, while emphasizing that the two were not seen as conflicting throughout the patristic and medieval periods.

A similar distinction reappears in the thought of Paschasius Radbertus and Ratramnus Maurus, both monks in the monastery of Corbie. Radbertus had written *De corpore et sanguine domini* for the instruction of the monks at Corbie near Amiens *ca.* 831–833, and the work was presented to Charles the Bald in 844 upon his coronation. The court's reaction was mixed, however, and so Charles tuned to Ratramnus for guidance on the topic of Eucharistic presence. Like Ambrose, Radbertus placed a strong emphasis on the reality of Christ's presence in the Eucharist: "This flesh which had been offered by Christ for the life of the world is now daily offered so that eternal life may be restored in the faithful."[16] Christ is the Truth and does not lie in promising his presence in these mysteries. Moreover, this presence is the means by which he brings about salvation. Gary Macy notes that Paschasius is driven by soteriological concerns: Christ must be present in the Eucharist because we are saved by the contact of our nature with Christ's.[17]

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[14] Ian Christopher Levy, *John Wyclif: Scriptural Logic, Real Presence, and the Parameters of Orthodoxy* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2003), 124–125.
[15] *Iohannis Euangelium Tractatus*, XXVI.11, 15, 18; see also Levy, *John Wyclif*, 125–126.
[16] Levy, *John Wyclif*, 128. See also *De corpore et sanguine Domini* I, *CCCM* 16, 14–15.
[17] Gary Macy, *The Theologies of the Eucharist in the Early Scholastic Period: A Study of the Salvific Function of the Sacrament according to the Theologians c.1080–c. 1220* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 28.

The bread and wine remain figures of that presence, but also bearers of its reality and truth.[18]

By contrast, Ratramnus takes a more Augustinian tack. He is concerned to answer the two questions posed by Charles the Bald: Do the faithful receive the body and blood of Christ in a mystery or in truth, and was this the same body born of Mary? This depends on the definition of figure and truth, Ratramnus argues. Truth is "the direct manifestation of the thing itself, not hidden under any veil," while a figure is veiled under something else that signifies it.[19] Something cannot be called a mystery, he continues, unless it is hidden by such a veil. The Eucharist is such a mystery. The historical body of Christ, born of a virgin, is his true body, which cannot be present if the Eucharist remains a symbol or figure. The body of Christ is therefore not present in truth, though it is spiritually present and accessible by faith.[20] Despite potential contradictions between Ratramnus' and Pascasius' writing, the two existed in harmony in the decades after without any conflicts that we have record of.[21]

Conflict came in the controversy over the thought of Berengar of Tours, one of the great masters of the eleventh century. Berengar began publishing his Eucharistic thought in 1047. The synods of Vercelli in 1050 and Paris in 1051 condemned his writing. Despite a compromise in 1054, the Easter council of Rome presided over by

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[18] Levy, *John Wyclif*, 130.
[19] Ibid., 132.
[20] Ibid., 132–135.
[21] Macy, *The Theologies of the Eucharist*, 22. Coolman adds: "While Ratramnus is often hailed as espousing a 'spiritual' view, as opposed to Radbertus' 'physical' view, such characterizations are misleading, failing to appreciate the depth and subtly of either author. As scholars have noted, their differences hinge on diverse, underlying conceptions of what the nature of reality is and what concepts best express it. In this sense, these two treatises adumbrate the poles of later medieval discussion and illustrate the unavoidable role that metaphysical assumptions will play in later Eucharistic theologies" (Boyd Taylor Coolman, "The Christo-Pneumatic-Ecclesial Character of Twelfth-Century Sacramental Theology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Theology* (forthcoming)).

Pope Nicholas II condemned him again and forced him to sign the "*Ego Berengarius*" statement drafted by Cardinal Humbert of Silva Candida. Berengar returned home from the council and continued publishing his Eucharistic theories, claiming that he signed the statement under duress. In turn, Lanfranc of Bec published his *De corpore et sanguine Domini ca*. 1063, an attempt to respond to Berengar without the crude physicalism and theological imprecision of Humbert's oath.[22] Henry Chadwick argues that the heart of Berengar's campaign was a concern to recognize that the change brought about by consecrating bread and wine need not and should not entail the species ceasing to be bread and wine, which would be incompatible with Augustine's concept of sacrament as sign: "To remove the sign was to annihilate the sacrament as sacrament."[23] After the consecration, the bread and wine remain bread and wine while taking on the real presence of Christ, Berengar argued. They are not subject to corruption, nor do their natures change, for the destruction of substance and retention of accidents would be a gross misuse of logic. But they are now signs of that presence and have a real relationship to it.[24]

In response to Berengar, Lanfranc articulated a position that would later acquire the name *transubstantiation*. After consecration the appearance of bread and wine remain, but their substance is transformed into the body and blood of Christ. Lanfranc claims that this articulates the established position of the whole Church and that in departing from it, Berengar has effectively transgressed the bounds of orthodoxy.[25]

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[22] Levy, *John Wyclif*, 137–140.
[23] Henry Chadwick, "Ego Berengarius," *Journal of Theological Studies* 40 (1989): 418, 425.
[24] Paul J. J. M. Bakker, "La Raison et La Miracle: Les Doctrines Eucharistiques (c. 1250–1400)" (PhD Diss., Radboud University, 1999), 9–12; Chadwick, "Ego Berengarius," 427.
[25] Levy, *John Wyclif*, 142–143.

However he does not offer a detailed account of how accidents and substance can exist separately and claims that this should be investigated by future theologians.[26]

In the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, they took up the charge. Berengar became the figure against whom authors would place themselves to mark the orthodoxy of their views. Debates engaged a variety of questions. For example, since the reality of Christ's substantial presence had been established, theologians took up the question of whether the substance of bread remained with the substance of Christ's body after the consecration. Alger of Liège stood firmly opposed: "In these species of bread and wine either nothing exists except the substance of Christ's body, or else our faith is in vain. The substance of the bread and wine is converted into the body and blood of Christ while it becomes what it was not and ceases to be what it had been."[27] Does that mean that the fracture of the bread is a literal breaking of Christ's body? No, argued Gilbert de la Porée, the fracture is like a branch that appears to be broken when submerged in water, but is in fact whole.[28]

The twelfth century debates produced two important developments in the doctrine of the Eucharist. First, the anonymously authored *Summa Sententiarum* drew on Augustinian terminology to make a distinction between the *sacramentum tantum*, the visible species of bread and wine; the *sacramentum et res sacramenti*, the true body and blood of Christ under these species; and the *res tantum*, union with Christ and his mystical body the Church signified and effected by the body and blood of Christ under

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[26] Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 18.
[27] "In illis enim speciebus panis et vini, vel nulla est nisi corporis Christi substantia vel fides nostra est irrata. Panis enim et vini substantia in corpus et sanguinem Christi conversa, dum facta est quod non erat, desistit esse quod fuerat" (*De sacramentis de corporis et sanguinis Dominici*, *Patralogia Latina* 180: 807B; English translation from Levy, *John Wyclif*, 154.)
[28] Ibid., 156–157.

the species of bread and wine.[29] Peter Lombard's use of this distinction in his *Sententiae* cemented it as standard terminology for subsequent authors.

Second, the term *transubstantio* came to be used to describe the substantial change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, as distinct from a transformation of qualities or outward forms. Goering posits that the term may have been introduced in Paris *ca.* 1140 by the English scholar Robert Pullen (whose potential influence on Baldwin of Forde is explored in chapter 3).[30] In 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council—convened by Innocent III, who had written on Eucharistic questions prior to his pontificate—employed the first official use of the term in the past participle, *transsubstantiatis*, to defend the real presence of Christ, the head and savior of the Church. However, at the time of Lateran IV there was no consensus on the meaning of transubstantiation. In fact, three theories of Eucharistic presence existed simultaneously and were all reckoned in 1201–1202 by Peter of Capua, a Master at Paris, to be orthodox. No particular theory of conversion is an article of faith, Peter concludes; the article of faith is that Christ is present on the altar following the consecration.[31] In this vein, therefore, when a figure such as Baldwin of Forde argues that transubstantiation is the orthodox dogmatic term to use, he opposes a lack of real presence, not other theories of conversion that also result in real presence.

Beyond the trajectory of Western medieval Eucharistic thought, two historical developments are worth considering. First, Patrick McGoldrick has examined the role of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist in light of various epicleses (invocations of the Holy Spirit over the bread and wine). Early liturgical texts distinguish three aspects of the

[29] Ibid., 161–162.
[30] Joseph Goering, "The Invention of Transubstantiation," *Traditio* 46 (1991): 157.
[31] Levy, *John Wyclif*, 172–175.

Spirit's Eucharistic action: preparing the participants for Eucharistic reception, consecrating and transforming the bread and wine, and making the Eucharistic communion efficacious.[32] But the understanding of the Eucharist that these prayers convey is broader than preparation and consecration. McGoldrick concludes that, in light of the structure and developments of Eucharistic prayers, "the Eucharist can be seen as the actualization of a divine economy revealed and realized in and by Jesus Christ. The epiclesis in the context of the whole Eucharist seeks the realization in the Church of what was accomplished once for all in the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. . . . The role that the Holy Spirit played in the mysteries of Christ's incarnate life, in the resurrection, and on Pentecost, he continues to play in the Eucharist."[33] Thus, in order to understand the relation between Christ and the Spirit in the Eucharist, one must understand the nature and structure of the economy of salvation as a whole, which is articulated *in nuce* in the epiclesis.[34]

McGoldrick goes on to argue that surveying early epicleses uncovers "a rich pneumatological seam in the Eucharist," the existence of which was largely unexamined in Western Eucharistic theology and spirituality. He notes that spiritual reception of the Eucharist had a deeper sense than "spiritual communion" in contemporary discussions, and that "elements of the Western tradition, in the line of Saint Augustine, saw as the final effect of the Eucharist the building up of the Church in charity, which they ascribed to the Holy Spirit." But, he concludes, "this last tended to become detached from consideration of the Eucharist, and in all cases the pneumatological dimension tended to

[32] Patrick McGoldrick, "The Holy Spirit and the Eucharist," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 50, no. 1 (April 1983): 54–55.
[33] Ibid., 60.
[34] Ibid., 62.

be passed over so that only the Christological remained important."[35] This dissertation provides strong exceptions to McGoldrick's rule, particularly with William of Saint-Thierry.

Second, contemporary with twelfth-century debates, a different Eucharistic controversy emerged in the Byzantine world. The prayer to Christ in the liturgies of St. Basil and of St. John Chrysostom concludes: "For it is you who offer and are offered, who receive and are yourself received." This implies that the sacrifice of the Eucharist is offered to the Trinity as a whole, not simply to the Father. The patriarch-elect of Antioch, the deacon Soterichos Panteugenos, argued that this idea implied Nestorianism, with the human nature of Christ offering the sacrifice and the divine nature receiving it. In this case, there would be two *hypostases* in Christ serving as subjects of two contradictory actions. In response to Soterichos, the councils in Constantinople of 1156 and 1157, and their spokesman Nicholas of Methone, held that the single *hypostasis* of the incarnate Word can and must be the only subject of both human and divine actions, in this case offering and reception. John Meyendorff notes that for a significant line of patristic thought, "the soteriological value of the sacrifice of Christ consists precisely of the fact that the priest, the victim, and the God who receives the offering are one."[36] Furthermore, Nicholas argued that Soterichos confused the hypostatic characteristics of Father and Son with the energies or divine actions in the economy of salvation. Though the persons of

[35] Ibid., 56.
[36] John Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Washington, DC: Corpus Books, 1969), 153. This section is taken from pp. 152–155.

the Trinity participate in a personal way in the action of God *ad extra*, that action remains essentially one.[37]

The *Synodikón of Orthodoxy*—a service of thanksgiving introduced into the liturgy of "Orthodoxy Sunday," when the Byzantine world celebrates the liquidation of iconoclasm in 843—proclaims that Christ "reconciled us to himself by means of *the whole mystery of the economy*, and by himself and in himself, reconciled us also to his God and Father and, of course, to the most holy and life-giving Spirit [italics original]."[38] Meyendorff elaborates the importance of this statement: "Christ's sacrifice is truly unique because it is not an isolated action but the culminating point of an 'economy' that includes the Old Testament preparation, the incarnation, the death, the resurrection and the presence of the Holy Spirit, and because the Same 'offers and is offered, receives and is received.' This 'economy' is essentially a Trinitarian action that also introduces human nature into the circle of divine love."[39] Because the sacrifice of the Eucharist is offered to the Holy Trinity, and because it is the sacrifice of Christ (not simply an image of it), the Eucharist "is the realization, at the moment on which we partake of it, of the whole economy of salvation and with all its elements made really present: the incarnation of the Logos, his death, his resurrection, and his Second Coming."[40] Across the continent,

[37] Matthew Milliner describes the effect the councils had on liturgical art: "The Council decided that fresco painters should place an image of the entire Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—near the locus of Eucharistic consecration. They did not need to invent a Trinitarian symbol, for one was already on offer in what is known as the *Hetoimasia*, or 'Prepared Throne.' Representing God's presence, this symbol depicts the invisible Father on the throne, the Son represented by the Gospel book and instruments of the Passion, and the dove of the Holy Spirit. The image's inclusion in frescoes and mosaics means that art historians can easily trace the effects of the Council of 1156–57" (Matthew J. Milliner, "Icon as Theology: The Byzantine Virgin of Predestination," in *ReVisioning: Critical Methods of Seeing Christianity in the History of Art*, ed. James Romaine and Linda Stratford (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 82.
[38] In Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, 154.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid., 155.

Cistercian theologians of the same century were developing the same theology in their own idiom.

**III. Review of Scholarship on Eucharistic Theology and Practice**

Modern scholarship of medieval history and theology tends to fall into the following categories. The first examines the social realities and devotional practices surrounding the Eucharist and the way in which lay people and clerics used them as a means of increasing clerical power, testing creedal fidelity, and forming art and culture. Miri Rubin's *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* serves as a prime example, with extensive analysis of how the Eucharist influenced doctrine, popular piety, liturgical changes, art, drama, architecture, and the treatment of outsiders (such as Jews and heretics).[41] Caroline Walker Bynum's *Holy Feast, Holy Fast* and *Fragmentation and Redemption* examine the way in which power dynamics and the symbolism of food, women, and the humanity of Christ explain the blood, food imagery, eroticism, and suffering of female mysticism.[42]

Édouard Demoutet looks at devotion to the flesh of Christ in and at the focus on seeing the Eucharist as a form of devotion.[43] Peter Browe's *Der Verehung der Eucharistie im Mittelalter* examines liturgical practices, such as processions and the new importance of the elevation.[44] Nathan Mitchell's *Cult and Controversy: The Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* offers an account of the nature and importance of ocular

[41] Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*.
[42] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1992).
[43] Édouard Demoutet, *Le désir de voir l'hostie et les origines de la dévotion au Saint-Sacrement* (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne, 1926); Édouard Demoutet, *Le Christ selon la chair et la vie liturgique au moyen-âge* (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne, 1932).
[44] Peter Browe, *Die Verehrung der Eucharistie im Mittelalter* (Munich: M. Hueber, 1933).

communion and seeing the Eucharist.[45] Dennis Devlin's dissertation focuses, but not exclusively, on liturgical developments from the Carolingian period through the rise of the feast of Corpus Christi.[46] And Ann Astell's *Eating Beauty* argues that the great spiritualities of the Middle Ages were oriented toward a restoration of the beauty of paradise through a pronounced virtue, which is Eucharistically infused, nourished through ascetical practice, and fitted to a particular diagnostic interpretation of original sin.[47]

The second type of scholarship focuses on the way in which Eucharistic theology developed and the significance of those developments. Just as the first group of scholars notices a confluence of various social and intellectual phenomena around the Eucharist, the second group sees the Eucharist as a confluence of important doctrines and debates, as noted above. Most accounts of the Eucharist in the Middle Ages seek to offer a succinct overview of the major debates of the period. Ian Levy's chapter on medieval Eucharistic theology in *John Wyclif: Scriptural Logic, Real Presence, and the Parameters of Orthodoxy* is a fine example of this. These treatments begin with an account of Paschasius Radbertus and Ratramnus, then proceed to Berengar and Lanfranc. They then touch on the twelfth century Eucharistic debates in order to focus on the more developed and livelier debates in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Many accounts focus on a particular time period or particular thinkers. Geiselmann examines Eucharistic theology from the Carolingian period through the

[45] Nathan Mitchell, *Cult and Controversy: The Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* (New York: Pueblo, 1982).
[46] Dennis Steel Devlin, "Corpus Christi: A Study in Medieval Eucharistic Theory, Devotion and Practice" (PhD Diss., University of Chicago, 1975).
[47] Ann W. Astell, *Eating Beauty: The Eucharist and the Spiritual Arts of the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

eleventh century.[48] Jorissen analyzes debates about Eucharistic change, transubstantiation in particular, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[49] Bakker recounts debates about Eucharistic presence, change, and accidents in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[50] Schlette gives an account of the thought of Bonaventure, Albert, and Aquinas on spiritual communion.[51] And Henri de Lubac's *Corpus Mysticum* shows how the term "mystical body" was ascribed first to the Church, then to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and the effect that that shift had.[52]

The Eucharistic thought of the twelfth century remains less studied, however. Holböck's *Der Eucharistische und Der Mistische Leib Christi* examines many scholastic and monastic authors in the twelfth century.[53] Devlin has a chapter on monastic devotion to the body of Christ and monastic Eucharistic devotion. Ghellinck offers a fine overview of the major (and less major) thinkers of the twelfth century, the role of debate with heretics in the development of Eucharistic thought, and liturgical changes.[54] The main drawback to his account is that it sees Eucharistic thought on a trajectory ending in Lateran IV and Trent, with writers contributing to or departing from that trajectory, and that it cannot take account of the century of scholarship that has transpired since its inception. Any student of Medieval Eucharistic theology must grapple with Gary Macy, the most frequently cited scholar in contemporary accounts of the Eucharist, who has

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[48] Josef Rupert Geiselmann, *Die Eucharistielehre der Vorscholastik* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1926).
[49] Hans Jorissen, *Die Entfalung der Transsubstantiationlehre bis zum Beginn der Hochschtolastik* (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlasbuchhandlung, 1965).
[50] Bakker, "La Raison et La Miracle: Les Doctrines Eucharistiques (c. 1250–1400)."
[51] Heinz Robert Schlette, *Die Lehre von der geistlichen Kommunion bei Bonaventura, Albert dem Grossen und Thomas von Aquin* (Munich: M. Hueber, 1959).
[52] Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages: A Historical Survey*, trans. Gemma Simmonds, et al. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).
[53] Ferdinand Holböck, *Der Eucharistiche und der mystische Leib Christi in ihren Beziehungen zueinander nach der Lehre der Frühscholastik* (Rome: Verlag "Officium Libri Catholici," 1941).
[54] Joseph de Ghellink, "Eucharistie au Xlle siecle en Occident," *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1913).

done the most work on twelfth century Eucharistic theologians. His *The Theologies of the Eucharist* digs into the details of debates over the metaphysics of Christ's presence under the appearance of bread and wine, the change that the bread and wine undergo, the manner in which recipients of the Eucharist are united to Christ, and pastoral questions such as what to do with a mouse who has eaten a host.[55] This dissertation seeks to follow in a similar vein of historical scholarship, fleshing out three important figures in twelfth-century theology and showing the relationship between their Trinitarian and Eucharistic thought.

[55] Macy, *The Theologies of the Eucharist*.

# Chapter 1: The Eucharistic Theology of William of Saint-Thierry

## I. Introduction

William of Saint-Thierry is best known for his writings on the journey of the soul toward God and for his Trinitarian theology. It is curious, then, that in *The Cisterscian Heritage*, Louis Bouyer calls William's Eucharistic doctrine "the keystone of his own spiritual teaching."[1] Should not that pride of place go to William's doctrine of *unitas spiritus*, his emphasis on the Holy Spirit as both the substantial love of God and the gift of grace by which human beings participate in that love, or his understanding of human faculties as a real image of the Trinity? While these are all vital elements of his theology, Bouyer is correct, for a keystone caps the arch of which it is the peak; it holds the other stones in place, but the shape it has is determined by the architectural logic of the arch as a whole. Likewise, William's Eucharistic theology caps his theological system and serves as the meeting point for many aspects of his thought according to the shape provided by his understanding of the Trinity.

For William, human beings are brought into the relationship with God for which they were created by participating in the relations of the Trinity. This participation takes place in a Trinitarian way, through movements of the Son and the Spirit that mirror their relations in the Godhead. This Trinitarian pattern or (to use Matthieu Rougé's term) logic consists of the order in which the persons proceed in their endless exchange of self-giving love, while remaining one substance, but also the fact that that love desires to incorporate human beings into its exchange. The immanent gift of love provides the template for the

[1] Louis Bouyer, *The Cistercian Heritage*, trans. Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1958), 107.

economic gift of love: Just as God is one substance that has the relations of three persons inherent in it, so the Trinity's one operation of salvation uniting men to God mirrors the order of those substantial relations. This takes place according to two dynamics, Rougé argues, both present in the Eucharist: the logic of the Incarnation and the logic of grace or the gift of the Spirit. These are not rivals, but they are carried together by the logic of the Trinity.[2] The logic of the Trinitarian relations forms the logic of the Trinitarian missions, these being the Incarnation and the gift of the Spirit, which reach a peak in the Eucharist.

This chapter focuses on how William's Trinitarian theology shapes his thought on the Eucharist. It examines William's understanding of particular questions in the Eucharistic theology of his day, such as how the body and blood of Christ are present under the appearance of bread and wine and the significance of Eucharistic reception, two areas in which William made significant theological contributions. It draws on Rougé's definitive treatment of William's Eucharistic theology, *Doctrine et expérience de l'eucharistie chez Guillaume de Saint-Thierry*, to give an account of William's thought on the Eucharist from his early treatise *De sacramento altaris* to the Golden Epistle. It builds on Rougé's account to examine William's thought as part of Cisercian Eucharistic theology as a whole, to further explore the connection between the Incarnation and the Eucharist, and to refine Rougé and Bouyer's argument about the Trinitarian nature of William's Eucharistic theology.[3]

The chapter begins by recounting the aspects of William's Trinitarian theology that provide that form or logic, including the role of the Spirit as the giver of grace through the sacraments. It examines how Trinitarian logic informs William's arguments

[2] Matthieu Rougé, *Doctrine et experience de l'eucharistie chez Guillaume de Saint-Thierry* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1999), 304.
[3] Bouyer, *The Cistercian Heritage*, 108–109, 118–119.

for the need for Christ's body and soul to be present in the Eucharist, arguments that parallel his understanding of the necessity of Christ's presence in the incarnation. For William, these two parts of the Son's mission must be thought of according to the same logic, whose end is incorporating belivers into the life of the Trinity. In both the Incarnation and the Eucharist, Christ becomes present in the way necessary for human salvation. The necessity of Christ's bodily and spiritual presence, in turn, drives William's argument on the metaphysics of that presence. However, the Trinitarian dimensions of his Eucharistic theology become most visible in his theology of bodily and spiritual Eucharistic reception, including spiritual reception through meditation on the Passion or the Mass. In both, the faithful are joined to the members of the Trinity and participate by grace in their relations. They are bound to the Son in the Spirit, making them part of the Son's offering of himself to the Father. Unity with Christ in the Spirit also makes them part of the body of Christ, the Church, and gives them a foretaste of that union with God that will be experienced fully only in the beatific vision. This chapter concludes with a consideration of William's use of imagery of a kiss, based on the Song of Songs, which ties together all the themes considered: Trinity, Incarnation, Eucharist, Church, and eschatology.

**II. Biography**

The basic chronology of William's life comes from the only surviving fragment of a late twelfth-century work called the *Vita antiqua*. The author is anonymous but likely a monk at the Cistercian abbey of Signy, where William spent the last thirteen years of his life, and he recorded what an acquaintance of William had told him. Other information comes from William's own work, especially the first book of his *Vita prima sancti*

*Bernardi*. He was born *ca.* 1080 in the now-Belgian town of Liège, the cradle of new Eucharistic piety.[4] In Liège the canon Alcher wrote a treatise on the Eucharist combatting Berengar, and Rupert of Deutz composed his own treatise, to which William would then respond. Liège was the home to Juliana of Mont-Cornillon, who worked to promote the feast of Corpus Christi in the early thirteenth century; Pope Urban IV, who instituted the feast in 1264, had been a canon and archdeacon there as well.[5]

William studied in Reims and then became a Benedictine monk in the city's abbey of Saint Nicaise between 1111 and 1118. In 1118 or 1119, he and his abbot stopped at Clairvaux and met its abbot, Bernard. The meeting became a friendship that transformed William's life. Despite an impulse to stay there in Clairvaux, and respecting Bernard's refusal to let him leave the black monks for the white, William returned to Saint Nicaise and a year or two later was elected abbot of the nearby monastery of Saint Thierry. He remained there until 1135, when he departed and made simple profession in the new Cistercian abbey of Signy, where he composed many of his later works and spent his days until his death in 1148.[6] Unlike the other great twelfth-century Cistercians, William left no corpus of sermons, but rather eighteen works and five surviving letters. These range from the more scholastic, to polemics against Abelard and William of Conches, scriptural commentaries on Romans and the Song of Songs, a life of St. Bernard, and the great spiritual treatises for which he is best known. All of William's

[4] F. Tyler Sergent et al., ed., *Unitas Spiritus and the Originality of William of Saint-Thierry*, Cistercian Studies Series 268 (Collegeville, MN: Cistercian Publications, 2015), xxvi; Paul Verdeyen, *Guillaume de Saint-Thierry: premier auteur mystique des anciens Pays-Bas*, trans. André Louf (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 121.
[5] Verdeyen, *Guillaume de Saint-Thierry: premier auteur mystique des anciens Pays-Bas*, 121–123.
[6] Sergent et al., *Unitas Spiritus and the Originality of William of Saint-Thierry*, xxvi–xxix. For more of William's biography, see Brian Patrick McGuire, "A Chronology and Biography of William of Saint-Thierry," in *The Brill Companion to William of Saint-Thierry* (forthcoming) and Jerry Carfantan, trans., *William of Saint Thiery, His Birth, His Formation and His First Monastic Experiences*, Cistercian Studies Series 94 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987).

extant works appear in the *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis* (*CCCM*) 86–89B, edited by Paul Verdeyen et al., and many appear in translation the Cistercian Fathers series from Cistercian Publications. This chapter uses the critical editions from the *CCCM* and the Cistercian Fathers (CF) translations, where available.[7]

**III. Literature Review**

We must first review the scholarship on William's Eucharistic theology, before turning to other aspects of his theology. Of the books and articles on William's Eucharistic theology, Hallet's short article on William's Eucharistic theology adds little to the thinkers described below.[8] Hontoir mentions William first in his catalogue of Cistercian devotion to the Eucharist, but offers little beyond the main themes appropriate for a catalogue entry.[9] Dubois' article on the Mass at Cîteaux in the twelfth century offers more insight into the liturgical-historical context in which William wrote, especially with respect to concerns about the proliferation of Masses offered.[10] Macy identifies William as part of the medieval school of mystical approach to the Eucharist, yet correctly notes that he synthesizes spiritual and physical approaches to the Eucharist into a theology of his own.[11] Châtillon's article on William's more scholastic treatises gives more background to the *De sacramento altaris*, as well as William's motivations for entering into more scholastic disputes.[12] And John Van Engen provides further context for the *De*

[7] The most recent full bibliography of William's works can be found in Sergent et al., *Unitas Spiritus and the Originality of William of Saint-Thierry*, 185–190.
[8] Charles Hallet, "Aspectos de la Eucaristia en Guillermo de Saint-Thierry," *Cuadernos monasticos* 11 (1976): 77–82.
[9]
[10] Marie-Gérard Dubois, "L'Eucharistie à Cîteaux au milieu du Xlle siècle," *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 67 (2005): 266–86.
[11] Macy, *The Theologies of the Eucharist*, 96–98.
[12] Jean Châtillon, "William of Saint Thierry, Monasticism and the Schools: Rupert of Deutz, Abelard, and William of Conches," in *William, Abbot of St. Thierry: A Colloquium at the Abbey of St. Thierry*, trans. Jerry Carfantan, Cistercian Studies Series 94 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987), 153–80.

*sacramento altaris* in his study of Rupert of Deutz and article focusing on Rupert and William.[13]

In her article on the Eucharistic spirituality of the Cistercian Fathers, Marsha Dutton argues that while William of Saint-Thierry, Baldwin of Forde, and Isaac of Stella wrote theological treatises on the Eucharist, "as the Fathers were not men of the schools, their inquiry into Eucharistic theology emerged not by and large in theological treatises but in their affective works, treatises, and sermons concerned with knowing God through love."[14] True to her word, she does not examine these treatises—indeed, she does not cite one once—but focuses on the writings of Bernard, William, and Aelred. There she finds questions posed about the Eucharist, which she divides according to whether they are asked by reason or love, a distinction that she adopts for the purpose of her study while acknowledging that it is "artificial and nonsustainable."[15] While a number of her insights are helpful for discerning the Cisercian Fathers' understanding of the Eucharist, in particular for how it fits into their devotion to the humanity of Christ, some of the examples she cites are implausible.[16] And while her framework may be helpful for understanding Bernard and Aelred's infrequent reference to the Eucharist, it does not do justice to William's more robust Eucharistic theology.

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[13] John H. Van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); John H. Van Engen, "Rupert of Deutz and William of Saint-Thierry," *Revue Benedictine* 93 (1983): 57–68.
[14] Dutton, "Eat, Drink, and Be Merry: The Eucharistic Spirituality of the Cistercian Fathers," 2.
[15] Ibid., 3.
[16] For example, Aelred writes in *De institutione inclusarum*, "Hasten, linger not, eat the honeycomb with your honey, drink your wine with your milk. The blood is changed into wine to inebriate you, the water into milk to nourish you" (*CCCM* I:671, 1188–90; CF 2, 90). Dutton comments, "In this passage the wine of the Eucharist is certainly Jesus' blood: the receipient drinks Jesus himself. It is not, Aelred suggests, that the substance of the wine is changed into blood during the Mass, but that it was blood in the first place" (9). A few paragraphs later, Dutton writes, "[Aelred's] explanation that at the crucifixion the blood and water are transformed into wine and milk to inebriate and nourish the lover of Christ may also be regarded as a response to one of the continuing Eucharistic questions, the relationship between the accidents and the substance of the Eucharistic species, between the *sacramentum*, the bread and wine, and the *res sacramenti*, Christ's body and blood" (10). In both cases, it is more likely that Aelred is not making a statement about the nature of the Eucharist but rather describing spiritual union using scriptural metaphor.

Bouyer offers a richer treatment, linking William's Eucharistic theology to that of Origen and looking at how it relates to the sacrificial life of the monk as a whole.[17] He further explains that "it is the characteristic of the Third Person to be the fruit of that communion that exists between the Father and the Son by the first procession, that is, the eternal filiation. Thus our participation by grace in this filiation itself finds its realization in a participation of the Spirit."[18] He provides the first real connection between William's Eucharistic and Trinitarian theology in secondary scholarship. Matthieu Rougé takes up this connection in his *Doctrine et expérience de l'eucharistie chez Guillaume de Saint-Thierry*, the best scholarly account of William's Eucharistic theology.[19] There he examines all references to the Eucharist in William's corpus, as well as the Eucharistic themes of food, sacrifice, and memory. Rougé also explores the Eucharist's relation to William's understanding of body, soul, and spirit. He concludes with an analysis of the role the Eucharist plays in William's understanding of the Trinity and deification, where he fleshes out the connection Bouyer identified before him.

Because there has been so much scholarship on William, the remainder of this literature review will focus on those sources that are most pertinent to his Trinitarian and Eucharistic thought. Scholarship on William of Saint-Thierry in the early twentieth century was tied up with scholarship on Bernard of Clairvaux. For centuries, William's works had circulated under Bernard's name, and many scholars sought to extricate the former from the latter's considerable shadow, beginning with André Wilmart.[20] Étienne Gilson's *The Mystical Theology of St. Bernard*, which argued that Bernard's theology

[17] Bouyer, *The Cistercian Heritage*, 107.
[18] Ibid., 118–119.
[19] Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*.
[20] André Wilmart, "La série et la date des ouvrages de Guillaume de Saint-Thierry," *Revue Mabillon* 14 (1924): 157–67.

was, in fact, theology with a real system and argument worth analyzing, gave only a small appendix to William.[21] Thereafter a number of scholarly papers took the form of a comparison and contrast between the two to distinguish William from his better-known friend and set him apart as a theologian in his own right. We find a good example of this in Hourlier's study of the two thinkers on love in the *De contemplando Deo*, *De natura et dignitate amoris*, and *De amore Dei*.[22] Around this time, Déchanet offered an introduction to William that analyzed his theological works in light of his biography.[23]

The other major trend in scholarship on William is the debate over his sources. In the 1940s, Déchanet argued that William relied extensively on the Greek Fathers, especially Gregory of Nyssa's anthropology, which served as the foundation of his thought.[24] More controvertially, Déchanet claimed that William drew on original Greek sources, not only Latin translations. Thus his theology bore certain characteristics that distinguished him from the main Augustinian current of Western thought. Others such followed in this line of argument, providing many Greek sources for different aspects of William's thought. To give but one example, Brooke characterizes William's understanding of the Trinity and the economy of salvation as more Eastern, with the Holy Spirit as the last person in a sequence of salvific movement from the Father through the Son in the Spirit, instead of being the love substantially uniting Father and Son, as

[21] Étienne Gilson, *The Mystical Theology of St. Bernard*, trans. A.H.C. Downes, Cistercian Studies Series 120 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1990).
[22] Jacques Hourlier, "St. Bernard et Guillaume de Saint-Thierry dans le 'liber de amore,'" *Analecta Sacri Ordinis Cisterciensis* 9 (1953): 223–33.
[23] Jean-Marie Déchanet, *Guillaume de Saint-Thierry: L'homme et son œuvre* (Bruges: Éditions Charles Beyaert, 1942).
[24] Jean-Marie Déchanet, *Aux sources de la spiritualité de Guillaume de Saint-Thierry* (Bruges: Éditions Charles Beyaert, 1940).

Augustine sees him.[25] In response, many more scholars have argued that there should be a moratorium on the quest for William's Greek sources. While they are important for his theology, he does not use them in their original Greek, nor do they form his theology as a whole. Rather, this argument continues, William receives Greek sources through Latin authors influenced by Augustine and fits them into a theological scheme that is Augustinian and Western as a whole. Moreover, earlier investigations into William's sources mischaracterized Augusine—forgetting his own Eastern influences—and Eastern authors. David Bell remains the most prominent proponent of this view, but he has been joined by Anderson and Cvetković, among others.[26] Today the majority of scholars no longer hold Déchanet's stronger claims, but debate continues as to the extent of Eastern influence on William's thought.

Most authors writing on William focus on his Trinitarian theology and understanding of spiritual union with the Trinity. Brooke's essays are helpful for both, despite some mischaracterizations of patristic theologians, along the lines noted above. Bell's work is essential for understanding William's theology, as well as its Augustinian roots. He also makes necessary corrections to Déchanet, Brooke, and others. Cvetković builds on Bell's work and offers a full account of William's understanding of the Holy Spirit, grace, and spiritual union, with reference to their Augustinian roots. Rydstrøm-Poulsen's book on the influence of Augustine's theology of grace in the twelfth century focuses on William's *Expositio super epistolam ad Romanos* and is also essential in this

[25] Odo Brooke, *Studies in Monastic Theology*, Cistercian Studies Series 37 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1980), 8, 76.
[26] John D. Anderson, "The Use of Greek Sources by William of St. Thierry Especially in the Enigma Fidei," in *One Yet Two: Monastic Tradition East and West*, Cistercian Studies Series 29 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1976), 242–53; David Bell, *The Image and Likeness: The Augustinian Spirituality of William of Saint Thierry*, Cistercian Studies Series 78 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1984); Carmen Angela Cvetković, *Seeking the Face of God: The Reception of Augustine in the Mystical Thought of Bernard of Clairvaux and William of St. Thierry* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012).

regard.[27] Sergent traces the use of *unitas spiritus* in Western theology for Trinitarian and ecclesial unity, thereby underscoring the importance of William's unique use of the term for personal union with God.[28] Hastings argues that William's understanding of the Spirit's identity as the mutual love of Father and Son then allows the Spirit to serve as the means of incorporating human beings into that love.[29] However, her term for the Spirit's incommunicable identity, "facelessness," derives from contemporary systematic theology and obscures the Spirit's own real identity in William's thought. The Spirit may be the love of Father and Son, but he is not thereby faceless, invisible, or a cipher. Moreover, as Tomasic notes, William views the structure of each person of the Trinity as intersubjective,[30] and therefore the Spirit is not especially "faceless" by comparison with the Father and Son.

Baudelet's work on spiritual experience focuses on definitions of terms and offers a comprehensive distillation of William's ideas on love and knowledge, as well as other aspects of his anthropology. It is most helpful for understanding the significance of memory in William's thought.[31] Déchanet likewise offers a comprehensive account of William's understanding of love, knowledge, and their relationship in the spiritual life.[32] Bouyer's *The Cistercian Heritage* is also helpful in this regard. Blommestijn's entry on spiritual progress in the *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité Ascetique et Mystique* offers a

[27] Aage Rydstrøm-Poulsen, *The Gracious God: Gratia in Augustine and the Twelfth Century* (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 2002), 251–307.
[28] Sergent et al., *Unitas Spiritus and the Originality of William of Saint-Thierry*.
[29] Elizabeth Hastings, "William of Saint-Thierry on the Holy Spirit's Personal Identity," *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (2002): 145–51.
[30] "The very structure of each person of the Trinity is now seen to be the very insinuation of the other persons, making, thereby, the essential and radical structure of the person intersubjective" (Thomas Michael Tomasic, "William of Saint-Thierry Against Peter Abelard: A Dispute on the Meaning of Being a Person," *Analecta Cisterciensia* 28 (1972): 65.
[31] Yves-Anselme Baudelet, *L'Expérience spirituelle selon Guillaume de Saint-Thierry* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1985).
[32] Jean-Marie Déchanet, "Amor Ipse Intellectus Est: La Doctrine de l'amour intellection chez Guillaume de Saint-Thierry," *Revue du Moyen Âge Latin* 1 (1946): 349–74.

thorough analysis of William's map of spiritual progress.[33] Campos' dissertation on William's Trinitarian theology is comprehensive, but does not advance a new argument beyond other existing scholarship.[34] Some of the most helpful works come from Verdeyen, chief among them *La théologie mystique de Guillaume de Saint-Thierry*.[35] He offers an excellent synthesis of William's theologies of the Trinity and deification and in subsequent works argues for William's influence on the mystics of the Low Countries.[36] He also belongs to the Origenist camp among William scholars and shows how Origen influences William's theology of spiritual reception. Other scholars have pushed back on some of his claims: For example, McGinn writes that Verdeyen's claim that William breaks with Augustine and Gregory to initiate a new Origenist mysticism continued in Rhineland mystics is exaggerated.[37]

**IV. William's Trinitarian theology**

In order to understand the Trinitarian dimensions of William's Eucharistic theology, we must first review the most relevant parts of his Trinitarian theology. William is on the one hand concerned with safeguarding the unity of nature of the persons, but also the way in which the relations of the persons are themselves part of that nature. In *Aenigma fidei*, he writes that predicaments of substance, accident, relation, genus, species, are human words and therefore unworthy of attribution to God. The

[33] Hein Blommestijn, "Progrès – Progressants," *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité Ascetique et Mystique* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1986).
[34] Mariano Ruiz Campos, *"Ego et Pater Unum Spiritus": El Misterio de la Trinidad en Guillermo de Saint-Thierry* (Rome: Editrice Pontifica Università Gregoriana, 2007).
[35] Paul Verdeyen, *La Théologie mystique de Guillaume de Saint-Thierry* (Paris: FAC-éditions, 1990).
[36] Paul Verdeyen, "William of Saint Thierry's Influence on the Flemish Mystics," in *William, Abbot of St. Thierry: A Colloquium at the Abbey of St. Thierry*, trans. Jerry Carfantan, Cistercian Studies Series 94 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987), 240–53; Verdeyen, *Guillaume de Saint-Thierry: premier auteur mystique des anciens Pays-Bas*.
[37] Bernard McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism: Gregory the Great through the 12th Century*, The Presence of God: A History of Western Mysticism, II (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1994), 515, n. 10.

reasoning of faith does not reject human terms, however, but adopts these things and conforms them to its own rules, taking them captive to faith's service. Therefore, many names that are accidents when referring to common things are predicated substantially of God. Likewise, substance is a problematic term to predicate of God, for there is no substance which cannot underly accidents. But the divine nature is supremely simple and has no accidents. It is better speak of God's essence, William concludes, but substance can be spoken in reference to God if we understand him as subsisting through himself or as that which subsists in all things that are.[38] Safeguarding the unity and simplicity of God is of utmost importance.

By the same logic, when God is spoken of in terms of relations, those relations should never be understood as accidents. Rather, the relations are part of the one divine nature that all three persons share: "For, never has the Son approached the eternal and everlasting Father so that he might become Father as if he were not previously, since he always was, or rather, always is Father. And the Son is always consubstantial to the Eternal Father and coeternally from him, and the Holy Spirit exists coeternally from the Father and the Son and is consubstantial to them."[39] This is shown in the names themselves, William notes, because they point to the other persons of the Trinity: "the very relation inherent in the name of the person forbids his being separated; for, when the name designates the persons, at the same time it also links them together. For, when Father is said, likewise is understood the Son of whom he is the Father. When Son is said,

[38] *Ænigma fidei*, *CCCM* 89A, 50–51; English translation by John A. Anderson, *The Enigma of Faith*, Cistercian Fathers Series 9 (Kalamazo: Cistercian Publications, 1973).
[39] "Numquam enim accessit aeterno ac sempiterno Patri Filius ut Pater fieret, quod quasi non fuerit prius, cum semper fuerit uel potius semper sit Pater; semper que de aeterno Patre consubstantialis ei et coaeternus sit filius; semper de Patre et Filio coaeternus eis et consubstantialis Spiritus sanctus" (*Ænig*, 51.1023–1028; 77).

also is understood the Father whose Son he is. When the Holy Spirit is called the gift, then just as the Son is called the Word in reference to a speaker, so he is inseparably related as a gift to the giver."[40] Though the persons of the Trinity can and must be distinguished, the very relations whereby they are distinguished unite them to the other persons from whom they are distinguished.

Likewise, William continues, attributes sometimes attributed to particular persons of the Trinity are attributed to the divine nature that they share. Sometimes the Father is called Power, the Son Wisdom, and the Holy Spirit Goodness. This is done to distinguish the persons, but the terms should not be understood to mean that the Son is the Wisdom by which God is wise, or that the Spirit is the Goodness by which God is good. Rather, these attributes are predicated singly of the divine nature common to all the persons.[41] This predication of power, wisdom, and goodness also underscores how the divine persons may play distinct roles in creation or redemption, but cooperate in one united operation because of the one nature that they share.[42] In the incarnation, for instance, William argues that the whole Trinity makes the form that the Son assumes, even if it is only the Son who assumes it. In the Lord's baptism, the Father's voice and the Spirit's descent as a dove form parts of the single operation of the Trinity. The entire Trinity made the voice of the Father sound and the dove in which the Holy Spirit appeared.[43] And, in *De natura et dignitate amoris*, when God realizes that man has sinned and will

[40] "Relatiuo quippe uocabulo sic una persona singulariter dicitur in se, ut non dicatur ad se. Idcirco relatio ipsa uocabuli personalis personas separari uetat, quas cum simul nominat, simul etiam insinuat. Cum enim dicitur Pater, intelligitur pariter et Filius cuius est Pater. Cum dicitur Filius, intelligitur et Pater cuius Filius est. Cum uero Spiritus sanctus 'donum' dicitur, sicut 'Verbum' Filius ad dicentem, sic et donum ad donantem inseparabiliter refertur" (*Ænig*, 74.1520–1528; 96).
[41] *Ænig*, 56–58.
[42] E.g. *Ænig*, 75.1539–1540.
[43] *Ænig*, 75, 80.

need to be saved, William constructs a scene in which "the whole Trinity took counsel togther" in deciding how to bring about salvation.[44]

As much as the persons of the Trinity are united in their operation, William continues, the order present in their relations is also present in that operation. The Father gives birth to the Son, and through the Son to the Holy Spirit, such that the Father is the origin of the Son and together with the Son is the origin of the Holy Spirit.[45] Thus, though they are coequal and coeternal, there is an order to who proceeds from whom, and that order should be reflected in our conception and language about the Trinity. The Father is put in the first place, then the Son who is begotten, then the Spirit who proceeds from both. This order, William writes, "must also be observed most prudently in the operation of the divinity or the cooperation of the Trinity which seems to be intimately connected with the relation of the three persons; as is the case, for example, in that which the Apostle says, 'From whom, through whom, and in whom are all things: to him be glory forever. Amen.'"[46] The Trinity's work in creation is thus a mirror and expression of its own nature, its inner life: united in action, ordered according to relation.

William combines these ideas by using the term *cooperation* to describe the work of the Trinity. All things are equally from, through, and in the Father, Son, and Spirit. But all things are said to be from the Father, through his Son the Word, and in the Spirit to reflect their threefold cooperation in one divine operation, just as they are three in relation and one in essence: "And they are said to cooperate whose operation is one just

[44] "Iniit ergo consilium tota Trinitas, consilium illud de quo dicit propheta: Consilium tuum antiquum uerum fiat" (*Nat am*, 34.915; 95).
[45] *Ænig*, 77.
[46] "Quod etiam in operatione diuinitatis seu cooperatione Trinitatis, quae cum relatione trium personarum magnam uidentur habere cognationem, prouidentissime animaduertendum est, sicut uerbi gratia in eo quod Apostolus dicit: Ex quo omnia, per quem omnia, in quo omnia, ipsi gloria in saecula saeculorum, amen" (*Ænig*, 78.1603–1608; 99–100).

as their essence is one. They are said to cooperate because they are three and their operation is one because they are one."[47] Because of this unity of essence and operation, when one person of the Trinity acts, the others are present and acting also. So it is that William concludes the *Aenigma* by writing that when the Holy Spirit moves and works in the hearts of men, he is sufficient alone because he is not actually alone. Unity of essence and operation mean that "he cannot be separated from the Father and the Son inseparably together with whom he does all that he does."[48] So when the Holy Spirit is at work or present, the Father and Son are at work and present as well.

William's pneumatology is an outgrowth of his Trinitarian theology. He emphasizes most the Spirit as "the love of the Father and the Son, by which they love one another, and the unity by which they are one."[49] The one who is "the unity of the Father and the Son, is himself the love and likeness of God and man."[50] In this sense, "sharing the divine life" is a very literal one. Hastings notes that the Spirit's incommunicable identity as the mutual love of the Father and Son allows him to be the means of incorporating human beings into that love: "The whole thrust of William's theory of the soul's ascent to the face of God the Trinity is dependent on the *personal identity* of the Holy Spirit as mutual love of Father and Son. The human soul can never know the love that is [sic] bond between persons, unless it is communicated by that very mutual love in person, who is the Holy Spirit. According to the abbot, it is proper to the Spirit alone that

[47] "Nam et quod cooperari dicuntur quorum sicut una essentia, sic una operatio est, cooperari dicuntur in eo quod tres sunt, et una eorum operatio est, in quantum unum sunt" (*Ænig*, 79.1625–1628; 100).
[48] "Sed ideo solus sufficit quia separari a Patre et Filio non potest, cum quibus inseparabiliter facit cuncta quae facit" (*Ænig*, 100.2027–2028; 117).
[49] "Sanctus enim Spiritus caritas est Patris et Filii, qua se diligunt, et unitas qua unum sunt" (*Ænig*, 99.2000–2001; 116).
[50] "Spiritus sanctus unitas Patris et Filii, ipse etiam caritas et similitudo Dei et hominis" (*Ænig*, 6.105–106; 39).

he in his person makes present to the soul this *intra*-Trinitarian communion of mutual love."[51]

Through meditation and the sacraments, the believer has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him in a way analogous to that of the Father and Son. The love of God dwells in him and becomes his own. It allows him to love God and those around him with God's own love. When this happens, William writes:

> we love you, or you love yourself in us, we affectively and you effectively, making us one in you, through your own unity, through your Holy Spirit whom you have given us. So it comes to this: that as for the Father to know the Son is nothing else but to be what the Son is, and for the Son to know the Father is simply to be what the Father is . . . and as for the Holy Spirit to know and understand the Father and Son is simply to be what the Father and Son are, so it is with us. We were created in your image. Through Adam we have grown old in unlikeness, but now through Christ we are being renewed in that image day by day. So for us who love God, I tell you, to love and fear God is nothing other than to be of one spirit with him.[52]

For William, the soul with the Holy Spirit in it has become like, but not identical to, the persons of the Trinity. It loves with the same love and is united with the same unity, not by nature, as the Father and Son are, but by grace. The soul's participation in the love of the Trinity takes place according to the order of persons, but in reverse: in the Holy Spirit, through Christ, and directed toward the Father.

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[51] Hastings, "William of Saint-Thierry on the Holy Spirit's Personal Identity," 150.

[52] "Cum que amor tuus, amor Patris ad Filium, amor Filii ad Patrem, Spiritus sanctus habitans in nobis ad te est quod est, id est amor, omnem captiuitatem Sion, id est animae nostrae omnes affectiones in se conuertens et sanctificans, amamus te uel amas tu te in nobis, nos affectu, tu effectu. Vnum nos in te efficiens per unitatem tuam, id est ipsum Spiritum sanctum tuum, quem dedisti nobis, ut, sicut non est aliud Patri nosse Filium nisi hoc esse quod est Filius, nichil aliud Filio nosse Patrem nisi hoc esse quod est Pater, (unde in euangelio: *Nemo nouit Patrem nisi Filius; et nemo nouit Filium nisi Pater*), et sicut Spiritui sancto nichil est aliud nosse uel comprehendere Patrem et Filium quam hoc esse quod est Pater et Filius, ita nobis, (qui ad imaginem tuam conditi sumus, et ab illa per Adam inueterati, per Christum ad illam *renouamur de die in diem*), amantibus Deum nichil sit aliud amare et timere Deum et mandata eius obseruare, quam esse, et unum spiritum cum Deo esse" (*De contemplando Deo*, *CCCM* 88, 17.409–424; English translation by Penelope Lawson, *On Contemplating God, Prayer, Meditations*, Cistercian Fathers Series 3 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1970), 58).

Scholars argue as to the particular nuances of William's theology of spiritual union because it is so strong. Hunt, for example, writes that in this *unitas spiritus*, "we *become* the Holy Spirit, who is, in person, the very unity and oneness, the mutual love and knowledge of Father and Son." By a gift of grace, we have an ontological participation in God.[53] The first of these statements is less correct, the second one more so. The best summary explication comes from Bell, who writes that unity of spirit is "the actualization of our participation in God. . . . It is participation in unity brought about by participation in love, and since both unity and love are substantially the Holy Spirit, unity of spirit is, in a certain sense, the Holy Spirit himself. . . . And since the Holy Ghost is God, and since God is Trinity as well as Unity, *unitas spiritus* is our entry into the intra-Trinitarian being of God, and thereby presents us with an experienctial awareness of the nature of God by being, not *Deus*, but *quod Deus est*."[54]

To summarize, William's Trinitarian theology emphasizes the unity of the divine essence and its attributes, even as it distinguishes the persons by their relations. Those relations are inherent to the divine essence and cannot be distinguished without reference to the other persons. This unity of essence is reflected in the Trinity's unity of operation. When God acts to create or save, all persons of the Trinity act together in a way that mirrors the order of the relations. The Son proceeds from the Father and the Spirit from the Father and Son. Therefore salvation comes by a gift of the Son and, through the Son, a gift of the Spirit. Those who are saved are drawn to the Father, through the Son, and in the Spirit. This Trinitarian logic shapes the logic of the missions of the Son and Spirit. In

[53] Anne Hunt, *The Trinity: Insights from the Mystics* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010), 16, 21.
[54] Bell, *Image and Likeness*, 215.

particular, it shapes William's understanding of what happens in the Eucharist, the paramount act in which we are drawn to the Father through the Son and in the Spirit.

**V. Why Christ's Physical Body Must Be Present in the Eucharist**

William of Saint-Thierry's thought on the Eucharist first appears in an early treatise and letter in response to Rupert of Deutz's *De officiis*, which was published anonymously in 1111. It was later dedicated to the archbishop of Regensburg in 1127, at which point it came to William's attention. Rupert was a fellow black monk, also associated with Liège.[55] Van Engen notes that he holds, "the dubious honor of having provoked the only two full-length treatises on Eucharistic theology known from the early twelfth century," that of Alger of Liège arguing for the objective validity of the Eucharist, and that of William.[56] While William writes as one monk to another, he also writes as a man who attended the schools and was formed there. His primary correction of Rupert is that he makes use of ambiguous vocabulary, the kind of reproach made by someone who had been a student in the schools and learned dialectic, to someone who had not.[57] Still, William begins his letter to Rupert with compliments, and his tone remains friendly throughout. But there is one problem he has with Rupert's treatise, one mole he sees on its otherwise pretty face:[58] the separation Rupert seems to make between the body of sacrifice offered on the altar and the body of the Lord that was crucified and now reigns in heaven. When he reads *De officiis*, therefore, he questions whether Rupert holds that the human body of Christ is truly present in the sacrament.

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[55] Verdeyen, *Guillaume de Saint-Thierry: premier auteur mystique des anciens Pays-Bas*, 69.
[56] Van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz*, 173.
[57] Châtillon, "William of Saint Thierry, Monasticism and the Schools: Rupert of Deutz, Abelard, and William of Conches," 165, 169.
[58] "in facie pulchri operis naeuum unum" (*Epistola Domni Guillelmi Abbatis Sancti Theodorici ad Domnum Rupertum Abbatem Tvitiensem*, *CCCM* 88, 8–9). All English translations of the *Ep Rup* and *Sac alt* are my own.

William relates two arguments of Rupert's for such a separation. First, because the body of sacrifice that is offered in the Eucharist does not have the characteristics of a living body (life, sense, mobility), it is not the body of the Lord.[59] Second, the body of the Lord contains animal and spiritual life. The animal life is engaged with the senses, while spiritual life is what gives the wisdom and grace of Christ in the Eucharistic sacrifice.[60] The spiritual life, then, is present in the body of sacrifice apart from the animal life, "as the light of the sun is apart from its heat in the body of the moon."[61] But the animal life, which is not needed for conveying grace and does not visibly appear, remains absent. Although Rupert puts the first argument in the mouth of an adversary, which William is not clear about, he more clearly adopts the second argument as his own, more nuanced view.

In response to the first of these claims, William argues that the Eucharist operates in a manner analogous to the miracle at the wedding feast at Cana. As he turned water into wine, the Word of God, operating invisibly through the prayers of the Eucharist, truly transforms the substance of bread into the substance of his body. At Cana, the water visibly became wine, but the appearance of bread remains in the Eucharist because of the horror that would result from eating human flesh, as Ambrose said.[62] Moreover, William continues, this teaching is confirmed in the condemnation of Berengar, whose theory of substantial remanence argued that the body of the Lord becomes present in the bread, even though it remains bread at the same time.[63] And finally, he concludes, Scripture

[59] *Ep Rup*, 13–18. See also Rupertius Tuitiensis, *De divinis officiis, CCCM* 7, II.9.397–430, and Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 32ff.
[60] *Ep Rup*, 19–28.
[61] "Haec autem uita spiritualis sic est in corpore sacrificii absque eius uita animali, quomodo lux solis absque calore eius in corpore lunae" (*Ep Rup*, 26–28; *De divinis officiis* II.9.428–430).
[62] *Ep Rup*, 29–38.
[63] *Ep Rup*, 39–47.

itself rejects the idea that Christ's body is not at all sacrificed in the Eucharist, as is apparent from those who depart from Christ when he teaches this in John 6.[64] The body of sacrifice must be nothing less than the body of the Lord.

In addition, William continues, Rupert must be more specific about what he means by "animal life." According to the common sense of scripture, soul (*anima*), body, and spirit (*spiritus*) exist in a person. When the soul and body serve the spirit, that person's life is said to be spiritual. When the spirit serves the body and soul, it is said to be animal, and those who live an animal life do not receive the things of God. To say that the body of Christ lives by animal life, then, is impermissible. But if we narrow the sense of "animal life" to that life by which all animal bodies live, then whoever says that the body of Christ after the resurrection has no animal life, even though he seeks to bring glory to Christ, destroys the hope that Christ's human body was resurrected, which in turn destroys the hope that the members of the body of which he is the head might be as well. Moreover, suggesting that the body of Christ on the altar does not have human life within it goes against Rupert's own words, when he argues that the one who receives the visible bread of the Eucharist without receiving the invisible bread of Christ's body by faith, separates life from the one who was vivified and is for this reason "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." So Rupert must clarify what he means by the body of sacrifice and the animal life of Christ not being present in it.[65]

In addition to his letter to Rupert, William penned a Eucharistic treatise of his own. *De sacramento altaris* is also focused on the clarification of potential ambiguities, this time with respect to the corpus of the Fathers. Different *sententiae* of the Fathers

[64] *Ep Rup*, 39–47.
[65] *Ep Rup*, 109–135.

seem to make conflicting claims about the presence of Christ in the Eucharist and its significance. William structures his work as a treatise on how to read these *sententiae* and resolve any apparent conflicts based on the Fathers' common understanding of the Eucharist, as he sees it.[66] The work begins with a brief dedicatory letter to St. Bernard and an invitation for him to correct it—the same service Bernard requested of William in his *De gratia et libero arbitrio*.[67] It does act as a manual for exegesis, but it is more than that. Indeed, *De sacramento altaris* and the letter to Rupert argue that just as Christ became present by taking on human flesh once in history for the salvation of the world, so he becomes present now in the Eucharist under the visible species of bread and wine for the salvation of the world. Since Christ came to unite himself to the whole man, body and soul, he needed to take on both in history and must become present in his full humanity now on the altar.

William begins this argument that Christ's body must be present in the Eucharist by writing that the presence of Christ's body on the altar is just as necessary for salvation as its presence on earth was, and operates in a similar way: "Just as the necessity of human salvation made him be present where it was beneficial, so it also made his body be present in this way where it is beneficial."[68] Since Christ needed to be crucified in order to redeem human nature from death, he had to take on that human nature in such a way that it was visible and could suffer and be crucified. After the crucifixion and

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[66] Déchanet argues that although William's method of listing patristic sentences in *Sac alt* resembles Abelard's, *Sic et Non* was not yet composed by 1128, the latest date likely for *Sac alt.* Ergo, he is unlikely to have taken his method from Abelard (Jean-Marie Déchanet, *Guillaume de Saint-Thierry: L'homme et son œuvre* (Bruges: Éditions Charles Beyaert, 1942), 166). In the decades since Déchanet's work, however, scholars have determined that Abelard wrote *Sic et Non* in multiple recensions, the earliest of which may date from the 1120s and 30s. Thus, it is possible (but not conclusive) that William is trying to demonstrate a better way to account for apparent discrepancies in the Fathers than Abelard's.

[67] Verdeyen, *Guillaume de Saint-Thierry: premier auteur mystique des anciens Pays-Bas*, 69.

[68] "Sicut enim exigit necessitas salutis humanae ut adsit ubi opus est, sic etiam exigit ut sic adsit corpus eius sicut opus est" (*Sac alt*, *CCCM* 88, III.3–4).

resurrection, Christ need not appear among us visibly. But his presence is still necessary for salvation, now in the form of food that sustains us and prepares us to share in his life: "And as by the communal food that a person desires so that he might live, he reaches that life by which one truly lives only through that food, so he only reaches this life by this food. For this food was prepared for bringing the soul to eternal life, not for prolonging the catastrophes of this miserable life . . . . Therefore this way is that by which the presence of his body is necessary for us for salvation and life, namely that it might be eaten by us, having become our daily bread."[69]

William further presses the point when he writes that Christ became incarnate "so that his flesh would be eaten."[70] This means that the Eucharist is one of the reasons for the Incarnation, like the crucifixion, and plays a central role in the economy of salvation. It is, in a sense, a continuation of Christ's presence on earth and action for salvation. As we shall see, William uses the same verb *fio* to describe Christ becoming incarnate and appearing under the species of bread and wine.[71] In both cases, the Word becomes flesh, first visible flesh and then invisible flesh. With this in mind, we can see the Eucharistic overtones in a passage from his *Expositio super Cantica Canticorum*, where he writes that "the Word of God 'in the form of God,' born inseparably of God, comes to be [*fit*] in the Bride in what he does [*facit*] in the Bride; and he comes to be [*fit*] not in an unlike manner. For whatever God the Father does [*facit*], this the Son also does [*facit*] in a like

[69] "Et sicut communi cibo id appetitur ut uiuatur, sic ad eam uitam qua uere uiuitur, solummodo per hunc cibum peruenitur. Cibus enim hic ad uitam aeternam animae conferendam collatus est, non ad ruinas sustentandas huius miserae uitae, quae uapor est ad modicum parens. Hic ergo modus est quo necessaria nobis est ad salutem et uitam praesentia corporis eius, uidelicet ut manducetur a nobis, factus panis noster cotidianus" (*Sac alt*, III.17–23).
[70] "Oportebat autem ut, sicut cum necessaria nobis fuit uisibilis eius praesentia, inuisibile in suis uisibile factum est in nostris Verbum caro factum sic cum res exigit salutis nostrae ut manducetur caro eius, quod non est ipsa caro in natura sua, fiat in aliena, manducabilis scilicet" (*Sac alt*, III.24–28).
[71] e.g. *Sac alt*, III.25–30; IV.8.

manner."[72] More explicitly, in *De sacramento altaris,* he concludes, "Therefore, by this worthiness and piety he deigned to lift the lost sheep on his shoulders, that is, to assume our corrupt nature in the unity of his person, and now in the same way, taking the earthly substance of bread in the strength of the divine power to which he is near, in, and through all things (since he desired that it be possible), he changes that substance into the truth of his flesh."[73]

In both the Eucharist and the Incarnation, the flesh of Christ serves as a medium for union with him and the Father. Rougé writes that Christ's humanity is to his divinity what the *sacramentum* is to the *res*.[74] The Eucharist is a particular instance of the principle that we are reconciled to God and receive beatitude through the flesh of Christ.[75] With our humanity joined to Christ's, we enter into his union with the Father. In Rougé's words, the flesh of the sacraments and of Jesus unites us to him so that we can enter into glory and, in him, pass into the Father.[76] This is all the more true of Christ's body, which as *res et sacramentum* serves as the flesh through which we receive the *res* of union with Christ in the Spirit. The metaphysics of Christ's real presence on the altar is

[72] "Sic et Verbum Dei, in forma Dei natum de Deo inseparabiliter, fit in sponsa in eo quod facit in sponsa; et fit indissimiliter, quia quaecumque facit Deus Pater, haec et Filius facit similiter" (*Expositio Super Cantica Canticorum*, *CCCM* 87, XXVIII.137.55–58; English translation by Mother Columba Hart, *Exposition on the Song of Songs*, Cistercian Fathers Series 6 (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1970), 112). Rougé comments, "Ce '*fit*' évoque immanquablement la 'confection' eucharistique du corps du Christ, qui est bel et bien 'fait' chaque fois que le sacrement de l'autel est célébré selon les formes prescrites, mais qui n'est 'fait pour' les fidèles que lorsqu'ils communient avec foi" (306). This connection to confection does not obscure the connection between the Eucharist and the Incarnation in William's use of *fio*.

[73] "Qua igitur dignatione et pietate dignatus est in humeros suos leuare ouem perditam, id est in unitatem personae suae assumere corruptam naturam nostram, eadem nunc terrenam substantiam panis suscipiens, in uirtute diuinae potentiae cui in omnibus et per omnia subest cum uoluerit posse, transmutat in ueritatem carnis suae" (*Sac alt*, III.32–37).

[74] Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 280.

[75] "NON SOLVM AVTEM, SED ET GLORIAMVR IN DEO PER DOMINVM NOSTRVM IESVM CHRISTVM, non iam in sacramentis, sed in ipsa re omnium sacramentorum; non in mysteriis, sed in ipsa luce manifestae ueritatis; quia, etsi nouit Iesum secundum carnem, sed nunc iam non nouit. Per carnem tamen transit in Deum, per dominum nostrum Iesum Christum; PER QVEM NVNC interim ACCIPIMVS RECONCILIATIONEM, ibi cum eo habituri beatitudinis unitatem" (*Expositio Super Epistola ad Romanos*, *CCCM* 86, Liber III.158–165; Romans 5:7–11).

[76] Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 281.

analogous to the unity of his humanity and his divinity.[77] In both cases, Christ's humanity is the medium of spiritual union between those joined to it and the Father. Those who receive that humanity in the Eucharist are joined to Christ and with Christ to the Father.

As we will see in greater detail later, this union takes place in the Holy Spirit. In receiving Christ in the Eucharist with love, the faithful receive his Spirit. As William writes in *De natura et dignitate amoris*, the Eucharistic recipient "eats and drinks the Body and Blood of his Redeemer . . . and while eating it he is transformed into the nature of the food he eats. For to eat the Body of Christ is nothing other than to be made the Body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit."[78] The Spirit prepares this temple by hallowing the sacraments. He is the person of the Trinity who sanctifies external, material things so that they can convey interior, spiritual realities. He purifies the soul through the outward washing with water in baptism, and refreshes it with incorruptible food when it consumes the corruptible species of the Eucharist.[79] Hence it would seem that for William, it is the Holy Spirit who enables Christ to be truly present in the sacrament of the altar. The Spirit makes Christ present so that through that presence, we might receive more of the Spirit, love God better, and thereby share more in the divine life.

In summary, William's primary concern in his letter to Rupert—also present in other works—is that the human body of Christ is truly present in the Eucharist. This presence occurs in a manner analogous to the events of salvation history because it is one such event. The Eucharist is a miracle effected by the same Christ who took flesh, turned

[77] Hence debates about the Eucharist are not so much about what Christ did before, but who he is and how he saves us now (Ibid., 278–279.

[78] "Manducat et bibit corpus et sanguinem Redemptoris sui, manna caeleste, panem angelorum, panem sapientiae; et manducans transformatur in naturam cibi quem manducat. Corpus enim Christi manducare nichil est aliud quam corpus Christi effici, et templum Spiritus sancti" (*De natura et dignitate amoris*, *CCCM* 88, 38.1010–1014; English translation by Thomas X. Davis, *The Nature and Dignity of Love*, Cistercian Fathers Series 30 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1981), 100).

[79] *Speculum Fidei*, *CCCM* 89A, 62–64.

water into wine, and communed his disciples after the resurrection.[80] This takes place according to the same economy in which the Word of God takes on human nature so that he may join his humanity to ours in a union of love, which is the Holy Spirit, and thereby draw us into union with the Father. Christ became present in flesh in history for the same reason he becomes present in flesh on the altar: the deification of bodies and souls. The two doctrines go hand in hand, and William's understanding of Christ's first coming forms his understanding of Christ's Eucharistic presence.

**VI. Metaphysics of Presence**

William's doctrine of the metaphysics of Christ's Eucharistic presence is also marked by this continuity with the way in which the incarnate Christ was present on earth. In the incarnation, human nature and divinity united in such a way "that neither divine things could be acted on without humanity nor human things without God, and through this unity even in the days of his flesh Christ the man could do divine things."[81] After the Resurrection, Christ's glorified body passed through walls and appeared to his disciples. This serves as a metaphor of the Incarnation itself, William explains, in which "he proceeded from the bridal chamber of the virgin's womb to run the way of the human dispensation with the doors of nature closed."[82] Or, as he discusses at length, consider Christ's entombment. Because of the union of humanity and divinity in him, Christ could be in multiple places at the same time. In his body, he was in the tomb; in his spirit, he

[80] Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 278.
[81] "Et si natura carnis ex quo illi naturae summae unita est, in tanta unitate ei ab ipso conceptu uirginis est conserta, ut nec sine homine diuina nec sine Deo agerentur humana, et per hanc unitatem etiam in diebus carnis suae homo Christus potuit diuina . . ." (*Sac alt*, II.30–33).
[82] "Nam quod de humanitate eius, per resurrectionem glorificata, saecularis philosophiae ratiocinationibus uidetur insusceptibile, ut clausis ad discipulos ianuis intraret, etiam passibilis et mortalis exercuit, dum de thalamo uteri uirginalis ad currendam uiam dispensationis humanae clausis naturae ianuis processit" (*Sac alt*, II.36–40).

was liberating hell; and in his deity, he was sitting at the right hand of the Father.[83] In these miracles, divine power allows human flesh to deviate from the normal created order according to a particular act of God. These acts take place according to the law of creating nature—i.e., God—not the law of created nature. This should not be seen as a deviation from the order that God instituted, "since it is the nature of created nature to obey all laws of creating nature," especially in the case of Christ's human nature, which was joined to the Word through which all that has been made was made.[84] The Incarnation is not a violation of that order, but a suspension of its normal processes by an act of divine power to accomplish salvation.

Likewise, during the Eucharist, Christ's humanity and divinity become present by an act of divine power that suspends the normal course of the laws of creation. William explains this by arguing that through the prayers of the rite, a real, substantial change takes place whereby the bread and wine on the altar become the body and blood of Christ. In the Incarnation, as William has written, Christ's humanity and divinity are joined such that they remain distinct, but predicate different attributes to the same subject. In an analogous—but not at all identical—way, when the substantial change takes place in the Eucharist, the accidents of bread and wine remain. As we have already seen, William uses the same verb to describe Christ's appearance on the altar as his appearance in history: *fio*. Thus his body becomes (*fiat*) edible and able to be carried, essential attributes for its purpose as the food of regeneration. But by a miracle that, like

[83] *Sac alt*, II.111–121.
[84] "Sic ergo constat in diuersis locis uno horae momento esse posse corpus Christi, sed lege creatricis naturae, non creatae. Cum autem naturae creatae natura sit creatricis naturae legibus in omnibus obedire, si haec aliquando pacta sua resoluenda illi permittit qui ea instituit et ordinat, non debet uideri errare uel deuiare ab ordine suo, maxime in illa natura quae in unitate personae coniuncta est illi Verbo, per quod facta est omnis facta natura, et praeter quod non posset aliquo modo esse, nisi, sicut dicit Euangelista, *in ipso uita esset*" (*Sac alt*, II.80–89).

the miracle of the incarnation, runs contrary to secular philosophy, the accidents that inhere in the substance do not modify or characterize it. Christ's body may appear white and round under the form of bread, and it may be near whiteness and roundness, but it does not actually have them in it.[85] Christ's substance remains together with the bread's accidents. As the humanity and divinity are joined without mixture in the Incarnation, so these are joined without the corruption or compromise of either.

William probes still further, asking what about the Eucharistic transformation is actually of God and what is supernatural. His response shows how the Eucharistic transformation is one that builds on and suspends the rules of nature without breaking them completely, according to Boethius' understanding of the process of substantial change in *De persona et duabus naturis*. There Boethius writes that things that can be transformed into each other must have the same material. For example, air cannot be changed into stone or grass, but wine can become water if a drop of it can be mixed in a much larger quantity.[86] So, William notes, "the body of the Lord has the common subject of one material with the bread. In as much as the body of the Lord can both be generated and die, it seems to have a common matter with this earthly bread. In as much as bread truly has common matter with the body of Christ, it has the possibility of being transmuted into it, and when this happens, it is not withdrawn altogether from nature."[87] For William and Boethius, the change between bread and body would be natural in the

[85] *Sac alt*, IV.1–16. Ten years later, in his *Disputatio contra Petrum Abelardum*, William offers this argument again against Abelard's idea that the Eucharistic accidents remain in the air after substantial change (see Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 85–86.).
[86] Boethius, *De persona et duabus naturis (Contra Eutychen et Nestorium)* 6 (PL 64, 1349 D–1350 B); V.11–16. As Rougé notes, William owes much of his philosophical vocabulary to Boethius (34, n. 1).
[87] "Corpus autem Domini cum pane unius habet commune materiae subiectum. In quantum enim corpus Domini et generari potuit et mori, communem cum pane isto terreno uidetur sortiri materiam. In quantum uero panis cum corpore Christi communem habet materiam, possibile habet in illud transmutari, nec cum hoc fit, a natura usquequaque receditur" (*Sac alt*, V.35–40). In the case of the Eucharist, of course, this is not simply a matter of natural conversion but a full substantial change.

sense that it is possible according to the ordinary laws of nature. That such a change actually take place, and that the accidents of the bread remain without changing the body, is possible by the power of Christ "by which Jesus Christ the man is one with God the Father."[88] And it is Christ, in his representative the priest, effects this change through the words of the Mass. In short, the Eucharistic change does not violate the laws of nature, but by the miraculous power of God surpasses them for the sake of the economy of salvation.

William echoes these arguments in his letter to Rupert, where he writes that irrespective of what Rupert means by "body of sacrifice," what he says about it is not fitting for the body of the Lord. That body is Jesus himself in his body, William argues, which is both available to the faithful on the altar and at the right hand of the Father. That body is fully human in all things, even if it has a superhuman glory. If by "body of sacrifice" Rupert means the visible species of bread, then obviously that lacks the characteristics of living things. For though the substance of bread changes into that of Christ's body, the accidents remain. While such a relationship between substance and accidents is contrary to the law of nature, it is not outside the power of God, who created the world.[89] Again, William appeals to Christ's glorified body after the resurrection. We see in Scripture that the resurrected Christ could pass through closed doors into the room where his disciples gathered, then distribute himself to them in the Eucharist. In a similar way, Christ in his body is at the Father's right hand, sacrificed on the altar, and

[88] "Si enim multitudini maris modicam uini guttam in suam transformare naturam, in tantum ut de ea nichil penitus uideatur residuum, est possibile multitudini uel magnitudini uirtutis Christi, qua cum Deo Patre unum est homo Christus Iesus, omnipotenti Creatoris actione et obedientissima creaturae passione panem in suum transmutare corpus erit impossibile?" (*Sac alt*, V.40–46).
[89] *Ep Rup*, 58–75.

distributed to the faithful.[90] This reflection serves as a springboard to a further reflection on the nature of Christ's Eucharistic presence. The Eucharist is not like a magician's trick, William writes, in which the eyes are deceived about the reality of the thing before them. Rather, the visible species of bread becomes like a pilgrim in a foreign land, without its substance, and the substance of Christ's body becomes present under its accidents. The accidents of bread do not have the relationship to the substance of the body that accidents normally do, but they remain so that they can convey the substance of Christ's body to the faithful.[91]

The point of these reflections is clear. Because they are both part of the Son's mission, the Incarnation and the Eucharist share the same Trinitarian logic and other patterns of logic, even down to the particular ways in which Christ makes himself present. Both are part of the one mission of the Son for salvation. As Rougé puts it,

> Just as it is the *res* of human salvation that determines the mode of the presence of the Lord that is necessary from now on, so it is the *res* of the sacrament that demarcates the transformation that the species must know. The Word, in the occurrence, does not maintain the substance of bread except insofar as necessary "according to the rite of the mystery, so that it can be touched and tasted."[92] What the ritual and liturgical economy needs so that the flesh of Christ can be eaten, is that the nature by which the Word makes itself food could be seized in a sensible manner. These are the exterior characteristics, the accidents of bread and wine that, alone, are required by the reality of the mystery.[93]

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[90] *Ep Rup*, 75–84.
[91] *Ep Rup*, 92–101.
[92] "ut secundum mysterii ritum tractabile foat et gustabile ex illa natura, quod non erat ex sua" (*Sac alt*, IV.8–9).
[93] "De même que c'est la '*res salutis humanae*' qui determine le mode de presence du Seigneur désormais nécessaire, de même, c'est la *res* du sacrement qui délimite la transformation que l'espèce droit connaître. Le Verbe, en l'occurrence, ne conserve de la substance du pain que ce qui est nécessaire 'pour, selon le rite du mystère, pouvoir être touché et gouté.' Ce dont l'économie rituelle et liturgique a besoin pour que la chair du Christ soit mangée, c'est que la nature par laquelle le Verbe se fait nourriture puisse être saisie de manière sensible. Ce sont les caractéristiques extérieurs, les accidents, du pain et du vin qui, seuls, sont requis par la réalité du mystère" (Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 47.

Then and now, God sometimes suspends the normal laws of creation for the sake of redemption. While incarnate, Christ performed miracles to show his divinity and the reality of his new life after the resurrection. This same logic is at work in the Eucharist, in which the normal relationship between substance and accidents is suspended so that Christ can become present and be joined to the faithful under the accidents of bread and wine received as food for the salvation of their bodies and souls.

**VII. Bodily Reception of the Eucharist**

Like many medieval thinkers, William distinguishes between physically or bodily receiving the Eucharistic elements and spiritually receiving it by being joined to Christ in charity. Both the virtuous and vicious alike can receive bodily, but only the virtuous can receive in a bodily and spiritual way to their benefit. William places greater emphasis on spiritual reception, going so far as to say that it alone suffices for salvation, but only if necessity compels one not to receive bodily.[94] William is well known for his map of the spiritual life from the animal man to the rational man to the spiritual man, corresponding to the three human faculties *animus, anima,* and *spiritus*. Although this is most famously developed in the *Epistola ad fratres*, it first appears in William's early Eucharistic writings.[95] Much of his Eucharistic theology points toward the union between the human *spiritus* and the divine *Spiritus—unitas spiritus*—that is the peak of the third stage. But while the body may lose importance in his schema, it never passes away. Instead of hostility to the body, Blommestijn writes, we find in William's theology "an incarnation

[94] William quotes Fulgentius of Ruspe in this regard, who writes that one is made a part of the body of Christ by baptism (*Sac alt*, IX.11–18; for the original, see *Epist.* 12.26 (*Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 91, 380.608–381.618). Therefore, those who die before they can receive the sacrament are not cut off from the body of Christ or the benefits of the Eucharist.
[95] Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 225–226.

of the spiritual dimension . . . in the structures of the body and of practical activity."[96] Physical reception remains important because contact with the physical body of Christ saves the physical body of the recipient.

In the *Speculum fidei*, William writes that the Holy Spirit himself sanctifies external things so that they may become the sacraments of so great a reality.[97] This is primarily for the union of the soul with God, but because soul and body are joined together, the soul must be led together with and through the body to God: "Placed in the body, we have been confined and contained by the corporal forms of the sacraments and by obedience to the wisdom of God who instituted them. We are confronted with the physical forms of the corporal sacraments and we are recalled by their external significance to their inner grace and to the inner dimension signified."[98] Rougé suggests, then, that there is a correspondence between the body and its bodily soul (*animus*), rational soul (*anima*), the spirit (*spiritus*) and the three-fold body of Christ present physically in heaven, substantially on the altar, and mystically in the union of the members of Christ's body the Church with her Head: "To the body of man is given the body of the Savior given for him; to the soul is offered his mystical flesh that effectively nourishes; to the spirit a proposal is given to participate in the spiritual and nuptial unity of the Lover with the Beloved."[99]

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[96] "Bref, chez Guillaume de Saint-Thierry, nous ne trouvons pas une fuite du monde ou une hostilité au corps, mais au contraire une incarnation de la dimension spirituelle (*animus*) dans les structures du corps et de l'activité pratique" (Blommestijn, "Progrès – Progressants," 2393.

[97] *Spec fid*, 62.

[98] "Nam in corpore positi corporalibus sacramentorum formis cohibendi eramus et continendi; et corporalium sacramentorum corporalibus formis ex obedientia instituentis sapientiae Dei commonendi; et ad interiorem eorum gratiam et significata interiora, exterioribus eorum significationibus reuocandi" (*Spec fid*, 68.858–861; 51–52).

[99] "Au coprs de l'homme est donné le corps livré du Seigneur; à l'âme est offerte sa chair mystique qui nourrit effectivement; à l'esprit est proposé de participer à l'unité spirituelle et nuptiale de l'Épouse avec l'Époux" (Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 224.).

Because souls and bodies must both be joined to Christ, they must both receive the Eucharist. Each doorpost of the house, William writes in *De sacramento altaris*, must be marked by the blood of the lamb, and just as sin entered the human race by one food, so it must be cured by the antidote of another food.[100] But his concerns are more than tropological or exegetical. For, just as spiritual reception conforms the soul to Christ through the purification of love, so bodily reception makes the body more like Christ's glorified body. Unlike regular food, which becomes part of the body that ingests it, the Eucharistic meal "turns our body into its nature, and prepares and joins it to the future resurrection and perpetual incorruption."[101]

William then pushes this logic to a startling conclusion: "[the Eucharist] turns our body into its nature . . . and it is in us, and where it was, namely at the right hand of the Father. . . . Therefore the same Christ is in us through the flesh, and we are in him, while this, which we receive, is with him in God. Therefore this is the cause of our life, for we have Christ remaining in us carnal people through the flesh—in us who will conquer through him by this condition, by which he lives through the Father."[102] In the physical

[100] "Non est tamen negligenda sacramenti perceptio, quia uterque domus nostrae postis, id est corpus et anima, signandus est Agni sanguine, ne ab exterminatore uastetur, et ne flagellum appropinquet tabernaculo nostro. Sed et natura nostrae carnis, quae in primo parente suo cibo uitiata illicito, originali propagine, peccato et poena peccati tota erat infecta et morti aeternae et corruptioni contradita, alterius cibi curanda erat antidoto, sicut pulcherrime Christianus poeta dicit Sedulius: Qui pereuntem hominem uetiti dulcedine pomi / Instauras meliore cibo, potu que sacrati / Sanguinis infusum depellis ab angue uenenum" (*Sac alt*, IX.19–29; Sedulius, *Paschale Carmen* I, 70–72 (*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 10, 21)).

[101] "Quae, ut multa breuiter concludam, non est aliud quam ponere corda in uirtute eius, et rem ducere in opus et affectum. Iam que ipse rei ordo uidetur exigere, ut etiam de corporali aliqua disseramus.Corporalis autem manducatio est corpus Domini corporaliter percipere, siue digne siue indigne, siue ad uitam siue ad mortem. Licet enim illa sufficiat, si sic ineuitabile cogat necessarium, tamen et haec non est omittenda" (*Sac alt*, IX.4–10).

[102] "Hic est cibus qui non uadit in corpus, quia nequaquam, sicut alii cibi, in naturam uertitur corporis, sed corpus nostrum in suam uertit naturam, et futurae resurrectioni et perpetuae incorruptioni illud praeparans et coaptans, et in nobis est, et ubi erat, scilicet in dextera Patris. Sic enim naturalis per sacramentum proprietas perfectae sacramentum fit unitatis, cum haec accepta atque hausta id efficiunt, ut et nos in Christo, et Christus in nobis sit. Est ergo in nobis ipse per carnem, et sumus in eo, dum se cum hoc, quod nos sumus, in Deo est. Haec ergo uitae nostrae causa est, quod in nobis carnalibus per carnem Christum manentem habemus; uicturis nobis per eum ea conditione, qua uiuit ille per Patrem" (*Sac alt*, IX.34–45).

reception of the Eucharist, the body of Christ is both in the recipient and with God in heaven. This unites the recipient to God and prepares him to join Christ at the end time, but also means that Christ is alive in him as he is alive in the Father.[103] In other words, there is a two-fold participation in the Trinitarian relations in physical reception. The recipient stands with Christ—to whose body he is conformed by his reception—in relationship to the Father, and at the same time stands in a manner analogous to the Father in relationship to Christ, because Christ now also substantially abides in him.

**VIII. Spiritual Reception of the Eucharist**

While William's understanding of the accidents was significant in the unfolding of medieval Eucharistic theology, he is also famous for his theology of spiritual Eucharistic reception, which begins in *De sacramento altaris*. There William asks an important question: What makes the Eucharist necessary food for eternal life? He answers with the following argument. It cannot be that bodily reception alone is enough for salvation, since Scripture warns against such presumption and gives examples of those who have received badly, to a bad end. Moreover, the Eucharist is not for the nourishment of the body but of the soul. The one who receives it seeks more of the life of the soul. As the life of the soul is the body, so God is the life of the soul. Since God is love, the life of the rational soul is the love of God. The Eucharist exists to increase our love for God, "who is his love itself and who is possessed where he is loved."[104] William cites the *Confessions* and uses explicitly Augustinian language to describe the way in which the Eucharist augments and purifies our love. This love is a matter of turning from

[103] Verdeyen, *La Théologie mystique de Guillaume de Saint-Thierry*, 170.
[104] "Vt igitur ille ametur, qui est ipse amor suus et qui habetur ubi amatur, ad hoc enutrire nos debet cibus iste. Quicquid enim Redemptor noster in carne fecit, ob hoc utique fecit, ut amaretur a nobis; non quod egeret ipse nostro amore, qui bonorum nostrorum non eget, per omnia sufficiens ipse sibi, sed quia, quos beatos facere susceperat, nisi eum amando non poterant esse beati" (*Sac alt*, VI.15–20).

the world and the devil to God.[105] Christ's incarnation makes him like us so that we can trust in him, and his embrace of death in the face of the fallen angels' spite draws us to God "in chains of love."[106] Given that the Holy Spirit is the love of the Father and Son, these passages are pneumatological. They describe a reception of the Holy Spirit and the healing and ordering effect that that has on the soul and its own loves.

William also describes Christ's saving work and our reception of it in love according to a metaphor of food and eating. Christ heaps up a great matter (*materiam*) of love for him in his flesh by suffering and dying out of love for us. This love is "the wonderful nourishment of life for our souls," which we then "take in with greedy mouths, when we recognize it sweetly and we put away in the stomach of memory whatever things Christ did or suffered for us. And this is the banquet from the flesh and blood of Jesus; for the one who receives, has life abiding in him."[107] Receiving the flesh of Christ in the Eucharist stores in our memory the deeds of that flesh on our behalf, and this brings as its fruit an increase in the *affectus* of our love for him. This, in turn, compels us to offer ourselves to the one who offered himself. By works of faith and charity, the faithful recipient puts back on the Lord's table those kinds of things they took from it.[108] He "abides in Christ by the banquet of Christ through the affect of pious love, and he has Christ abiding in him through the effect of this holy work [*sanctae operationis*]."[109] The

[105] "Ideo quippe descenderat ad nos, ut amorem nostrum, in terrenis dispersum et putrefactum, beneficia pietatis exhibendo, in se recolligeret et in nouitatem uitae reformaret; et abstractum et emundatum a faece earum rerum, quae cum ipso pariter amari non possunt, se cum sursum leuaret" (*Sac alt*, VI.25–29).
[106] "Sic enim, ut ait propheta Osee, adtrahendi eramus *in uinculis caritatis*" (*Sac alt*, VI.53–54).
[107] "Quam tunc auidis faucibus sumimus, cum dulciter recolligimus et in uentre memoriae recondimus, quaecumque pro nobis fecit uel passus est Christus. Et hoc est conuiuium de carne Iesu et sanguine; cui qui communicat, habet uitam in se manentem" (*Sac alt*, VI.66–70).
[108] *Sac alt*, VI.70–74.
[109] "Sicque in Christo manet bonus conuiua Christi per piae dilectionis affectum, habetque Christum in se manentem per sanctae operationis effectum" (*Sac alt*, VI.78–80). See also, Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 50.

more he loves, the more he eats, and the more he is built into a greater mass of the love of which he has but a pledge now, with the promise of fulfillment in the life to come. This exchange of love, William concludes, is what Jesus means when he says that "Whoever eats my flesh, abides in me and I in him."[110] In this metaphorical language, William is outlining the Trinitarian logic of the Eucharist. The one who receives the Eucharist has the Holy Spirit operating in him and is able to offer back Christ-like works to the Father. By the Spirit he is joined to Christ, and his offering can be joined to Christ's because he acts with the love of the Spirit, which is Christ's love.

We also see these Trinitarian dynamics present in Augustine's sermons on the gospel of John, from which William draws in formulating his Eucharistic theology. In sermon 27 on the bread of life discourse in John 6, Augustine instructs his flock that they are members of the body of Christ, which is animated and held together by the Holy Spirit in the same way that the soul animates a human body. He tells them to receive the Eucharist not only sacramentally, but also to "eat and drink to the extent of a participation in the Spirit, staying in the Lord's body as members, and being energized by his Spirit . . . ."[111] Elaborating how the Spirit does this, Augustine writes, "Now we abide in him when we are his members, while he abides in us when we are his temple. But for us to be his members, we have to be bonded together by unity. What makes unity bond us together? What else but charity? And where does the charity of God come from? Question the apostle. *The charity of God*, he says, *has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us* (Rom 5:5). So then, *the Spirit gives life;* it is the Spirit

[110] *Sac alt*, VI.87–88.
[111] "sed usque ad spiritus participationem manducemus et bibamus, ut in domini corpore tamquam membra maneamus, ut eius spiritu uegetemur . . ." (*Iohannis Euangelium Tractatus*, *Corpus Augustinianum Gissense,* edited by Cornelius Mayer (Basel: Schwabe, 1995), 27.11, 276/13–15; English translation by Edmund Hill, *Homilies on the Gospel of John (1–40)* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2009), 475).

after all who makes sure that the members are alive, unless they are in the body which the spirit itself animates."[112] So it is that, for Augustine and William, the spiritual fruit of the Eucharist is a gift of the Holy Spirit that comes through receiving Jesus into oneself.

These themes appear again in *Meditatio* X, where William writes that picturing the Passion of Christ teaches us to love God, the highest good.[113] Our love for the Father comes through the way and door of the Son. The one who seeks to ascend to God and desires

> to offer gifts and sacrifices according to the precepts of the Law . . . should walk calmly and smoothly over the level of his own likeness, to a Man like himself, who tells him on the very threshold: 'I and the Father are one.' And he is forthwith gathered up to God in love through the Holy Spirit and receives God coming to him and making his abode with him, not spiritually only but corporally too, in the mystery of the holy and life-giving body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.[114]

It is in receiving and loving Christ by meditation on the passion and sacramental reception that we receive his Spirit. This reception binds us to Christ, uniting us and our loving sacrifices and works to his self-offering to the Father.

This connection between the sacrifice of Christ for redemption and the redeemed joining in that sacrifice also appears in William's *Expositio super epistolam ad Romanos.*

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[112] "Manemus autem in illo, cum sumus membra eius; manet autem ipse in nobis, cum sumus templum eius. Ut autem simus membra eius, unitas nos compaginat. Ut compaginet unitas, quae facit nisi caritas? Et caritas dei unde? Apostolum interroga. "caritas,"inquit, "Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per spiritum sanctum qui datus est nobis." Ergo "spiritus est qui uiuificat"; spiritus enim facit uiua membra. Nec uiua membra spiritus facit, nisi quae in corpore quod uegetat ipse spiritus, inuenerit" (*Iohannis Euangelium Tractatus*, 27.6; 470).

[113] As Rougé puts it, "C'est bien le Christ, et non l'eucharistie, qui constitue notre trésor. Mais c'est grâce à l'eucharistie que ce trésor peut, en toute vérité, être en notre possession" (*Doctrine et experience*, 69).

[114] "Quid enim melius praeparatum, quid suauius potuit esse dispositum, quam quod ascensuro homini ad Deum suum offerre dona et sacrificia secundum praeceptum legis, non sit ei ascendendum per gradus ad altare eius, sed per planum similitudinis, placide et pede inoffenso, eat homo ad hominem similem sibi, in primo ingressus limine dicentem sibi: Ego et Pater unum sumus. Statim que per Spiritum sanctum affectus assumptus in Deum, et ipse Deum in semetipsum excipiat uenientem et mansionem apud eum facientem, non tantum spiritualiter sed etiam corporaliter per mysterium sancti et uiuifici corporis et sanguinis Domini nostri Iesu Christi" (*Meditationes Devotissimae*, *CCCM* 89, X.X.94–104; English translation by Penelope Lawson, *On Contemplating God, Prayer, Meditations*, Cistercian Fathers Series 3 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1970), 154–155).

In Romans 8:3–4, Paul writes, "For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit." William comments that because the infirmity of the law comes through the flesh, the Only-begotten Son comes from the Father so full of grace that it overflows from him to the faithful. They receive from Christ faith, hope, and charity, the latter being poured into their hearts through the Holy Spirit.[115] The Son then joins the believer to his own self-sacrifice to the Father. Living this life of faith, hope, and love in union with the Son who offered himself on the cross is what redemption and justification entail.

Eucharistic reception plays an explicit role in this process. William writes: "He [Jesus] put his faith and charity into his [the believer's] heart, the saving confession of himself into his mouth, and his body and blood into his hand. In this way he presents him to God the Father as his own, a culprit yet redeemed. With the sin of the presumer condemned and the sin of the penitent destroyed, he restored him, pleasing and acceptable, to a part in the sacrifice of his justice."[116] The Trinitarian dimensions we have already seen appear again here. Christ bestows the Spirit on the believer, which unites him to the Son. The Son then presents him to the Father, as he does his own self. The Eucharist is put forward as an important part of justification, along with the infusion of the theological virtues by the Holy Spirit. Together, they join the believer's life to the

[115] *Exp Rom*, IV.692–703; Romans 8:3–4;
[116] "Ipse uero innocentis mortis suae iustitiam dans peccatori paenitenti, fidem suam et caritatem posuit ei in corde, confessionem ad salutem in ore, corpus suum et sanguinem in manu; sic que reum et redemptum suum Deo Patri repraesentans, de peccato praesumptoris damnato et destructo peccato paenitentis, placitum et acceptum eum reddidit in sacrificium iustitiae suae" (*Exp Rom*, IV.704–709; Romans 8:3–4; English translation by John Baptist Hasbrouck, *Exposition on the Epistle to the Romans*, Cistercian Fathers Series 27 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1980), 153).

Son's in sacrifice to the Father. This, William continues, is the redemption, justice, and work of God.[117]

**IX. Meditation, Memory, and Eucharistic Reception**

William examines the Trinitarian dynamic of spiritual reception again in *Meditatio* VIII, focusing this time on the way in which meditation on the Eucharist serves as a form of that reception. William asks God to receive his own spirit, which he offers him, and then asks for an infusion of the Holy Spirit so that he may permeate him. This happens, he says

> when we eat and drink the deathless banquet of your body and your blood. As your clean beasts, we there regurgitate the sweet things storied within our memory, and chew them in our mouths like cud for the renewed and ceaseless work of our salvation. That done, we put away again in that same memory what you have done, what you have suffered for our sake. When you say to the longing soul: "Open your mouth wide and I will fill it," and she tastes and sees your sweetness in the great Sacrament that surpasses understanding, then she is made that which she eats, bone of your bone and flesh of your own flesh. Thus is fulfilled the prayer that you made to your Father on the threshold of your passion. The Holy Spirit effects in us here by grace that unity which is between the Father and yourself, his Son, from all eternity by nature; so that, as you are one, so likewise we may be made one in you. This, O Lord, is the face with which you meet the face of him who longs for you. This is the kiss of your mouth on the lips of your lover; and this is your love's answering embrace to your yearning bride who says: 'My beloved is mine, and I am his; he shall abide between my breasts." And again, "My heart has said 'My face has sought you.'"[118]

[117] Rougé summarizes the interplay between the Trinity and the Eucharist in William's theology of reception in this way. Christ gives himself to us in giving us a share of his Spirit. His food is to do the will of the Father, to live on the "substantial will" that is the Spirit. Christ never ceases to offer himself to the Father, eternally presenting to him his glorified human flesh, and he is heard because of his piety. The Spirit is himself the piety of those who worship rightly, in spirit and in truth. Rougé concludes: "Tout le 'jeu' de l'eucharistie, manifestation visible de l'humanité du Christ qui introduit dans la profondeur invisible de sa divinité, don de l'Esprit qui permet de reconnaître le Christ, don du Christ qui donne part à son Esprit, chemin vers le souvenir veritable et l'adoration du Père, tout ce jeu, tout ce mouvement, rend témoinage à la circumincession des Personnes divines, au mouvement et à l'unité de leur amour" (Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 304.

[118] "Hoc est quod agitur cum facimus quod *in tui commemorationem* nos *facere* praecepisti, quo in salutem filiorum tuorum nil dulcius, nil potuit prouideri potentius, cum manducantes et bibentes incorruptibile epulum corporis et sanguinis tui, sicut munda animalia tua, ab intestino memoriae cogitandi dulcedine, quasi ad os reducimus, et in nouum et perpetuum salutis nostrae officium, nouo semper pietatis affectu

Here we see many themes from *De sacramento altaris* echoed again, with a more explicit connection to the Trinity. The Eucharist is important for storing memories of Christ's saving work, which, when we meditate on them, increase our love for him. This loving, spiritual reception of Christ further conforms the recipient to him. It is a nuptial act, Rougé notes, which William signifies by echoing Adam's encounter with the newly created Eve in Genesis 2:23: "This is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh."[119] This conformation takes place by grace, with the Holy Spirit giving himself to us, and in so doing giving us the same unity as that between the Father and the Son, thereby binding those who receive worthily to each other and to Christ and the Father.

William's most significant writing on Eucharistic reception through meditation occurs in his celebrated letter to the Carthusian brothers of Mont-Dieu. Here he offers counsel on the basics of living the monastic life. In his discussion of reading, prayer, and meditation, he treats the Eucharist. It is beneficial and important to devote at least one hour of the day, he writes, "to an attentive passing in review of the benefits conferred by his Passion and the Redemption he wrought, in order to savor them in spirit and store them away faithfully in the memory.[120] This is spiritually to eat the Body of the Lord and

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ruminantes, rursum suauiter in ipsa recondimus memoria quid pro nobis feceris, quid fueris passus. Vbi dicis animae desideranti: *Dilata os tuum et ego adimplebo illud*. Et illa gustans et uidens suauitatem tuam sacramento magno et incomprehensibili, hoc efficitur quod manducat, *os ex ossibus tuis et caro de carne tua*, ut sicut orasti Patrem iturus ad passionem, hoc Spiritus sanctus operetur in nobis per gratiam, quod in Patre et te, Filio eius, est ab aeterno per naturam, ut *sicut uos unum estis, ita et nos in uobis unum simus*. Haec est, Domine, facies tua ad faciem te desiderantis; hoc est osculum oris tui ad os te amantis; hic est amplexus dilectionis tuae ad amplexum sponsae tuae suspirantis tibi et dicentis: *Dilectus meus mihi, et ego illi; in medio uberum meorum commorabitur. Et: Tibi dixit cor meum: Exquisiuit te facies mea*" (*Med*, VIII.7.72–9.92; 142–143).

[119] Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 251.

[120] Baudelet draws attention to the significant role memory plays in William's theology: "La mémoire est l'un des lieux privilégiés de la présence de Dieu." William sees memory as a parchement on which the stylus of the animus inscribes, or as a wax on which images of material objects from the corporal senses are imprinted. Hence meditation on things of God further conforms the soul to the divine likeness (Yves-Anselme Baudelet, *L'Expérience spirituelle selon Guillaume de Saint-Thierry* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf,

drink his Blood in remembrance of him who gave to all who believe in him the commandment: 'Do this in remembrance of me. . . .'"[121] Here William makes more explicit the connection we have already seen between meditation and spiritual reception. In the *Ep frat*, they are effectively identical. Because meditation on the passion allows a person to grow in love of Christ and store that love in his memory, it produces the same spiritual fruit as receiving the Eucharist in the sacrament.

William continues to exhort meditation on the passion as a form of Eucharistic reception, in particular as safer and more accessible. Only a few are allowed to celebrate the mystery of this commemoration, he notes:

> But the reality of the mystery can be enacted and handled and taken up for salvation at all times and in every place where God rules, in the way in which it was given, that is, with the feeling of due piety, by all those to whom are addressed the words: "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people set apart, so that you might proclaim the virtues of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvellous [sic] light." As the worthy man receives the sacrament to life, so the unworthy can violate it to his death and judgment. But no one perceives the reality of the sacrament unless he is worthy and suitable. For the sacrament without the reality of the sacrament is the death of the one receiving; but the reality of the sacrament, even without the sacrament, is eternal life of the one receiving.
>
> Now if you wish, and if you truly wish, this is available to you in your cell at all hours both of day and of night. As often as you will be moved piously and faithfully by what he did, in memory of him who suffered for you, you eat his body and drink his blood; as long as you remain in him

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1985), 46–48). This is closely related to William's view of sensation, in which the encounter between the person and the sensory object transforms the one who senses into that object (Déchanet, "Amor Ipse Intellectus Est," 350–354.

[121] "Scit etiam quicumque *habet sensum Christi* quantum christianae pietati expediat, quantum seruum Dei, seruum redemptionis Christi deceat, et utile ei sit una saltem aliqua diei hora passionis ipsius ac redemptionis attentius recolligere beneficia, ad fruendum suauiter in conscientia et recondendum fideliter in memoria; quod est spiritualiter manducare corpus Domini et bibere eius sanguinem, in memoriam eius qui omnibus in se credentibus praecepit dicens: *Hoc facite in meam commemorationem*" (*Epistola ad fratres de Monte Dei*, *CCCM* 88, I.115.824–831; English translation by Theodore Berkeley, *The Golden Epistle*, Cistercian Fathers Series 12 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1971), 49–50).

> through love, and he is in you through the working of sanctity and justice, you are reckoned in his body and in his members.[122]

Unlike when physically receiving the sacrament, there is no danger when receiving the sacrament's spiritual benefit by meditation. Any monk can meditate on the passion at any time of day as part of his share in the priesthood of all believers. One need not wait until the celebration of Mass to receive its spiritual fruits. The extent to which William equates meditation and Eucharistic reception seems shocking, and yet the conclusion is entirely consistent with his theology of spiritual reception. By receiving Christ in the Eucharist, a person is reminded of Christ's saving work and grows in love by a gift of the Spirit. Yet such a memorial and increase of love are possible by meditation as well, and hence the fruits of each are the same. Knowledge of Christ in meditation presupposes and further realizes a kind of ontological conformity to Christ as the object of knowledge and love, in a manner analogous to Eucharistic reception.[123] This knowledge and love comes from an increase of the Spirit, who is himself the knowledge and love of Father and Son.[124] This does not denigrate or radically relativize the uniqueness of the sacrament. As we have seen, in previous works William has written of the necessity of the sacrament for the deification of the body and the importance of joining oneself to the sacrifice of Christ

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[122] "Siquidem sanctae huius ac reuerendae commemorationis mysterium, suo modo, suo loco, suo tempore celebrare licet paucis hominibus, quibus in hoc creditum est ministerium; rem uero mysterii in omni tempore *et in omni loco dominationis Dei*, modo quo traditum est, hoc est debitae pietatis affectu agere et tractare et sumere sibi in salutem, omnibus in promptu est, quibus dicitur: *Vos autem genus electum, regale sacerdotium, gens sancta, populus adquisitionis, ut uirtutes adnuntietis eius qui de tenebris uos uocauit in admirabile lumen suum*. Nam et sacramentum, sicut accipit ad uitam dignus, sic ad mortem suam et iudicium temerare potest indignus; rem uero sacramenti nemo percipit nisi dignus et idoneus. Sacramentum enim sine re sacramenti sumenti mors est; res uero sacramenti, etiam praeter sacramentum, sumenti uita aeterna est. "Si autem uis et uere uis, omnibus horis tam diei quam noctis, haec tibi in cella tua praesto est. Quotiens in commemorationem eius qui pro te passus est, / huic facto eius pie ac fideliter fueris affectus, corpus eius manducas et sanguinem bibis; quamdiu in eo manes per amorem, ipse uero in te per sanctitatis et iustitiae operationem, in eius corpore et in membris eius computaris" *Ep frat*, I.117.836–119.855; the translation is my own).

[123] Cf. Déchanet, "Amor Ipse Intellectus Est," 352, 359.

[124] Ibid., 366.

offered in the Mass. But why does he not mention these here? Why the interiorization of liturgy and sacrament?

There are two reasons. First, William derives his theology of spiritual reception from Origen, who saw the scriptures as an incarnation of the Word of God into the letter analogous to the Word's incarnation in the flesh. Most of Origen's theological themes express the interiorization of Christ the Word into the Christian, particularly through the means of the scriptures. By reading and meditating on the words of Scripture, the Word that it contains is appropriated to the one reading and meditating.[125] The purpose of both spiritual study and the Eucharist is to reveal the Word of God again,[126] to bring Christ's presence in history in the Incarnation into the present life of the believer. Von Balthasar sums up this core view: "In the platonism of Origen, spiritual presence and eating equal real presence and eating."[127] Activities such as meditation and study that increase the presence of Christ in the memory by the power of the Spirit are logically, for Origen, other forms of spiritual reception.

Second, Rougé suggests that the answer lies in the letter's context. William, he writes, is addressing Carthusians, whose vocation is to remain in their cell and whose

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[125] Henri Crouzel, *Origen*, trans. A.S. Worrall (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 70, 76.

[126] "L'attention d'Origène se porte avant tout sur la function que remplissent et l'Écriture et le sang du Verbe dans l'économie de notre salut. Or, leur function à l'une et à l'autre est analogue. Elle est d'exprimer et de révéler le Verbe de Dieu. L'une et l'autre le font selon un schéma semblable et l'Écriture le fait en fin de compte avec une supériorité qui permet de la considérer, non sans doute en sa matérialité, mais prise en son essence secrète, comme la vérité dont l'Eucharistie serait le symbole" (Henri de Lubac, *Histoire et esprit : L'intelligence de l'écriture d'après Origène* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2002), 365.). For more on William's use of Origen in his theology of reception, see Verdeyen, *La Théologie mystique de Guillaume de Saint-Thierry*, 172ff.

[127] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Parole et mystère chez Origène* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1957), 105. Crouzel adds: "The birth of Christ in the soul is essentially bound up with the reception of the Word and in a certain way Jesus is thus being continually born in souls. . . . The birth of Jesus at Bethlehem is only effective in the order of Redemption if Jesus is also born in every man, if each adheres personally to this advent of Jesus into the world, and thereby into him. . . . It can even happen that some accord Him such a place within them that he walks in them, lies down in them, eats in them, with the whole Trinity" (Crouzel, *Origen*, 125).

liturgical life is diminished compared to more cenobitic monastics. At the same time, he is also conscious of the monastic practice of accumulating private Masses for the intentions of the deceased. Hence Rougé concludes: "A warning against limiting all of the spiritual life to the celebration of the sacrament of the altar should not be interpreted too quickly as a complete denigration of the Eucharist as such."[128] He also points to the fact that the grace procured in meditation is named *res mysterii*, that is specifically the grace that the Eucharist brings. It is not that meditation on the passion could replace the Eucharist. Rather it serves as another way to receive the grace that the celebration of the Eucharist makes available: "Therefore if William establishes a real distinction between the materiality of the exterior celebration and the interior participation in its virtue, he maintains no less that the grace that a person must acquire is the grace of the Eucharist. If the discursivity of the sacrament is relativized in part, it is only to better value the grace of the sacrament itself."[129] In short, William is more trying to enhance the meditation and affective life of his readers than to make reductive dogmatic statements about the Eucharist. Yet it is significant that William uses language of eating to describe meditation and remembrance. For him, these activities are Eucharistic acts of thanksgiving and love that are united to the Eucharist and derive their life from it. They are extensions of Eucharistic grace, not replacements for it.

[128] "Une mise en garde contre la limitation de toute la vie spirituelle à la célébration même du sacrement de l'autel ne doit pas être interpretée trop vite comme un dénigrement complet de l'eucharistie en tant que telle" (Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 103). For more on Masses for the dead and Cistercian liturgical reforms, see Dubois, "L'Eucharistie à Cîteaux au milieu du Xlle siècle," 269–276.

[129] "Si donc Guillaume établit une distinction réelle entre la matérialité de la célébration extérieure et la participation intérieure à sa vertu, il n'en maintient pas moins que la grâce qu'il s'agit d'accueillir en soi, c'est la grâce de l'eucharistie. Si la discursivité du sacrement est en partie relativisée, ce n'est que pour mieux mettre en valeur la grâce du sacrement lui-même" (Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 104).

## X. Sacrifice

The purpose of the Eucharist is not just for its recipients to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them; it is to unite them in the Spirit to Christ in his sacrifice to the Father, and to unite their sacrifices and lives to his own. In *De natura et dignitate amoris*, William treats the Eucharist during a section in which he constructs a conversation between the persons of the Trinity on the need for redemption of the human race. As "the medium between God and man,"[130] Christ addresses humanity and the Father and tells them what he has done for each: "Taking his own Body and Blood in his hand, he said: 'Eat this! Drink this! And live by it!' And presenting it to the Father, he says: 'Behold, Father, the price of my blood. If you require a price for sin, see here is my Blood for it. Lord Father, you have bestowed liberality, and the earth of my Body has produced its fruit. Now righteousness will walk before you and you will set your feet on the path of human salvation. . . .'"[131]

William goes on to describe the fruits of redemption further as being reconciliation with God, but also more than reconciliation. Receiving redemption through the Eucharist brings wisdom, for the one who receives well savors what he eats and becomes conformed to the one whom he eats, who is Wisdom itself: "He eats and drinks the Body and Blood of his Redeemer, the heavenly manna, the bread of angels, the bread of wisdom, and while eating it he is transformed into the nature of the food he eats. For to

[130] "inter Deum et hominem medium se faciens" (*Nat am*, 35.939–940).
[131] "Positoque corpore suo et sanguine in manu eius: Hoc, inquit, manduca, hoc bibe, hinc uiue. Patrique eum repraesentans: En, inquit, Pater, sanguinis mei pretium. Si de peccato huius requires, en pro eo meus sanguis. Domine Pater, dedisti benignitatem, et terra corporis mei dedit fructum suum. Iam iustitia ante te ambulabit, et tu pones in via saluationis humanae pedes tuos" (*Nat am*, 37.1000–1006; 99).

eat the Body of Christ is nothing other than to be made the Body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit."[132]

These passages echo many of the themes we have already seen in William's Eucharistic writings. First, the Eucharist serves as a means of deification whereby the recipient becomes conformed to the one he receives. Rougé identifies this as a Christological theme, which is true enough.[133] But it is even more a Trinitarian theme. For this conformity to the one he receives accompanies an infusion of the Holy Spirit so that the recipient, in sharing the life of the Son, can become part of the offering of the Son to the Father. That offering takes a particular form in the economy of salvation, where the Son assumes human flesh and offers his life on behalf of sinners. But it is part of the eternal exchange of love between the two.

The Eucharist is not only a matter of increasing love, but is also serves as a sacrifice of Christ's body, offered by Christ to the Father. William describes Christ as the one who blesses the Eucharistic bread and changes it into his body with the words of institution.[134] In the Eucharist, Christ bears the flesh that he assumed for us to the Father for our sake.[135] William offers an extensive quotation of Chrysosotom's (cited as Ambrose's) homilies on the letter to the Hebrews explaining that the Eucharistic sacrifice is the *exemplum* of Christ's self-offering on the cross. The two are always together, so that the Eucharist is completely a sacrifice.[136] And both are a sacrifice by which the Son

[132] "De fructu ergo huius operas satiates homo, mediante sapientia Dei, non solum reconciliatur, sed etiam sapiens efficitur. Sapit enim ei quod manduact. Manducat et bibit corpus et sanguimen Redemptoris sui, manna caeleste, panem angelorum, panem sapientiae; et manducans transformatur in naturam cibi quem manducat. Corpus enim Christi manducare nichil est aliud quam corpus Christi effici, et *templum Spiritus sancti*" (*Nat am*, 38.1008–1014; 100).
[133] Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 30.
[134] *Sac alt*, V.48–52.
[135] *Sac alt*, XI.28–29.
[136] *Sac alt*, XI.35–50.

incorporates men into his self-offering to the Father. As Rougé puts it, "The glorious Christ offers the flesh that he took from our nature to the Father; we offer this flesh with the same piety when we recognize it as holy and sanctifying and when we recognize that we present it to Him from whom all holiness comes (cf. Heb. 2:11). This is the profound reality of the sacrament of the altar."[137]

Two implications arise from this. First, while the Eucharist serves as a memorial, it is also an enactment of the Son's offering to the Father in heaven now and forever. It points to the present and future as much as the past.[138] Second, our offering of the Eucharist is efficacious because it is joined by faith to Christ's self-offering in heaven.[139] William writes:

> Indeed we do this humbly here on earth through him, which he does powerfully for us in heaven, as the Son who must be heard on account of his reverence, where he intercedes before the Father as an advocate for us. It is his to intercede for us: to bear the flesh, which he assumed for us and from us, to God the Father in a certain way for our sake. Therefore let us sacrifice the body of Christ, since we believe it to be holy and sanctifying with certain piety of faith, and we offer this faith for his honor, from which, whoever sanctifies and whoever are sanctified, all are from one.[140]

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[137] "Le Christ glorieux offer au Père pour nous la chair qu'il a prise de notre nature; nous offrons cette chair avec la mème piété quand nous la reconnaissons sainte et sanctifiante et que nous la présentons à Celui de qui provient toute sainteté (cf. Heb. 2:11). Voilà la réalité profonde du sacrement de l'autel" (Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 56.

[138] Ibid., 178.

[139] "Notre sacrifice du corps du Seigneur procède, par la médiation de la foi, du sacrifice que le Christ fait lui-même de son propre corps. Ce qui rend notre offrande effective, c'est notre foi en la puissance sanctifiante de la chair glorifiée de Jésus. Cette foi, vécue dans la célébration du sacrement lui-même, est la mise en oeuvre de la médiation sanctifiante du Fils, à la louange de la gloire du Père. Notre sacrifice est authentique parce que nous croyons à l'unique véritable sacrifice du Fils" (Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 179. Rougé also notes that all of our offerings and sacrifices are only a secondary response to the primary iniative of God, which gives us all we could ever offer back (169).

[140] "Hoc enim hic per eum humiliter agimus in terris, quod pro nobis ipse potenter, sicut Filius *pro sua reuerentia* exaudiendus, agit in caelis, ubi apud Patrem pro nobis quasi aduocatus interuenit. Cui est pro nobis interuenire: carnem, quam pro nobis et de nobis sumpsit, Deo Patri quodammodo pro nobis ingerere. Sacrificamus ergo corpus Christi, dum certa fidei pietate sanctum illud credimus et sanctificans, et hanc fidem offerimus ad honorem eius, ex quo, qui sanctificat et qui sanctificantur, ex uno omnes" (*Sac alt*, XI.24–31).

Not only the priest but all those participating in the sacrament become joined to Christ's offering of himself to the Father. Their deification through the sacrament entails an entrance into that Trinitarian relationship. And, as William's subsequent quotation of Augustine makes clear, the faithful offer themselves to Christ at the same time as they participate in his self-offering to the Father. They are one with him in his act and make a similar act of their own. Indeed, it is through Christ's sacrifice to the Father that those united to his body and indeed now its members have the sacrifices of their lives brought into the eternal offering of the Son to the Father in the Spirit.[141]

**XI. The Eucharist as the Body of Christ, the Church**

In *De sacramento altaris*, William turns more explicitly to the question of how to understand the Fathers' apparently conflicting *sententiae* about the body of Christ. From these *sententiae*, he writes, he finds three ways in which the Fathers speak of it according to layers of sacramentality. A sacrament is a sign of a sacred thing; it "makes something come into the mind."[142] The visible species of bread on the altar makes the faithful think of the physical body of Christ. William emphasizes that the sacramentality of the visible species depends not only on the spoken words of the priest, but on the fact that the bread is broken, laid down, and raised, which call to mind Christ's death, burial, and ascension.[143] The physical or material flesh of Christ in the sacrament is then received by

[141] "Le Christ offre et est offert, comme l'homme qui est appelé à s'offrir lui-même mais aussi à rapporter à Dieu l'offrande qu'il lui présente. Seul le Christ, grand prêtre du sacrifice universel permet à l'homme d'être, en vérité, le prêtre du sacrifice de sa propre vie" (Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 164–165. "L'eucharistie n'est pas le seul sacrifice que nous ayons à célébrer. C'est par toute notre vie que nous sommes appelés à render à Dieu le culte et la louange qui lui sont dûs. Mais l'eucharistie ouvre la porte et montre le chemin de l'action de grâce véritable. L'eucharistie est le sacrifice visible qui nous introduit dans l'offrande éternelle et invisible de l'amour" (Ibid., 182.

[142] "Sacramentum enim est sacrae rei signum. Signum autem est, quod praeter speciem quam ingerit, facit aliquid in mentem uenire" (*Sac alt*, X.32–34).

[143] *Sac alt*, X.39–44.

the faithful. But Christ's body received is also a sacrament of the third sense of the body of Christ, his spiritual body the Church. As William puts it

> Indeed that flesh or body must be understood in one way, which hangs on the cross and is sacrificed on the altar; that flesh or body that whoever eats it has life abiding in him in another way; and his flesh or blood which is the church in another way. . . . For this trinity of the body of the Lord must not be understood as other than that body of the Lord, thought of according to its essence, strength, and effect. For the body of Christ, which is so much in itself, presents itself to all as the food of eternal life, and it truly makes those receiving it faithfully one with it, and by the love of the Spirit and the communion of nature, appears as the head of his body the Church.[144]

A similar parallel exists, then, between the unity of the persons of the Trinity and the unity of the members of the body of Christ. William writes that the Father and the Son are each in the other, bound together by the Holy Spirit "who exists as such by virtue of his unity of being with you both."[145] Likewise, the Spirit creates and orders the unity that makes those in the Church one among themselves and in God, as sons. The sonship the Spirit brings is not by nature, as with the Son, but by an adoption of grace: "The former birth is not something that happens, nor does it effect a unity; it is itself a oneness in the Holy Spirit. The latter birth, however, has no existence of itself, but comes to being

[144] "Aliter enim cogitanda est caro illa uel corpus, quod pependit in ligno et sacrificatur in altari; aliter caro eius uel corpus, quod qui manducauerit, habet uitam in se manentem; aliter caro uel corpus eius, quod est ecclesia. Nam et ecclesia caro Christi dicitur, ut ibi: *Hoc nunc os ex ossibus meis, et caro de carne mea. Sacramentum hoc*, inquit Apostolus, *magnum est; ego autem dico, in Christo et in Ecclesia*. Non quod tricorpor a nobis Christus describatur, sicut de Geryone illo ferunt fabulae, cum unum esse corpus Christi testetur Apostolus; sed quodam fidei respectu intellectus uel affectus facit diuersitatem hanc, res uero ipsa simplicitatis suae puram obtinet ueritatem. Haec enim trinitas corporis Domini non est aliud intelligenda quam ipsum Domini corpus, cogitatum secundum essentiam, secundum uirtutem, secundum effectum. Nam corpus Christi, quantum in se est, omnibus se praebet cibum uitae aeternae, et fideliter se sumentes unum uere se cum efficit, et amore spiritus et ipsius consortio naturae, *caput* exsistens *corporis Ecclesiae*" (*Sac alt*, XIII.25–41).

[145] "Nostra ergo, ut uideo, in te, uel tua in nobis habitatio nobis caelum est; *caelum* uero *caeli* tua aeternitas tibi, qua es quod es in teipso, Pater in Filio, Filius in Patre, et unitas qua Pater et Filius unum estis, id est Spiritus sanctus, non quasi aliunde ueniens et medium se faciens, sed coessendo in hoc ipsum existens" (*Med*, VI.XI.89–94; 128).

through the Holy Spirit, in so far as it is stamped with the likeness of God."[146] This strong doctrine of union with the Trinity through the Spirit—*unitas spiritus*—is one of the hallmarks of William's theology. He takes a phrase first used to describe the relations of the Trinity, then the relations of Christians in community in the Church or a monastery, to describe the union of the individual soul with God.[147] The semantic field of the phrase captures all levels of unity present in the Eucharist. That unity is perfected in the beatific vision, which will make the faithful like God: "For for the Father to see the Son is to be what the Son is, and vice versa. For us, however, to see God is to be like God. This unity, this likeness is itself the heaven where God dwells in us, and we in him."[148]

**XII. The Eschatological End of the Eucharist**

The Eucharist is a real participation in the union of the Trinity, but it is only a foretaste of the real union to come in the beatific vision. In *De natura et dignitate amoris*, William describes the glorification of the body in beatitude and its reception of the beatific vision. He does not think that God will be seen by physical eyes, but the glorification of the body will show it the presence of divinity through some kind of grace, in a way similar to the way in which grace makes God present to our senses now through the sacraments: "Even in this life the religion of the physical sacraments is effective for this. Since we understand scarcely anything besides bodies and physical things while we are passing through as an image, we are bound by the physical sacraments lest we draw

[146] "Natiuitas uero Filii de Patre, aeternitatis natura est; natiuitas in nobis, gratiae adoptio est. Illa nec fit, nec facit unitatem, sed ipsa in Spiritu sancto unitas est; ista non est, sed fit per Spiritum sanctum, in quantum similitudine Dei insignitur, equidem ultra modum humanae naturae, sed citra essentiam diuinae" (*Med*, VI.XIII.103–105; 129).
[147] For more, see Sergent et al., *Unitas Spiritus and the Originality of William of Saint-Thierry*.
[148] "Similitudinem autem Dei ipsam conferet nobis uisio eius, qua Deum uidebimus, non quod est, sed sicut est, et ipsa similitudo qua similes ei erimus. Nam uidere Patri Filium, hoc est esse quod Filius, et e contrario. Nobis autem uidere Deum, hoc est similes esse Deo. Haec unitas, haec similitudo ipsum est caelum, quo Deus in nobis habitat, et nos in Deo" (*Med*, VI.XIII.110–XIV.116; 129).

away from God."[149] Rougé notes the eschatological and anthropological point at work here.[150] This union with Christ's body is accomplished now through sacraments and is real, but not as full as it will be in the beatific vision, when the body is glorified and material things have passed away. Until that time, the Eucharist serves as a physical bond to God for physical beings who need it and as a real foretaste and participation in the union that is to come.

William returns to this topic in *Meditatio* VI, where he describes the joy of the blessed, the inter-Trinitarian relations of God in heaven, and his own longing for beatitude. The second of these is most pertinent here for its echoes with William's treatment of Eucharistic reception. William quotes John 1:38, in which Andrew and another disciple ask Jesus where he lives, and answers the question with Jesus' words in John 14:20, "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you." He understands this to mean that the Father is the *locus* of Christ, and Christ the *locus* of the Father, but also that we are the *locus* of Christ and Christ is ours. He continues: "Since, then, Lord Jesus, you are in the Father and the Father is in you, O most high and undivided Trinity, you are yourself the place of your abode, you are yourself your heaven. . . . When, therefore, you dwell in us, we are your heaven, most assuredly. Yet you are not yourself sustained by dwelling in us; no, it is your sustaining that makes a

[149] "sic in illa vita videbitur Deus a singulis in omnibus, et ab omnibus in singulis; non quod corporalibus oculis videatur diuinitas, sed praesentiam duinitas glorificatio corporum demonstrabit manifesta quaedam sui gratia. Ad hoc etiam in hac vita corporalium sacramentorum ualet religio; quia cum uix aliquid nisi corpora et corporalia intelligamus, quamdiu in imagine pertransimus, corporalibus religamur sacramentis, ne a Deo recedamus" (*Nat am*, 44.1155–1162; 107).
[150] Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 30.

dwelling for you. And you too are our heaven, to which we may ascend, and in which we may dwell."[151]

**XIII. Imagery of the Kiss**

William's most complex connections between the Trinity, Christ, and the Eucharist appear when he characterizes each of these as a kiss or embrace, borrowing the image from the opening verse of the Song of Songs, "Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth." William calls these the kiss of nature, the kiss of doctrine, and the kiss of grace.[152] In his *Brevis commentatio*, he writes that there is a *conversio* from the Father to the Son, and from the Son to the Father. This takes place in a kiss of mutual knowledge and an embrace of mutual love. The Holy Spirit is this kiss and embrace, the love of the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father.[153] And the Holy Spirit reveals the truth of God's trinity and unity to us. Hence we are said to be touched by the kiss of the mouth when God reveals himself to us by the Spirit.[154] This characterization of the Holy Spirit as a kiss between the Father and the Son appears in William's other works as well. In his *Disputatio adversus Petrum Abelardum*, he writes that the Spirit is common to the Father and the Son, and is their community (*communitas*). He also characterizes the Spirit as

[151] "Locus ergo tuus Pater est, et tu Patris, et non solum, sed etiam nos locus tuus sumus, et tu noster. Cum ergo, o Domine Iesu, tu es in Patre, et Pater in te, o summa et indiuisa Trinitas, tu tibi locus es, utique tu tibi locus es, tu tibi caelum es, sicut non habens ex quo, sic non indigens in quo subsistas, nisi ex teipso in teipso. Cum autem nos inhabitas, caelum tuum sumus utique, sed non quo sustenteris, ut inhabites, sed quod sustentes ut in|habitetur, tu quoque caelum nobis exsistens ad quem ascendamus et inhabitemus" (*Med*, VI.X.81–XI.89; 128).
[152] *Brevis Commentatio*, *CCCM* 87, VII.28–30.
[153] "Et est quaedam conuersio a Patre ad Filium, et a Filio ad Patrem. Sed prima est Patris ad Filium, quia Filius a Patre est, non Pater a Filio. Prima autem non tempore, sed quasi quadam relatione, sicut Pater ad Filium. Conuersio autem ista est in osculo et amplexu. Osculum est mutua de se cognitio; amplexus est mutua dilectio. Vnde dicit Filius in euangelio: Nemo nouit Patrem nisi Filius, et nemo nouit Filium nisi Pater. Osculum igitur Patris et Filii, et amplexus, est Spiritus sanctus ab utroque procedens, amor Patris ad Filium, et amor Filii ad Patrem" (*Brev com*, VI.17–26).
[154] "Cui igitur Filius per Spiritum reuelat, non dicendus est osculari ore suo Deus, sed osculo oris sui. Non enim os tangimus, sed osculo tangimur. Osculo tangimur, cum amor et cognitio nobis infunditur" (*Brev com*, VI.37–40).

"charity, embrace and kiss, goodness, sweetness and joy . . . and their divinity."[155] And in the *Ep frat*, he calls the Spirit "the God who is Charity. He who is the love of Father and Son, their Unity, Sweetness, Good, Kiss, Embrace and whatever else they can have in common in that supreme unity of truth and truth of unity."[156]

The Incarnation is a second kiss in which humanity and divinity are joined in union (*coniunctio*).[157] This kiss intensifies in the Passion, which William describes as a kiss and an embrace and Rougé characterizes as "the kiss of the cross."[158] The third kiss is the union of the Holy Spirit and the soul in particular gifts of grace. William describes these latter two in greater detail in his *Cant*:

> A kiss is a certain outward loving union of bodies, sign and incentive of an inward union. It is produced by use of the mouth and aims, by mutual exchange, at a union not only of bodies but of spirits. Christ the Bridegroom offered to his Bride the Church, so to speak, a kiss from heaven, when the Word made flesh drew so near to her that he wedded her to himself; and so wedded her that he united her to himself, in order that God might become man, and man might become God. He also offers this same kiss to the faithful soul, his Bride, and imprints it upon her, when from the remembrance of the benefits common to all men, he gives her her own special and personal joy and pours forth within her the grace of his love, drawing her spirit to himself and infusing into her his spirit, that both may be one spirit.[159]

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[155] "Cum ergo Pater etiam sit spiritus et sanctus, Filius quoque spiritus et sanctus, oportuit censeri aliquo nomine quod commune esset amborum, ipsum qui communis et communitas est amborum; et commune amborum quidquid commune est eorum: caritas, amplexus et osculum, bonitas, suauitas et gaudium, et ut totum concludam, diuinitas amborum" (*Disputatio adversus Petrum Abelardum*, *CCCM* 89A, IV.85–90; the translation is my own).

[156] "Deus caritas; cum qui est amor Patris et Filii, et unitas et suauitas, et bonum et osculum, et amplexus et quicquid commune potest esse amborum" (*Ep frat*, II.263.508–510; 96).

[157] "Coniunctio enim Verbi et audientis, diuinitatis et humanitatis, quasi quoddam osculum est caritatis. . . . Haec igitur coniunctio diuinae et humanae naturae quoddam est osculum sponsi et sponsae" (*Brev com*, VII.5–6, 26–27).

[158] *Med*, V.8, V.17, VIII.5; Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 310.

[159] "Osculum amica quaedam et exterior coniunctio corporum est, interioris coniunctionis signum et incentiuum.
Quod oris ministerio exhibetur, ut non tantum corporum, sed ex mutuo contactu etiam spirituum coniunctio fiat. Sponsus uero Christus sponsae suae ecclesiae quasi osculum de caelo porrexit, cum Verbum caro factum in tantum ei appropinquauit, ut se ei coniungeret; in tantum coniunxit, ut uniret, ut Deus homo, homo Deus fieret. Ipsum etiam osculum fideli animae sponsae suae porrigit et imprimit, cum de memoria communium bonorum, priuatum ei et proprium commendans gaudium, gratiam ei sui amoris infundit, spiritum eius sibi adtrahens et suum infundens ei, ut inuicem *unus spiritus sint*" (*Cant*, IV.27.83–93; 25–

Here it becomes clear that, for William, a kiss is a movement of love and knowledge by a person of the Trinity toward another person, human or divine. In the kiss of nature, this movement takes place within the existing unity of the Trinity and hence is a *conversio*, a turning toward. In the kisses of doctrine and grace, however, these movements goes out toward human beings to form a *coniunctio*, a union that did not previously exist. In the same pattern of logic we have seen before, the Son unites himself to human nature and bestows the Spirit on particular persons so that they may have his love in them. The Spirit unites them to Christ, which incorporates them into his self-offering to the Father and into the life of the Trinity. In Rougé's words, "The kiss of the humanity and the passion of Jesus bear witness and lead to the still more surprising and wonderful kiss of the Trinity itself."[160] *Coniunctio* leads to a share in *conversio*.

It is no coincidence that in this passage William describes the kisses of doctrine and grace in sacramental, even Eucharistic language. First, like the sacraments, a kiss is an outward sign of a corresponding inner spiritual reality in which the outward sign not only signifies but effects that reality. Indeed, the Eucharist is obviously one of the kisses of grace that Christ gives through the Holy Spirit. Second, the purpose of the union of the kiss of the Incarnation is for God to become man so that man might become God. Here William again uses *fio*, the verb he regularly employs for the Word taking on flesh and becoming present on the altar during the Eucharist. This reflects logic common to both the mission of the Son in the Incarnation and the mission of the Spirit in gifts of grace, such as the Eucharist. Finally, Christ imprints the kiss on the soul when he infuses it with

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26). For more on how this union takes place in thoughts and feelings, knowledge and love, see *Cant,* XXVII.

[160] "Le baiser de l'humanité et de la passion de Jésus rend témoinage et mène au baiser, plus surprenant et admirable encore, de la Trinité elle-même" (Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 311.

the grace of his love and draws its spirit to himself. In so doing, he gives the soul its own joys from the memory of the good things common to all, a clear reference to the way in which meditation on the passion and spiritual reception of the Eucharist increase love in a particular person based on remembering what Christ has done for all. This is made explicit in the passage of *Meditatio* VIII mentioned above, in which William describes spiritual reception of the Eucharist and the union of grace it produces as the kiss of the lover on the mouth of the beloved.

The role of the Eucharist becomes even more explicit when William elaborates about the work of God. He writes:

> Your work is made true for us when we sacrifice to you this your sacrifice. When we remember with the sure sacrament of faith and a pious affection of heart what you have done for us, faith, as it were, receives it with its mouth, hope chews it, and charity cooks into salvation and life the blessed and beatifying food of your grace. There you show yourself to the soul which desires you, accepting the embrace of her love and kissing her with the kiss of your mouth. As happens in a loving kiss, she pours out to you her spirit [lit. *anima*, soul], and you pour in your spirit [*spiritum*], so that you are made one body and one spirit when she receives in this way your body and blood.[161]

As Rougé notes, this is not metaphorical language about a general way in which the soul is justified. Rather, it is explicitly Eucharistic language tying together some of William's favorite themes.[162] Eucharistic offering and meditation make Christ present to the soul,

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[161] "Verum quippe nobis fit opus tuum, cum sacrificamus tibi hoc sacrificium tuum; cum certo fidei sacramento et pio cordis affectu recolentibus nobis quid pro nobis fecisti, fides quasi ore suscipit; spes ruminat, caritas excoquit in salutem et uitam beatum et beatificum gratiae tuae cibum. Ibi enim te exhibes animae desideranti, acceptans amplexum amoris sui, et osculans eam osculo oris tui, ubi sicut in osculo amoris solet, ipsa tibi effundit spiritum suum, et tu ei infundis tuum, ut efficiamini unum corpus et unus spiritus, cum hoc modo sumit corpus et sanguinem tuum" (*Exp Rom*, Liber IV.714–723; Romans 8:3–4; 153).

[162] "Il semble pourtant qu'en insistant sur la nécessaire conjonction du 'véritable sacrement de la foi' et d'une 'pieuse affection du coeur' ainsi qu'en parlant explicitement du corps et du sang du Seigneur, notre auteur se situe délibéré dans le registre sacramental. . . . De manière peu inopinée, Guillaume fournit donc aux lecteurs de son commentaire une brève synthèse de ses themes eucharistiques favoris: participation au mystère de la Rédemption, memorial intérieur, nourriure spirituelle, échange intime avec le Christ" (Rougé, *Doctrine et experience*, 83.

which then receives him through faith, hope, and charity. That act of reception is metaphorically depicted in the opening passage of the Song of Songs, as William wrote earlier in his *Meditationes*. It is an exchange in which the believer offers his soul to Christ and receives the Spirit of Christ in return. In this way, the soul's reception of Christ's body and blood unites the believer to Christ in body and spirit. Given what William has written previously in *Sac alt* about physical reception deifying the body, he seems to imply spiritual and physical reception here. Offering and receiving the Eucharist, then, is an important part of justification and union with God. Hence Rougé comments, "If man and his Lord can form 'one single body and one single spirit,' it is because one food at once corporal and spiritual is received in communion."[163]

William repeatedly emphasizes the way in which the kiss of the Spirit by grace brings human beings into the kiss of nature that takes place between the persons of the Trinity. In the *Ep frat*, his characterization of the Holy Spirit as the kiss of the Father and the Son is situated in the middle of a passage describing how the Spirit "becomes for man in regard to God in the manner appropriate to him what he is for the Son in regard to the Father or for the Father in regard to the Son through unity of substance. The soul in its happiness finds itself standing midway in the Embrace and the Kiss of the Father and Son. In a manner which exceeds description and thought, the man of God is found worthy to become not God but what God is, that is to say man becomes through grace what God is by nature."[164]

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[163] "Si l'homme et son Seigneur peuvent former 'un seul corps et un seul esprit,' c'est bien parce qu'une nourriture à la fois corporelle et spirituelle est reçue en communion" (Ibid., 83).

[164] "in summa illa unitate ueritatis et in ueritate unitatis, hoc idem fit homini suo modo ad Deum, quod consubstantiali unitate Filio est ad Patrem uel Patri ad Filium. Cum in osculo et amplexu Patris et Filii mediam quodammodo se inuenit beata conscientia; cum modo ineffabili et incogitabili, fieri meretur homo Dei, non Deus, sed tamen quod Deus est: homo ex gratia quod Deus est ex natura" (*Ep frat*, II.263.510–516; 96).

This incorporation into the life of the Trinity through union with the Spirit takes place in part in this life through the sacraments, but comes to fulfillment only in heaven. In his *Cant*, William writes that this embrace of the Holy Spirit who is the embrace of the Father and Son is begun here, but perfected elsewhere. The sweetness experienced here foretells a future sweetness. The essence of that future good and this present good are the same, but the aspect is different. This present union belongs to wayfaring in mortal life, the other to the journey's end in eternal life. Then, when mutual knowledge shall be perfect, it will be the full kiss and the full embrace.[165] Only the wall of mortal life holds back the Bridegroom, Christ, from his bride, the Church, in the full kiss of union in the Spirit.[166] While that wall remains, the sacraments serve to mediate the reception of the Spirit so that that union can come about. But in heaven, "the Reality [*res*] which is veiled by all the sacraments will utterly put an end to all sacraments. In the sacraments of the New Testament, it is true, the day of new grace began to break; but in that end of perfect consummation will come the full noonday when glass and riddle and that which is in part shall be done away, but there shall be the vision face to face and the plenitude of the highest good."[167] The *res* of union with the Spirit that they, especially the Eucharist, make available is only a foretaste of the fulfillment of that union to come.

In the *Spec fid*, William also connects memory to the Holy Spirit's meditation of union with God. We recognize God as we recognize a friend. We have *affectus* derived from faith in our memory, which makes God present to us when he is absent. But the Father and Son recognize each other in their unity, which is the Spirit and the substance

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[165] *Cant*, XXVII.128.
[166] *Cant*, XXXIII.151.
[167] "In sacramentis quippe Noui Testamenti cepit aspirare nouae gratiae dies; in illo uero omnis consummationis fine erit meridies, ubi non erit speculum et aenigma et ex parte, sed uisio faciei ad faciem, et summi boni plenitudo" (*Cant*, XXXVII.172.19–23; 142).

by which they are what they are. The Father and Son reveal this recognition by imparting the Spirit, who is their common knowledge and will. This enables the one who has received the Spirit to recognize them as the Father and Son recognize themselves, because he has within himself their mutual knowing and love. In this kiss of the Spirit the person receives a partial recognition of God, which will become perfect in the beatific vision.[168] The preparation of memory by right faith and Eucharistic reception imprints the recognition of God on his memory, conforming it to God and preparing his mind to receive the fullness of the image of God.

**XIV. Conclusion**

As much as William did not seek theological novelty, he made significant contributions to the development of medieval Eucharistic thought. As Gary Macy has noted, William's metaphysics of Eucharistic presence made sense of how Christ could be really present in complete substantial integrity and still have the accidents of bread and wine. This theory was adopted by Peter Lombard and subsequently become accepted as the most popular conception in the thirteenth century.[169] His articulation of spiritual reception offers a detailed account of how the Eucharist and meditation on the passion are means of union with Christ through the charity that is the Spirit. Indeed, his understanding of the relations and substantial unity of the persons of the Trinity gives shape to his Eucharistic theology which, to clarify Bouyer's metaphor, serves as the keystone of the Trinitarian arch of his thought.

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[168] *Spec fid*, 105–112.

[169] Macy, *The Theologies of the Eucharist*, 97; Van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz*, 123. Macy also writes that William reconciles "the two opposing interpretations of Liège and Laon on the efficacy of spiritual and sacramental reception by relegating the efficacy of the corporal reception to the future salvation of the body, while spiritual reception is necessary for the more important salvation of the soul" (Macy, *The Theologies of the Eucharist*, 97.). But perhaps William is evidence that Macy's split between the two is too forced.

The Eucharist is part of the missions of the Son and the Spirit, which are themselves part of the unified operation of the Trinity and take place according to the order of the three persons. The Eucharist is the climax of those missions, the place where the Son is received most intimately and bestows the Spirit on those who receive him. Those who receive it have the Son abiding in them, as the Father does, and are united to the Father in the Spirit with the Son. In order for this union to take place, it must encompass the whole person, body and soul. Hence Christ must be completely present under the Eucharistic species, as he was present body and soul in his Incarnation, and be received in both the body and soul of the recipient.

Physical reception of the Eucharist should not be neglected, and it affords the faithful the awesome experience of having the Son abide in him in a manner analogous to his abiding in the Father. However, the spiritual reception of the Holy Spirit of charity into the soul is the more important type of Eucharistic reception. This form of reception is available through other means by which love for Christ is increased, chiefly meditation on and remembrance of Christ's Passion. By the Spirit living in and inspiring their actions, the faithful become conformed to the one whom they have received and live as members of the one body of Christ, the Church. Joined to Christ, they are also able to offer their lives as Christ did and to join that offering of themselves to Christ's own offering of himself to the Father. This self-offering reaches its perfection in the beatific vision, where they will know and love the Father, the Son proceeding from him, and the Spirit proceeding from the Father through the Son. And they have been brought to that vision with the Spirit uniting them to the Son, and the Son drawing them to the Father. They therefore participate in the divine life in a manner analogous to that life, with the

Eucharist providing a true foretaste of that union in this life even as it furthers those who receive it toward that perfection.

# Chapter 2: Isaac of Stella's Eucharistic Theology

## I. Introduction

Although less famous than William of Saint-Thierry and Bernard of Clairvaux, Isaac of Stella has become known as one of Cîteaux's more speculative theologians. In the early twentieth century, he appeared as a minor figure in scholarly works, such as Mersch's magisterial *Le corps mystique du Christ*, with an exclamation of astonishment that no one had further studied this remarkable man.[1] By the end of the twentieth century, scholars have made considerable advances in understanding Isaac's biography, doctrine of God, Trinitarian theology, anthropology, ecclesiology, and Eucharistic theology. However, those who study Isaac's letter on the Mass do so without reference to his sermons that pertain to the Eucharist or to other aspects of his thought that influence his Eucharistic theology. Likewise, those who study the main currents in his theology pass over his Eucharistic thought. This chapter connects the two and shows in a detailed analysis how Isaac's Eucharistic theology fits with the rest of his theology. In order to best understand Isaac's Eucharistic theology, however, we must understand more about the man himself. This chapter begins, then, with a brief overview of Isaac's biography as contemporary scholarship can best discern it. There follows a literature review and an exploration of the most prominent themes of his theology, which are also important for understanding his Eucharistic theology: theological anthropology, Trinitarian theology, and theology of the mystical body of Christ. We then turn to Isaac's Eucharistic theology as it appears in his sermons before considering the letter on the Mass, its exposition of his Eucharistic theology, and the way in which that fits into his theology as a whole.

[1] "Il est étonnant que cet homme remarquable ait été relativement peu étudié" (Émile Mersch, *Le corps mystique du Christ*, vol. II (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer et Cie, 1936), 150–151).

Such a study helps us understand better the role the Eucharist plays in the soul's union with God, and the role the Son and the Spirit play in both. Isaac's metaphysical thought is founded on the idea of the great chain of being connecting lower entities in creation with higher ones, and ultimately with God. As both matter and rational spirit made in the image of God, human beings are a microcosm, a symbol of the relationship between God and the world, and their rational faculties serve as the point by which they receive God. Through the Son's incarnation and saving work, the bonds between soul and body and God and man that sin severed are restored. Union with God takes place through union with the Son, by being made a member of his mystical body, the Church. The Eucharist is the means of continued participation in that body. It is its food and fills them with the love of the Holy Spirit. In the Spirit, they are united to Christ their head. Their lives are joined with his in self-offering back to the Father, and they share in the knowledge and love of the Trinity. Just as humanity is a microcosm of the universe, the Eucharist is a microcosm of the spiritual life, the means and map of the soul's journey toward union with God, particularly in the monastic life. As such, it shows the ways in which the Son and Spirit accomplish the work of salvation according to the pattern set by their processions in the Trinity.

**II. Biography**

The extent of Isaac's corpus has now been clarified and includes fifty-five sermons and three fragments, whose critical editions are found in the *Sources Chrétiennes*.[2] There are also two letters, one on the soul*, Epistola de anima*, and one on

[2] Isaac of Stella, *Sermons*, ed. Anselm Hoste, trans. Gaston Salet, vol. I, III vols., Sources Chrétiennes 130 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1967); Isaac of Stella, *Sermons*, ed. Anselm Hoste, trans. Gaston Salet, vol. II, III vols., Sources Chrétiennes 207 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1974); Isaac of Stella, *Sermons*, ed. Anselm

the Mass, *Epistola ad Joannem Episcopum Pictaviensem de officio missae* (hereafter *De officio missae*), reproduced in the *Patrologia Latina* from Tissier's *Biblioteca Patrum Cisterciensium*.[3] A recent critical edition of the *Epistola de anima* appeared in 2011.[4] While scholars acknowledge textual problems with the *De officio missae*, no critical edition is available yet. Bliemetzrieder conjectured that a manuscript of the *De officio missae* in National Library of Vienna ms lat. 1068, f.61 contains a longer ending by the author's own hand. However, Raciti determined that the longer ending is a series of two small summaries of the treatise composed at the end of the twelfth century by an anonymous author for priests too hurried to meditate on the whole text before Mass.[5] English translations of both treatises and selected sermons exist in *The Selected Works of Isaac of Stella*,[6] which draws them from the Cistercian Fathers Series' *Sermons on the Christian Year I* (which contains more),[7] McGinn's translation of the *De anima* from *Three Treatises on Man*,[8] and Daviau's translation of the *De officio missae*.[9] Boyle's translation adds little to Daviau's and need not be used by contemporary scholars.[10] Waddell's is based on an edition of his own making. While he describes how he made a

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Hoste and Gaetano Raciti, trans. Gaston Salet and Gaetano Raciti, vol. III, III vols., Sources Chrétiennes 339 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1987).

[3] *De anima*: Tissier, *Bibliotheca Patrum Cisterciensium*, VI, 78–83; *PL* 194, 1875–89. *De officio missae*: Tissier, VI, 104–107; *PL* 194, 1889–96. For a list of manuscripts of the treatises, see Bernard McGinn, *The Golden Chain: A Study in the Theological Anthropology of Isaac of Stella*, Cistercian Studies Series 15 (Spencer, MA: Cistercian Publications, 1972), 29–30.

[4] Caterina Tarlazzi, "L'Epistola de Anima di Isacco di Stella: studio della tradizione ed edizione del testo," *Medioevo* 36 (2011): 167–278. This is the Latin text of *De anima* used in this dissertation.

[5] Gaetano Raciti, "Isaac de l'Étoile," in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, vol. 7 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1971), 2020.

[6] Isaac of Stella, *The Selected Works of Isaac of Stella: A Cistercian Voice from the Twelfth Century*, ed. Dániel Deme (Hants, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007).

[7] Isaac of Stella, *Sermons on the Christian Year*, trans. Hugh McCaffery, Cistercian Fathers Series 11 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1979).

[8] Bernard McGinn, *Three Treatises on Man: A Cistercian Anthropology*, Cistercian Fathers Series 24 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1977).

[9] Also published in *The Way*, vol. 6 no. 4 (October 1966).

[10] Charles Boyle, "De Officio Missae: The Epistle of Isaac of Stella to John, Bishop of Poitiers" (MA Thesis, Catholic University of America, 1963).

partially complete critical edition of the text, he never produces the result, making it difficult to discern where in his translation he is working from a textual variant and where his whimsy serves as guide.[11]

Isaac's biography remains largely unknown, and what we do know comes largely from clues in his sermons, as well as a handful of letters and charters. Because of the amount of conjecture required to generate a biography, scholars have made numerous attempts and corrections. The first biography of Isaac came from Franz Bliemetzrieder,[12] the first modern scholar to write on Isaac. Jeanette Debray-Mulatier followed him,[13] as did Louis Bouyer.[14] The most significant biography came from Gaetano Raciti, in a series of articles in the early 1960s.[15] Raciti's extensive research and examination of Isaac's corpus for biographical details create a vivid picture of Isaac's place in twelfth-century France. However, he frequently makes conjectures beyond the limited available evidence so that scholars following him are forced to temper his conclusions.[16] Two such scholars are Hoste[17] and McGinn, the latter providing one of the most recent biographies available.[18] Dietz makes further corrections to Raciti and McGinn's narrative,[19] which

[11] Chrysogonus Waddell, "Isaac of Stella on the Canon of the Mass," *Liturgy, O.C.S.O.* 11 (1975): 21–75.
[12] Franz Bliemetzrieder, "Isaak von Stella: Beitrage zur Lebensbeschreibung," in *Jahrbuch der Philosophie und spekulative Theologie*, vol. 15 (Freiburg: Divus Thomas, 1904), 1–34.
[13] Jeanette Debray-Mulatier, "Biographie d'Isaac de Stella," *Cîteaux* X (1959): 178–98.
[14] Bouyer, *The Cistercian Heritage*, 161–189.
[15] Gaetano Raciti, "Isaac de l'Étoile et son siècle," *Cîteaux* XII (1961): 281–306; XIII (1962): 18-34, 132-145, 205-215.
[16] For example: "The author succeeded in amassing the quasi-totality of all texts and monuments that might in any way throw light on the somewhat enigmatic Isaac. The weak point of this important work, however, is that the conjectural and the possible are too often proposed as the factual and the probable. This is a bit irritating, since Fr. Gaetano's contribution is too important not to be the constant point of reference for other scholars; but so many of these references are perforce of a negative sort: Fr Raciti concludes thus and thus, but the conclusion goes beyond what the evidence warrants" (Waddell, "Isaac of Stella on the Canon of the Mass," 24.
[17] Isaac of Stella, *Sermons*, 1967.
[18] Bernard McGinn, "Isaac of Stella in Context," in *The Selected Works of Isaac of Stella: A Cistercian Voice from the Twelfth Century* (Hants, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 167–76.
[19] Elias Dietz, "When Exile Is Home: The Biography of Isaac of Stella," *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 41 (2006): 141–65.

were confirmed by Stolz's dissertation.[20] Both argue that the Becket controversy played less of a role in Isaac's life than previously thought. The following biography draws on McGinn, Dietz, and Stolz to provide a brief, up-to-date account of Isaac's life and works. For further biographical information and a bibliography of Isaac's works and important documents, see Raciti, Milcamps, McGinn's *The Golden Chain*, and Garda.[21]

Isaac was born in England *ca.* 1100. It is likely that he spent a decade in the French schools, and while we do not know for sure where he studied, his theology shows the influence of Peter Abelard; the Christian Platonists known as the "School of Chartres," such as Thierry of Chartres and William of Conches; and the Victorines, particularly Hugh. It is not difficult to imagine him spending some years in Paris and moving between different masters in Chartres and Laon. The only secure date we have for the beginning of his monastic life is his becoming abbot of Stella, a small community near Poitiers, in 1147. Given that Isaac would need to have been a monk for some years before becoming abbot, he probably left the academic life for the monastic in the 1140s, perhaps around the time Bernard of Clairvaux preached his famous sermon on conversion to the clerics of Paris in 1139 or early 1140. Since Stella was a daughter house of the great abbey of Pontigny—itself one of the four daughter houses of Cîteaux—it is likely that Isaac entered Pontigny directly, before becoming abbot of Stella when it was incorporated into the Cistercian order.

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[20] Travis D. Stolz, "Isaac of Stella, the Cistercians and the Thomas Becket Controversy: A Bibliographical and Contextual Study" (PhD Diss., Marquette University, 2010), http://epublications.marquette.edu/dissertations_mu/87.

[21] Raciti, "Isaac de l'Étoile"; M. Raymond Milcamps, "Bibliographie d'Isaac de l'Étoile," *Collectanea Ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorum* 20 (1958): 175–86; McGinn, *The Golden Chain*; Claude Garda, "Du nouveau sur Isaac de l'Étoile," *Cîteaux* 37 (1986): 8–22.

Isaac's writings and the documents from the time of his abbacy confirm three decades of fairly typical monastic life—except, some scholars argue, for the circumstances surrounding Thomas Becket's arrival in France during his prolonged conflict with Henry II over the rights of the English church. Becket had been a guest at Pontigny for two years before his hosts, fearful of Henry's threats to Cistercian houses in England, politely asked him to leave.[22] Raciti argues that because of Isaac's support of the Archbishop, his Cistercian opponents used Isaac's controversial speculative preaching to have him silenced and exiled to a small monastery on the island of Ré, off the port of La Rochelle, around 1167.[23] McGinn tempers this, writing that Isaac's exile does seem to be connected to his support of Becket, but not to his speculative preaching. Furthermore, his exile was brief—possibly as little as 7 months—and he returned to Stella for some years before his death, probably around 1178.[24] Dietz and Stolz further correct this account, arguing that Isaac's role was a marginal one and that whatever support he may have given to Becket was minimal and not the reason for his exile on Ré. Rather, Isaac's rhetoric about exile is typically monastic and serves as an allegory of the spiritual life, not a record of historical events.[25]

Be that as it may, Isaac's time in Ré, while fruitful in solitude and free of worldliness, had its difficulties.[26] The greatest pain of the island's poverty, he wrote, was "abundant want and generous dearth, particularly of books and of Scripture

[22] McGinn, "Isaac of Stella in Context," 171–175.
[23] Raciti, "Isaac de l'Étoile et son siècle." See also Raciti's "Notes Complémentaires 33" in *Sermons III*: 316–19.
[24] McGinn, "Isaac of Stella in Context," 175.
[25] Dietz, "When Exile Is Home: The Biography of Isaac of Stella."; Stolz, "Isaac of Stella, the Cistercians and the Thomas Becket Controversy: A Bibliographical and Contextual Study."
[26] "This indeed is solitude worthy of the name, far out, at sea, cut off almost completely from all the rest of the world. Here then destitute of all worldly comfort and very nearly all human solace, it should not be difficult to give worldliness a rest" (*Sermo* 14.11; CF 11, 117).

commentaries. Like the praiseworthy monk who could boast 'I gave away my Gospel for the sake of the Gospel,' we have been led by books to leave books."[27] While this lament for lack of a library could have come from any of the Cistercian fathers, it is particularly fitting for Isaac, who loved both "*mysteria*" (allegory and metaphysical speculation) and the asceticism more typical of his order.[28] This love of asceticism and books captures well the character of Isaac's thought. On the one hand, Salet notes, Isaac shows many of the characteristics common to Cistercian spirituality: opposition to the world; an emphasis on conversion bringing us from region of unlikeness to self-knowledge and union with God; the sanctifying value of the Rule observed in a simple, strict, and perfect way; and fervent love for Christ our brother who makes the heavy burden of religious life light.[29] On the other hand, Isaac engaged in the kind of speculation that his confreres typically disliked.[30] In short, Isaac provides a synthesis of monastic contemplation and the new methods of the schools in a way not attempted by his fellow Cistercians.[31]

**III. Literature Review**

In 1936, Émile Mersch remarked of Isaac that "Il est étonnant que cet homme remarquable ait été relativement peu étudié."[32] Happily, this is no longer the case. Most scholarship on Isaac has focused on his theological anthropology and speculative

[27] *Sermo* 18.1.
[28] eg. *Sermo* 11.6.
[29] Gaston Salet, "Introduction," in *Sermons*, by Isaac of Stella, vol. I, Sources Chrétiennes 130 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1967), 62–63.
[30] Hence Bliemetzrieder finds him similar to Abelard and Gilbert de la Porrée in terms of bold—though more orthodox—speculation, and calls him not a dilettante theologian but "un voyant illuminé par Dieu" (Franz Bliemetzrieder, "Isaac de Stella: Sa speculation theologique," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* VI (1932): 157–159).
[31] "Dans l'oeuvre d'Isaac confluent donc et parviennent à une heureuse synthèse le type de théologie *doxologique*, fruit d'une expérience contemplative monastique, nourrie de la rumination liturgique de l'Écriture sainte et de la frequentation de la tradition patristique, et les methods nouvelles de la scolastique naissante, avec leur besoin de structure, de systématisation et d'analyse rationelles" (Raciti, "Isaac de l'Étoile," 2015.
[32] Mersch, *Le corps mystique du Christ*, II:150–151.

theology of the divine nature. These begin with the article by Bliemetzrieder and include summaries and introductions to editions of Isaac's works by Salet and Deme.[33] Raciti's articles offer helpful expositions as well. In a separate series of articles, M. André Fracheboud traces the influence of Augustine and Pseudo-Dionysius on Isaac.[34] The most important scholar of Isaac remains Bernard McGinn. *The Golden Chain* offers an introduction to his life and works well as the definitive analysis of his anthropology.[35] McGinn explores Cistercian anthropology more broadly with his comments on and translations of Cistercian anthropological treatises in *Three Treatises on Man*.[36] His work has continued in book introductions[37] and in his section on Isaac in *The Growth of Mysticism*.[38] There and in "Isaac of Stella on the Divine Nature," he offers a thorough exposition of Isaac's understanding of God.[39] And in his article on Isaac's view of theology, he further underscores the Dionysian elements of Isaac's thought.[40]

Those works provide the metaphysical scaffolding for Isaac's understanding of how union with God takes place. Union with God and the operation of grace in the spiritual life are even more important for understanding Isaac's Eucharistic theology. Fracheboud's article in the *Dictionnaire de spiritualité* on divinization is helpful for

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[33] Bliemetzrieder, "Isaac de Stella: Sa speculation theologique"; Salet, "Introduction"; Dániel Deme, "Introduction to the Theology of Isaac of Stella," in *The Selected Works of Isaac of Stella: A Cistercian Voice from the Twelfth Century*, ed. Dániel Deme (Hants, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 176–220.
[34] M. André Fracheboud, "Le Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite parmi les sources du Cistercien Isaac de l'Étoile," *Collectanea Ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorum* 9 (1947; 1948): 328–41, 19–34; M. André Fracheboud, "L'influence de Saint Augustin sur le Cistercien Isaac de l'Etoile," *Collectanea Ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorum* 11 (1949): 1–17, 264–78.
[35] McGinn, *The Golden Chain*.
[36] McGinn, *Three Treatises on Man: A Cistercian Anthropology*.
[37] Bernard McGinn, "Introduction," in *Sermons on the Christian Year*, by Isaac of Stella, vol. I, Cistercian Fathers Series 11 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1979), ix – xxx; McGinn, "Isaac of Stella in Context."
[38] McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism*.
[39] Bernard McGinn, "Isaac of Stella on the Divine Nature," *Analecta Cisterciensia* 29 (1973): 1–53.
[40] Bernard McGinn, "Theologia in Isaac of Stella," *Cîteaux* 21 (1970): 219–35.

Isaac's thought on the topic and that of other medieval theologians.[41] Javelet's masterwork on image and likeness in twelfth century theology likewise illuminate's Isaac's theology and its twelfth-century context.[42] Mannarini examines the abbot's thought on the state of original justice, its loss in sin, and its rectification, showing links with Anselm and Augustine.[43] But Isaac himself does not treat original justice and debates over nature and grace extensively; to a certain extent, Mannarini attempts to fit Isaac into categories in which he himself does not operate. Gaggero's study of Isaac's thought on redemption and the role of the cross in salvation is much more helpful, as is Dietz's study of Isaac's view of conversion in contrast to the common monastic one of his time.[44]

The third main theme in scholarship on Isaac is his theology of the mystical body of Christ, first noticed by Émile Mersch in his magisterial *Le corps mystique du Christ*.[45] De Lubac likewise notes Isaac's thought in the trajectory of medieval Eucharistic theology and ecclesiology.[46] Beumer's article on Isaac's ecclesiology and Mariology, and their interrelation, is further illuminating, while Piolanti's on Christ's spiritual solidarity with mankind and Weinheimer's licentiate dissertation contribute little that is not evident in Isaac's own text and in other scholarly works.[47] Dickens' dissertation on

[41] M. André Fracheboud, "Divinisation: Auteurs monastiques du 12e siècle," in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, vol. III (Paris: Beauchesne, 1957), 1399–1413.
[42] Robert Javelet, *Image et ressemblance au douzième siècle: de Saint Anselme à Alain de Lille*, II vols. (Paris: Éditions Letouzey & Ané, 1967).
[43] D. Franco Mannarini, "La grazia in Isacco di Stella," *Collectanea Ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorum* 16 (1954): 137–44, 207–14.
[44] Leonard Gaggero, "Isaac of Stella and the Theology of Redemption," *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 22 (1965): 21–36; Elias Dietz, "Conversion in the Sermons of Isaac of Stella," *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (2002): 229–59.
[45] Mersch, *Le corps mystique du Christ*.
[46] de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*.
[47] Johannes Beumer, "Mariologie und Ekklesiologie bei Isaak von Stella," *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift* V (1954): 48–61; Antonio Piolanti, "La nostra soledarità soprannaturale nel pensiero di Isacco

Cistercian Christologies makes more explicit the connection between Isaac's metaphysics, so thoroughly studied by McGinn, and Isaac's theology of the mystical body, which McGinn neglects by comparison.[48] While Mersch touches briefly on the role of the Eucharist in incorporating believers into the mystical body, more work must be done on how Isaac sees this taking place. This is the burden of this chapter of the dissertation.

While Isaac's Sermons 40–45 reveal important aspects of his Eucharistic theology, they do not appear in scholarship on the topic, which focuses exclusively on the *De officio missae*. Jungmann, Franz, and Reynolds provide important background on commentaries on the Mass and their mostly negative scholarly reception.[49] Macy treats Isaac's commentary along with others in a modest attempt to argue for the genre's importance for revealing the concerns of the time.[50] Schaefer and Mosey's dissertations do much the same thing, but in greater detail and with greater benefit for other scholars.[51] Raciti's article in the *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* analyzes the treatise along with Isaac's other works.[52] Bouyer argues that *De officio missae* brings Isaac's teaching on the mystical body to fulfillment which, while excessive, is not without merit.[53] Boyle

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della Stella," *Palestro del Claro* VII (1956): 1–18; Edmund Weinheimer, "The Mystical Body of Christ According to Isaac of Stella" (STL Diss., St. Mary's University and Seminary, 1945).

[48] Andrea Dickens, "Unus Spiritus Cum Deo: Six Medieval Cistercian Christologies" (PhD Diss., University of Virginia, 2005).

[49] Joseph Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origin and Development (Missarum Sollemnia)*, trans. Francis Brunner, vol. 1, 2 vols. (New York: Benziger, 1951); Adolph Franz, *Die Messe im Deutschen Mittelalter* (Freiburg: Herder, 1902); Roger Reynolds, "Liturgy, Treatises on," *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* (New York: Charles Scribners, 89 1982).

[50] Gary Macy, "Commentaries on the Mass During the Early Scholastic Period," in *Treasures from the Storeroom: Medieval Religion and the Eucharist* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 142–71.

[51] Mary Schaefer, "Twelfth Century Latin Commentaries on the Mass: Christological and Ecclesiological Dimensions" (PhD Diss., University of Notre Dame, 1983); Douglas L. Mosey, "Allegorical Liturgical Interpretation in the West from 800 A.D. to 1200 A.D." (PhD Diss., University of St. Michael's College, 1985).

[52] Raciti, "Isaac de l'Étoile."

[53] Bouyer, *The Cistercian Heritage*, 183.

reproduces the work of others with no significant addition of his own and will not be considered here.[54] Waddell offers his own translation and commentary, in the form of a dialogue with a hypothetical Br. Pambo, which does not help scholars as much as it could.[55] However, these scholars do not link Isaac's Eucharistic writings to the rest of his theological corpus. As noted above, that is the burden of the following pages.

**IV. Isaac of Stella's Trinitarian Theology and Anthropology**

McGinn's "Isaac of Stella on the Divine Nature" offers a full treatment of Isaac's speculative doctrine of God. In this section, however, we will focus on Isaac's Trinitarian theology—particularly the roles of the Son and Spirit in the economy of salvation—and anthropology. Isaac does not have a treatise explicitly treating Trinitarian theology, as William of Saint-Thierry does, nor is he as interested in speculation on the intra-Trinitarian relations. However, we can discover his Trinitarian theology by examining different passages in his corpus, especially from his latter sermons for Sexagesima (23–26), and by examining his writing on the role of the Trinity in the economy of salvation, which he treats more extensively. As Salet notes, Isaac considers the Trinity from the economic perspective, leaving us to infer their immanent relations: The Father, through the Son, gives the Spirit, and the Christian life is a progression in the Spirit, through the Son, to the Father.[56] This Trinitarian theology shapes his understanding of union with God through participation in the mystical body of Christ, which is accomplished through baptism and the Eucharist.

We should first begin with Isaac's anthropology. Modern Cistercian scholarship made a great advance with Étienne Gilson's *The Mystical Theology of St. Bernard*, which

[54] Boyle, "De Officio Missae: The Epistle of Isaac of Stella to John, Bishop of Poitiers."
[55] Waddell, "Isaac of Stella on the Canon of the Mass."
[56] Salet, "Introduction," 40.

advocated that Bernard's theology was, in fact, theology: a systematic body of thought with a coherent understanding of human nature, God, and the path to beatitude through the observance of the Rule of St. Benedict.[57] This is true of the Order as a whole, McGinn argues, and explains the Cistercian focus on theological anthropology: "In their efforts to revitalize traditional monasticism, the Cistercians realized that they needed to rethink the mass of inherited materials about the soul, its powers, its relation to the body, and its spiritual destiny, in order to ground their conviction that the best way to attain the goal of human life, that is, union with God, was to be found within the Cistercian monastery."[58] To do this, most Cistercian authors focused on moral and ascetic questions: the nature of conscience, reflection on one's own sinfulness, and the need for God's help to remedy that through a program of asceticism. They did not develop an extensive theory of human freedom, the nature of the soul, or the theoretical basis of the return to God. St. Bernard's influence on this focus is very clear.[59] However, William of Saint-Thierry and Isaac's treatises went further, and in McGinn's assessment, Isaac's thought "represents the most systematic attempt" at Cistercian anthropology.[60]

In Genesis 1:27, God reveals that human beings are created in his own image and likeness. Hence Isaac exhorts his readers in an Augustinian fashion to go into themselves to that part that is most God-like if they desire to know themselves: "The world surrounds you, your body belongs to you, and you yourself are within, made to the image and likeness of God. Return, then, 'transgressor, to your heart, within, where [sic] are truly

[57] Gilson, *The Mystical Theology of St. Bernard*.
[58] McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism*, 287. See also *Three Treatises on Man*, 79.
[59] McGinn, *Three Treatises on Man: A Cistercian Anthropology*, 81–82. This trend seems to speak to the interests of the order as a whole. As a case in point, Isaac acknowledges his own preference for allegory and theological speculation in contrast to his monks, who prefers moral exegesis of Scripture (*Sermo* 11.16).
[60] McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism*, 287.

yourself.' Outwardly you are an animal, fashioned as the world is fashioned, and that is why man is called a miniature world [*minor mundus*]. But inwardly you are made in the image of God and so are capable of being deified."[61] Two important themes in Isaac's anthropology appear in this brief passage. First is his understanding of man made in the image of God. All Cistercian authors have the relation between God and the soul at the heart of their anthropology. St. Bernard, focused more on the will, emphasizes human freedom as the image of God in the soul. Aelred, William, and Isaac take the more intellectualist route.[62] For Isaac, the rational mind's capability for union with God through knowledge and love is the image of God in the soul.[63]

Second, following Boethius' *De deffinitione*,[64] Isaac views the body as an image of the world. Hence the whole human person, body and soul, can be said to be an image of God creating and underpinning the universe, an encapsulation of the world and its relationship to God—literally, a microcosm.[65] Deification is a process that involves the whole person, body and soul, in a manner analogous to that of the whole Christ.[66] The body and soul have parallel paths of service by which they become Christlike. The monastic life is the process by which this conformity to Christ takes place and the

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[61] "Circa te mundus, tui corpus, tu ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei factus intus. Redi igitur, praevaricator, intus, ubi tu es, ad cor. Foris pecus es ad imaginem mundi, unde et minor mundus dicitur homo; intus homo ad imaginem Dei, unde et potes deificari" (*Sermo* 2.13; CF 11, 14–15).
[62] McGinn, *Three Treatises on Man: A Cistercian Anthropology*, 89; Gaggero, "Isaac of Stella and the Theology of Redemption," 29.
[63] Deme, "Introduction," 209–210, 212; Javelet, *Image et ressemblance au douzième siècle*, I:232.
[64] *PL* 64:907.
[65] McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism*, 288; Deme, "Introduction," 207–208.
[66] "[The Psalmist] would tell us with what simplicity his soul and with what diversity his body tends each to Christ; his soul as one; his body as at once a unity and a plurality, as doing many things for the sake of the one Christ. The soul ascends, the body descends, so that the whole man may go the way of the whole Christ, may be fully at the service of the whole Christ. The whole Christ is God and man; the whole of man is rational soul and flesh. It is for the soul as it contemplates truth to welcome the company of those of its kind in the realms above; the body in dutiful charity should care for those at its side; thus neither will fail in its duty to itself. . . . Never does the soul better deserve to have true sight of its kind in the realms above as when the body stoops in charity to such of its on kind as have fallen below its level" (*Sermo* 12.7–8; CF11, 101–102).

offering of one's own life joined to that of Christ. The sacraments—especially baptism, penance, and the Eucharist—play an important role. In particular, Isaac conceives of the Eucharist as a symbol of and catalyst for progression through the stages of spiritual growth. It is the spiritual life, and the monastic life, in microcosm.

The relationship between body, soul, and God shows the influence of neoplatonic metaphysics on Isaac's conception of God and the world. Isaac sees the universe as a chain of being united by connecting points. Ascension along this chain of being occurs by moving along those points in a process known as concatenation. Within human beings, the mind is the summit of the soul, the image of God that can connect to the Spirit. Likewise, Christ is the summit of humanity that permits union with God. The personal union of Creator and rational creatures is realized in him.[67] Christ therefore has two aspects, an immanent, hidden one that expresses the Father and an economic one that reveals the Word, and by the Word, the Father. Javelet describes these as relays in expressivitiy and compares them to transformers that lower the divine voltage and permit its communication.[68] The Son's incarnation serves as the conjunction of God and human beings, but his death and resurrection serve as the culmination of his salvific action. Our fallen state has resulted in a double death of soul and body and a double separation of body from soul, and the two from God. In Christ, too, there are two bonds: body and soul, humanity and divinity. The latter bond could not be broken and the former did not deserve to be. But Christ loosens the bond between his soul and body in his death so that with his resurrection he can retie ours. His death and resurrection are "an effective type of

[67] Javelet, *Image et ressemblance au douzième siècle*, I:235.
[68] Ibid., I:304. See also *Sermo* 8.

ours, and not simply a figure or symbol."[69] Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection serve as complementary parts of human redemption, which takes place by reconnecting the bonds severed by sin so that human beings made whole can be reunited with God.

Redemption takes place when Christ has become the object of the human mind's knowledge and love in a way analogous to that of the Word in the mind of the Father. In his sermons for Sexagesima, Isaac develops his understanding of the Word as the rational thought of the Father, an important aspect of his Trinitarian thought. When Isaac considers the mind of God from which creation proceeded, he concludes that the mind of God cannot be other than God himself: "These two truths go together then: He is and he has Mind. He is being and has what, belonging to and proceeding from his being, is himself."[70] The Son is the Word and Wisdom of God, who proceeds from the Father, differing in personal property but not in essence.[71] As such, he is the object of the divine mind's self-knowledge and the source of all created things, the efficient principle of their existence.[72]

This rational aspect of God's nature is the point of connection by which God allows created beings to share in the divine life. Therefore, the purpose of rational faculties is to seek union with God through knowledge and love of him:

> When the indivisible Trinity willed eternally and undividedly the existence of beings able to receive God, to have part in his delight, gladness, peace, joy, then the Trinity created from nothing the rational mind made in God's image. . . . The whole world of matter is at the service of the [rational] spirit's instruction; nowhere silent, it ever keeps telling him of its Maker. Rational spirit has no other purpose than to enjoy

[69] Gaggero, "Isaac of Stella and the Theology of Redemption," 33. See also *Sermo* 40.
[70] "Duo quidem occurrunt, ipsum esse et aliquid habere; ipsum esse et ipsius aliquid, quod tamen de se sit et hoc quod ipse" (*Sermo* 23.4; CF 11, 190).
[71] *Sermo* 23.6–7.
[72] *Sermo* 23.14; 22.23.

> and share God's delight in God and in all else. Rationality is his that he may be able to seek God himself in himself and in everything.[73]

Again Isaac writes:

> Rational minds are the first and only beings made in God's image, thanks to the gift God wills to make of his Joy. They are for that reason the only creatures capable of sharing his knowledge and love. Their intellects and wills, faculties that enable them to understand and to love, fit them to share God's communicable nature. These faculties are, as it were, receptacles and tools belonging to their nature that the first gift of grace puts in being and the further gift of grace fills against both emptiness and the wrong kind of content. . . . Created minds are the receptacles into which God's Wisdom and Power pours himself, filling them with knowledge and love of him. Each of them is a field in which the Wisdom and Power of God sows himself, the Seed, from which comes the light of knowledge and the fervor of love.[74]

These passages reveal key aspects of Isaac's anthropology and Trinitarian theology. First, Isaac's anthropology is marked by a deep sense of receptivity. The soul's rational faculties are made to receive Christ, the Word and Wisdom of God, in a manner analogous to that of the mind of God, which has the Word as its object. Union with God takes place through the Son sowing himself in rational minds, an image taken from the parable of the sower in Matthew 13 and Luke 8. The Son sows himself from the bosom of the Father "freely, that is, by the gift of the Holy Spirit. . . ." to the angels in heaven, to

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[73] "Fecit itaque, quando voluit, quae velle numquam coepit, indivisa Trinitas indivise naturam sui capacem, suae delectationis et iucunditatis et pacis et gaudii participio habilem, mentem rationalem videlicet ad imaginem suam de nihilo. . . . Universa enim corporea natura spiritui servit rationali ad eruditionem et quodammodo suum loquitur principium, et nihil est sine voce. Ideo igitur factus est spiritus rationalis ut congaudeat et condelectetur Deo de Deo et de omnibus in ipso solo. Rationalis quidem factus, ut ipsum Deum in se et in omnibus investiget . . ." (*Sermo* 25.3–5; CF 11, 206).

[74] "Naturali dono communicabilis gaudii sui facta a Deo mens rationalis, sicut prima et sola eius suscipit imaginem, ita potest cognitionem et amorem. Facta est enim capax capabilis Divinitatis per rationem et voluntatem, id est intelligendi et amandi facultatem, tamquam per vasa quaedam aut instrumenta naturalis conditionis, quae sicut primum gratiae donum creat ut sint, sic secundum replet ne vacua sint aut male plena. . . . Ipse ergo, sicut vas cui se sapientia et virtus Dei, ut cognitione ac caritate ipsius perfundat, infundit, ita est et ager ubi se sapientia eadem ac virtus seminat, quatenus de tali semine cognitionis lux ac dilectionis fervor exsurgat" (*Sermo* 26.1, 3; CF 11, 211–212).

Adam and Eve, to the Israelites in the desert, and to the whole world in the person of Jesus.[75]

Second, joy and delight serve as two important characteristics of God's nature, both of which are also associated especially with the Holy Spirit. When Isaac first treats the Spirit in the Sexagesima sermons, he describes him as "God's internal joy and delight in his light and with his light." As such, the Spirit belongs both to the Father, who rejoices, and to the Son, because of and in whom he rejoices: "God's joy in his Son makes both of them the principle of their unique joy."[76] Since the Father and the Son are one being, Isaac continues, it follows that this joy shares their being and is the love that exists between them, as well as their sweetness, peace, and delight.[77] As Javelet notes, one could make of Isaac's Trinity a Trinity of joy, because the unity of the three persons is precisely the joy of that fullness that breaks out in the embrace of the Trinity. Still, spiritual joy is especially associated with the Spirit, who is charity.[78] This joy is the communion into which those who receive the Spirit are invited. In the economy of salvation, the Holy Spirit is poured out into the hearts of human beings through the Son as a gift of that same love and light.[79] Indeed, Isaac sees him as "closer to the creature in some sense as the one who, proceeding from both, is Gift and Power."[80] Likewise, in *De anima*, Isaac writes that every enjoyment of God that we have comes from the gift of the Spirit, "for he is the natural gift existing in God, by means of which God can be given to

[75] "id est dono Spiritus sancti" (*Sermo* 26.11, 18; CF 11, 214)
[76] "Si enim intus de hac sua luce et cum sua luce gaudet ac delectatur, gaudium illud ac delectationem de utroque procedere manifestum est: de illo scilicet qui gaudet et de illo de quo et cum quo gaudet. Utrumque enim principium constat esse gaudii quod huius de illo est" (*Sermo* 24.9; CF 11, 199).
[77] *Sermo* 24.10–11.
[78] Javelet, *Image et ressemblance au douzième siècle*, I:418.
[79] *Sermo* 24.21–22.
[80] "creature tamen quodammodo quasi proprior videtur esse spiritus sanctus quipped qui de utroque munus est utriusque" (*De anima*, 547–549; Deme, 156).

and enjoyed by every nature, as it was said above."[81] The Spirit bears the image of the Father and the Son and is thereby able to conform those who receive him to that image. He fills their hearts with that same charity that exists between the Father and Son, giving them the likeness of the Trinity and thereby uniting them to God and giving them a share in divine joy.[82] Isaac understands the soul's union with God to be a participation in divine affectivity through the infusion of the Spirit into the rational faculties made to receive him.

Like Bernard and William, Isaac sees this union in terms of the kiss from the opening verse of the Song of Songs. It is a union with the Father, through the Son (by filial adoption into the whole Christ), in the Spirit, who is light and gift.[83] He especially associates the Son with forgiveness and liberation from slavery, and the Spirit with favor and friendship. Hence the Spirit is the kiss of friendship given to the soul by the Son, the mouth of the Father.[84] The Son and Spirit work together, but each has his own particular mission:

> In this perspective Christ is to an extent a mediator of forgiveness, the Spirit is a mediator of friendship. Christ mediates verity, the Spirit mediates charity. Through Christ comes forgiveness, through the Spirit comes fortitude. Pardon through Christ, perseverance through the Spirit. Through Christ comes loosing, through the Spirit comes binding together. Nonetheless Christ and the Spirit do it all inseparably. For the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit actuate in one and the same way, being one without composition and three without division. . . . The Son, as atonement and advocate, mediates between the one found guilty and the Judge who judges justly; while the Spirit, as assuage and advocate, mediates between the weakness of the one at peace and the greatness of the one appeased.[85]

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[81] "nobis autem ombis diuinitatis usus ex munere. Est enim in deo munus naturale quo ipse donabilis et fruibilis est omni, ut superius dictum est, nature" (*De anima*, 549–551; Deme, 156).
[82] Javelet, *Image et ressemblance au douzième siècle*, I:93–95; 440.
[83] Raciti, "Isaac de l'Étoile," 2031.
[84] *Sermo* 45.13.
[85] "Christus itaque mediator quodammodo est ad iustitiam, Spiritus ad amicitiam. Christus ad veritatem, Spiritus ad caritatem. Christus ad remissionem, Spiritus ad conservationem. Christus ad indulgentiam,

In each of these pairs, Christ provides the prior attribute required for what the Spirit provides, though Isaac makes clear that they do this "inseparably," without temporal sequence. Still, as the Son proceeds prior to the Spirit, who proceeds from him, so his economic activity is prior to the Spirit's.

The Spirit's activity takes place in three stages, and Isaac gives the Spirit a different name according to each stage in which we encounters him. The *spiritus rectus* brings about conversion from sin; the *spiritus sanctus* fortifies good gifts in us and makes us cling to God; the *spiritus principalis* gives us steadfastness to remain in the divine union and find an eternal resting place there.[86] As we shall see in *De officio missae*, Isaac sees these same stages reflected in the canon of the Mass, which serves both as a means of receiving the Spirit and as a microcosm of the spiritual life as a whole. In the Eucharist, the Spirit joins the lives and sacrifices of the members of the Church to those of Christ their head. In this way, the Son and Spirit draw them to God the Father—into the joy that the three enjoy together—according to their missions in salvation history and their processions in the Trinity.

**V. The Mystical Body of Christ**

Isaac's teaching on the mystical body of Christ, into which individual members are drawn and in which they are sustained by the Holy Spirit, shapes his understanding of how this union takes place. The mystical body is a significant concept in Isaac's

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Spiritus ad perseverantiam. Christus ad absolutionem, Spiritus ad colligationem. Omnia tamen Christus, et omnia Spiritus indivise operantur. Omnia enim Pater et Filius et Spiritus sanctus simul et similiter operantur, qui sine confusione sunt unum et sine divisione tres. . . . Inter iniquitatem rei et aequitatem iudicis, Filius reconciliator et advocatus intercedit; inter infirmitatem reconciliati et maiestatem placati, Spiritus delinitor et paraclitus intervenit" (*Sermo* 45.14–15; Deme, 122).

[86] Deme, "Introduction," 217.

theology, one he adopts from Augustine and develops in his own particular way. It serves as a guiding concept that unites different aspects of his theology. If Isaac's metaphysical vision is founded on the golden chain of being, Dickens notes, then his theological vision is founded on the ascension of the mystical body.[87] It is also the theme that makes him distinct from other Cistercian theologians. McGinn writes that Bernard's theology of mystical union is largely expressed in Christocentric terms, while William's is pneumatic and centers on the Spirit as the union of Father and Son. Isaac, while closer to William, conceives of union with God in terms of the mystical body and the whole Christ.[88] Beumer describes Isaac as uniting Augustine's dogmatic depth with Bernard's pious interiority, concluding that no one else in the twelfth century focused so specifically on unity in the mystical body of Christ and made these reflections so animated (*lebendig*).[89] In this section, we will examine Isaac's theology of the mystical body in two sermons, particularly the way in which it connects his Trinitarian theology and anthropology and provides the form for his sacramental theology.[90]

Isaac's ninth sermon describes his understanding of the union of particular souls with God and the relationship between that union and the mystical body of Christ. The sermon is for the first Sunday after the Octave of Epiphany, whose gospel reading is the wedding feast at Cana. Isaac distinguishes between three kinds of wedding feast: an outer feast of the flesh joining human beings, an inner feast joining flesh and spirit in human

[87] Dickens, "Six Medieval Cistercian Christologies," 131.
[88] McGinn, *Three Treatises on Man: A Cistercian Anthropology*, 92. Mersch likewises notes that Bernard speaks little of the mystical body but rather conceives of union with Christ as an intense, affective personal love for Christ and Mary. William and Isaac, however, do make progress on the doctrine of the mystical body (Mersch, *Le corps mystique du Christ*, II:147–148. He also remarks that Isaac is calmer and more complicated in speculation than William, and more directly similar to Augustine (Ibid., 150).
[89] Beumer, "Mariologie und Ekklesiologie bei Isaak von Stella," 54–55.
[90] See *Sermo* 51 and Beumer for more on the connection between Isaac's Mariology and ecclesiology, which will not be discussed in detail here.

beings, and a higher feast above human beings joining spirit and spirit. The first unites two persons in one flesh. The second unites rational soul and flesh and results in a person. In the third, the spirit clinging to God becomes one with God and becomes what God is. This unity is what Christ meant when he prayed that they may be one as we are one. It precedes, surpasses, and outlives every other; it is both source and purpose of all that is and the everlasting glory of existence itself.[91]

So far Isaac's schema is a standard description of mystical union. However, he then adds another kind of marriage, that between the Word and man: "That this built-in bent towards God should in due time and through God's grace find fulfillment, there took place a mysterious marriage, intermediate between the second and third kinds and far distant from the first, a marriage whereby the Word and our nature, Christ and the Church were joined."[92] This third marriage takes place for the sake of the fourth. That is, Christ's incarnation, passion, and resurrection take place to wed Christ to the Church so that the members of the Church can be joined to God, allowing them to enter the Trinity without it becoming a quaternity.[93] In a way that many other mystical theologians do not, Isaac expressly underscores that mystical marriage takes place first between the Church and Christ, then between souls in the Church and God.

In Sermon 11, Isaac explains how the Church's forgiveness of sins in the sacrament of penance is the logical result of her union with Christ. As Beumer notes, Isaac sees Christ and the Church as actually one, one flesh, one person.[94] More

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[91] *Sermo* 9.9–10.
[92] "Sed ut pervenire possit aliquando per gratiam quo semper tendit per naturam, factae sunt quaedam mysteriales nuptiae inter secundas et tertias, a primis longe remotae, Verbi et carnis, Christi et Ecclesiae" (*Sermo* 9.10; CF 11, 76).
[93] *Sermo* 9.17.
[94] Beumer, "Mariologie und Ekklesiologie bei Isaak von Stella," 53.

specifically, Christ is one in nature with the Father and one in spirit with the Bride. He makes the Bride's sins his own, destroying them on the cross, and offering his own divinity in their place: "Whatever he found improper in his Bride the Bridegroom has swept it away, nailing it to the cross, the wood on which he bore the weight of her sins and took them away. He took upon himself, he clothed himself in whatever really belonged to his Bride's nature and bestowed on her his very own divine nature. In becoming man the Son took away the devil's nature, assumed human nature, and conferred the divine nature so that Bridegroom and Bride could hold everything in common."[95]

Because Christ and the Church hold everything in common, Isaac continues, Christ gives the Church the power to forgive sins. The Church's authority comes from her intimate union with Christ, who willed forgiveness to be granted through her.[96] To put it another way, if the right to forgive sins does not belong to the Church, it does not belong to the whole Christ.[97] The union between Christ and the Church grants the Church the power to celebrate the other sacraments as well:

> It follows that apart from Christ the Church cannot grant forgiveness and that Christ has no will to forgive apart from the Church. . . . Doubtless, Christ need accept no restraints to the power of his baptizing, consecrating the Eucharist, ordaining ministers, forgiving sins, and the like, but the humble and faithful bridegroom prefers to confer such blessings with the cooperation of his Bride. "What God," then, "has joined together, let no man put asunder" (Mat 19:6). "I say this is a great mystery and refers to Christ and the Church" (Eph 5:32). The sacrificial turtle-dove's neck might not be completely severed from its body (Lev 5:8); no man may

[95] "Sponsus itaque cum Patre unum, cum Sponsa unus; quod in Sponsa reperit alienum, abstulit, affigens cruci, ubi peccata sua pertulit super lignum, et abstulit per lignum; quod naturale et proprium assumpsit et induit, quod ipsius sui proprium et divinum contulit. Abstulit enim diabolicum, assumpsit humanum, contulit divinum, ut omnia Sponsae sint Sponsi" (*Sermo* 11.10; CF 11, 94).
[96] "Pour avoir le Christ tout entire et tel qu'il est, il faut le prendre dans l'Église: pour avoir le pardon du Christ totalement et réellement, il faut donc le recevoir dans le pardon de l'Église" (Mersch, *Le corps mystique du Christ*, II:153–154).
[97] *Sermo* 11.11.

> separate Christ, the Head, from his Body. . . . To remove the Head from the Body were to ruin the whole Christ irreparably. Christ apart from the Church is no more the whole Christ than the Church is complete if separated from Christ. Head and Body go to make the whole and entire Christ.[98]

In all cases, it is Christ who performs the sacraments to bring souls into union with his mystical body, through which he operates.[99] Likewise the action of the Church is nothing other than the action of Christ operating through it, bringing her members to be joined to God sacramentally, just as the Son is naturally joined to him and Christ's humanity is personally joined to him.[100]

In Sermons 9 and 11, we see how the important themes of Isaac's theology come together in his theology of the mystical body. In the person of Christ, the Word through whom the universe was created is joined to human nature, the highest point of creation. The whole Christ unites "the entirety of relations in himself and, in fact, as one *being* this complex of relations" between God, the universe, and human beings.[101] The members of the mystical body of Christ ascend the chain of being in and through him, toward fuller adoption into the sonship he has received by nature. The links of the chain are united in Christ, yet Christ's members must still ascend and can only ascend by his help. As Deme puts it: "The Son of God ascends through himself to himself, yet man can ascend only at

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[98] "Nihil ergo potest Ecclesia sine Christo dimittere, nihil vult Christus sine Ecclesia dimittere. Nihil potest Ecclesia, nisi paenitenti, id est quem prius Christus tetigit, dimittere; nihil vult Christus Ecclesiam contemnenti dimissum servare. Omnia per se potest omnipotens Christus, id est baptizare, Eucharistiam consecrare, ordinare, peccata dimittere, et similia; sed nihil vult sine Sponsa humilis et fidelis Sponsus. Quod igitur Deus coniunxit, homo non separet. Ego dico, sacramentum hoc magnum in Christo et in Ecclesia. Noli caput turturis prorsus abrumpere, noli caput corpori detruncare. Non enim decollari voluit Christus, sed cruce extendi, distendi, suspendi, ut ima, summa, media copularet. Noli ergo corpori caput subtrahere, ut nusquam sit totus Christus; neque enim totus Christus sine Ecclesia usquam, sicut tota Ecclesia sine Christo nusquam. Totus est enim et integer Christus, caput et corpus" (*Sermo* 11.14–15; CF 11, 96).

[99] As Beumer notes, the authority of the Church is nothing other than the authority of Christ, who wants to complete everything through the Church (Beumer, "Mariologie und Ekklesiologie bei Isaak von Stella," 53–54.

[100] *Sermo* 42.12.

[101] Deme, "Introduction," 193.

the discretion of Christ, and even that only up to a point after which no one is able to follow."[102] How exactly the mystical body becomes one with God through Christ remains, on the deepest level, a mystery. However, the sacraments serve as the visible means of that unifying grace, and, as we shall see further below, the monastic life serves as the path by which Isaac and his fellow monks come to that union.

The giver of that grace, who sustains the monk along the way, is, of course, the Holy Spirit. As much as Isaac's theology of the mystical body is evidently Christocentric, it is also deeply pneumatological and brings his Trinitarian theology into contact with the other elements of his theology. As Deme notes, "The central concept of the 'Whole Christ' from this perspective is just as much a pneumatological term as it is Christological. It is the Spirit that instructs and leads the Church to Christ, and it is here that the Body finds its unity with the Head."[103] In a variation on the metaphor of the vine and branches in John 15, Isaac also describes the Spirit as the life of a tree: "Nonetheless just as verdure and vigor come, as life itself comes only from the life of the Root to the whole Tree, so the whole Body of the Church lives, feels and moves in complete dependence on the one Holy Spirit of Christ and of our God. The life of the root of a tree does not belong to any but to its own tree and to the whole of it; the Spirit of Christ, in our present context, extends his influence only and completely to the Body that belongs to him, so that the whole of it lives and moves because of and in him."[104]

This understanding of the Spirit and Son's roles in the life of the mystical body informs Isaac's sacramental theology, beginning with his account of the forgiveness of

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[102] Ibid., 203.
[103] Ibid., 219. See also Piolanti, "La nostra soledarità," 304; de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 88.
[104] "Verumtamen, sicut de sola vita radicis in totum arboris corpus viror et vigor vita que procedit, sic de solo Christi et Dei nostri sancto Spiritu totum Ecclesiae corpus vivit, sentit, movetur" (*Sermo* 34.7; Deme, 91).

sins. The Father forgives sinners by making them a part of the body of the Son, whose act of reconciliation on the cross destroys sin and satisfies divine justice. But his forgiveness comes by a gift of grace of the Spirit through the Church, incorporating them into the Church and making them friends of God. The paradigmatic moment for this is baptism, in which "the very Spirit by which the Son of Man, our Head, was born from the womb of the Virgin . . . has bestowed on his Spirit-filled Body through the free gift of rebirth freedom from all that is reckoned as sin."[105] Hence, Deme comments: "The theologoumenon of the Spirit uniting the Body to its Head and, as a matter of fact, the theology of the Whole Christ, finds its final expression in the thesis of the [sic] Spiritual authority to grant forgiveness. In a sense, for Isaac the unifying symbol of the works of God is the baptismal font."[106] This path of union is, of course, the mirror image of the intra-Trinitarian relations. The Spirit proceeds from the Father and Son, and the Son proceeds from the Father. In its union with God, therefore, the Spirit unites the to Christ the Head of the Body, who then unites it to the Father.

**VI: Isaac's Eucharistic Theology in the Sermons**

However, as we shall see in *De officio missae* and in Isaac's other sermons, the forgiveness of sins is only the beginning of the Christian's spiritual journey. The "final expression" of Isaac's theology of the mystical body lies in the act by which it is constituted: the Eucharist. Although scholars have not treated Isaac's Eucharistic

[105] "Quo enim Spiritu de utero Virginis natus est hominis Filius, caput nostrum, eo nimirum renascimur de fonte baptismatis filii Dei, corpus suum. Et sicut ille absque omni peccato, sic et nos in remissionem omnium peccatorum.
Sicut enim totius corporis omnia peccata super lignum in corpore carnis portavit, sic spirituali corpori, ut nullum ei peccatum imputetur, per regenerationis gratiam semel simul que donavit, sicut scriptum est: Beatus vir cui non imputavit Dominus peccatum" (*Sermo* 42.17; Deme, 109). Elsewhere Isaac describes Christians as "born anew by the power of the Holy Spirit and virgin-mother Church" (*Sermo* 27.7; Deme, 81).
[106] Deme, "Introduction," 220.

theology outside *De officio missae*, his other works contain passages necessary for understanding his thought *in toto*. Just as Isaac's Sexagesima sermons are important for his Trinitarian theology and doctrine of God, so his sermons for Easter, the Ascension, and Pentecost (41–44) are important for his Eucharistic theology. Sermon 41 is the least interesting, theologically speaking. There Isaac outlines three births in the lives of Christians: birth into human life, birth into the life of grace through the sacraments, and birth into glory in heaven.[107] As God prepared food for the first Adam before he was born, so he prepares food for the Second before he was reborn. Therefore, prior to Christ's resurrection, "he changed bread and wine into the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. For just as he created our new self out of our old self, so from what was [sic] old, old food he transformed into new food for the new self."[108] The Eucharist preserves the new life we receive in baptism, until perfect union with God in heaven, when sacraments will no longer be necessary.[109]

Likewise, in Sermon 44, Isaac writes of the altar of Christ nourishing the faithful with Christ's body and blood. Like baptism, this must be received with charity, otherwise neither profits. However, Isaac goes on to describe the banquet that Wisdom has prepared (Pr 9:2–4), where the bread is truth and the wine is charity. He later ascribes Charity to the Holy Spirit, Truth to the Son, and Power to the Father. By Truth and Charity, we come to Power, that is, by the Son and Spirit, to the Father.[110] This is more than just one allegory stacked on top of the others. Rather, it demonstrates yet again the Cistercian

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[107] *Sermo* 41.1–5.
[108] "Ideo et ante resurrectionem suam unicam, quae figura est nostrae primae et exemplum secundae, die videlicet calicis, panem et vinum vertit in sacramentum corporis sui et sanguinis. Sicut enim de vetere homine novum hominem creavit, ita et de veteris <hominis> cibo veteri novo homini escam novam transformavit" (*Sermo* 41.6; Deme, 104).
[109] *Sermo* 41.7–8.
[110] *Sermo* 44.12–14.

interest in the role of the Son and the Spirit in the Eucharist and the way in which that is determined by their roles in the economy of salvation as a whole.

A concluding passage from the *De anima* further elaborates on these roles. There Isaac outlines the way in which gifts proceed from God to human beings and from human beings back to God:

> just as divine gifts descend to us from the Father through the Son and the Spirit, or in the Spirit . . . so through the Spirit to the Son, and through the Son to the Father human gifts ascend. For upon the departure of the Son the Paraclete Spirit is sent that he might unite the body to the head, that is, to Christ, and Christ to God . . . Therefore the Spirit rules, consoles, instructs, and leads the Church to Christ. And Christ at the same time offers it, without spot or blemish as a kingdom to his God and Father. May the glorious Trinity deign to fulfill this in us. Amen.[111]

Even though the Eucharist is not explicitly mentioned here, it is the greatest human gift offered to the Father by the Church and is clearly implied. The Son becomes present through the power of the Spirit and offers himself back to the Father through that Spirit's working through those whom the Spirit has formed into the Son's mystical body. Members of the mystical body are incorporated into the Son's own self-offering to the Father in one simultaneous action, according to the relations of the Trinitarian persons.

In a sermon for the Second Sunday of Easter, Isaac clarifies that the Son's self-offering is not only to the Father, but to the other persons of the Trinity as well. While discussing Christ's prayers on the night of the Last Supper, he describes him as "My teacher and Lord Jesus Christ, true God, true priest, true sacrifice, who offered himself as

[111] "Itaque, licet indifferens sit natura coequalis trinitatis, tamen sicut ad nos a patre per filium et spiritum vel in spiritu diuina descendunt, iuxta quod dicitur 'baptizantes eos in nominee patris et filii et spiritus sancti,' ita per spiritum ad filium et per filium ad patrem humana ascendant. Ideo namque abeunte filio mittitur paraclitus spiritus, qui corpus capiti uniat idest Christo, et ipse deo, sicut scriptum est: 'Caput mulieris uir, uiri Christus, Christi deus.' Spiritus igitur regit et consolatur et erudite et perducet ecclesiam ad Christum, quam ipse simul sine macula et ruga offeret regnum deo et patri. Quod in nobis adimplere dignetur gloriosa trinitas. Amen" (*De Anima* 23; 562–572; Deme, 156–157).

victim and oblation to himself and to the Father and to the Holy Spirit."[112] This passing remark pertains directly to the Passion. But given Isaac's theology of the mystical body, we can also see that it applies to the Eucharist. When the body of Christ performs sacramental actions, it is Christ himself who acts through the members of his body, who are empowered by the gift of the Holy Spirit. The greatest of these is the confection of the Eucharist.[113] Hence Christ serves as priest and sacrifice in the Eucharist as well as the Passion. But this text also brings to the fore another paradoxical doctrine: Christ's sacrifice on the cross and in the Eucharist is offered to all the persons of the Trinity. Christ is priest, sacrifice, and recipient of his own self-offering. The persons of the Trinity receive this offering according to their work in the economy of salvation: Through the Spirit, Christ's members are assembled into one body, which is then joined to its head, and presented to the Father.

Isaac's sermon on the Ascension joins these ideas from different sermons and the *De Anima* together. He begins with an exposition of the doctrine of the mystical body and the unity of the body with its head. All the members form one body, which is united to Christ the Head of the body. Together, the two make up the whole Christ. Isaac then turns to Paul's comparison of the union between husband and wife, Christ and the Church, and Christ and God.[114] He uses the concept of concatenation as the way to describe unity between them: "The head then to which a wife is united through her husband is Christ; the head to which a husband is united through Christ is God. It follows that God is the

[112] "Doctor et Dominus meus Iesus Christus, verus Deus, verus sacerdos, verum sacrificium, qui se sibi et Patri et Spiritui sancto pro nobis hostiam et oblationem effecit" (*Sermo* 36.20; the translation is my own).
[113] "Ad hanc etenim potestatem pertinere dignoscuntur quae a sacerdotibus vel praesulibus aut praelatis fiunt benedictiones, consecrationes, ordinationes, exorcizationes et manuum impositiones, praelationes, praedicationes, baptizationes, absolutiones, excommunicationes quoque, et maxime maxima potestas eucharistiae confectionis" (*Sermo* 43.12; Deme, 112).
[114] "Since the head to which a wife is united is her husband, just as the head to which every individual is united is Christ; so too the head to which Christ is united is God" (I Cor 11:3).

head to which wife, husband and Christ are united. All therefore joined with God are one God; the Son being so naturally, the Son of Man being so personally, while the Body is so sacramentally (cf. Eph 5:32)."[115] What Christ is by nature, they are by fellowship [*consortio*]; what he has fully, they have by participation. In this sense, they can claim to be God's son and even God, just as Isaac's own foot and tongue can claim to be Isaac.[116] And the fellowship by which they are constituted as one body—such that they could claim to participate in the attributes of Christ—is a sacramental one.

Isaac then considers the threefold way in which Christ is born. According to his divine nature, Christ is born from the beginning from the Father without a mother. According to his humanity, he is born in time from a mother without a father. Christ's third birth comes about according to sacrament or mystery [*secundum vero sacramentum*] from God the Father through the Holy Spirit, and from the virgin mother Church—the same connection between the Son's procession from the Father, the Incarnation, and the Eucharist that we have seen in William of Saint-Thierry. Isaac goes on to say that it is by this same Spirit, by whom Christ was born of the Virgin, that we are reborn in the waters of baptism and made into children of God and the body of Christ. His focus with respect to the sacraments remains on baptism and its spiritual birth and forgiveness of sins. Yet, having described Christ taking on the sins that baptism removes and bearing them on the cross, Isaac writes, "Offerer and Offering and God, by offering himself to himself he has reconciled himself through himself to himself and to the Father and to the Holy Spirit."[117]

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[115] "Ad hanc etenim potestatem pertinere dignoscuntur quae a sacerdotibus vel praesulibus aut praelatis fiunt benedictiones, consecrationes, ordinationes, exorcizationes et manuum impositiones, praelationes, praedicationes, baptizationes, absolutiones, excommunicationes quoque, et maxime maxima potestas eucharistiae confectionis" (*Sermo* 42.12; Deme, 108).
[116] *Sermo* 42.14.
[117] "Sacerdos et sacrificium et Deus, qui se sibi offerens, se per se sibi sicut Patri et Spiritui sancto reconciliavit" (*Sermo* 42.18; Deme, 110).

That sacrifice took place on the cross, but is re-presented in the Eucharist, where the Spirit joins the body of Christ to its head in offering to the Trinity. The Eucharist, therefore, is the way by which the initial birth of baptism is brought to its fruition. It is the oblation to which baptism is ordered and the means by which the mystical body participates in its head's offering of himself to himself, the Spirit, and the Father.

**VII. Commentaries on the Mass During the Twelfth Century**

Before we turn to Isaac's *De officio missae*, we must examine the genre of which it is a part. From the early days of Christianity, allegorical readings of Scripture were popular among theologians. Following 2 Corinthians 3:6, "the letter kills, but the spirit gives life," they believed that an inner spiritual meaning lay beneath the literal sense of a scriptural text. Different methods of exegesis were popular for different authors, and many scholars have recounted these in the patristic and medieval periods.[118] In the medieval era, theologians began to use the same methods of allegory on the liturgy, searching for a deeper spiritual meaning beneath its prayers and actions. Allegorical commentaries on the liturgy became popular during the Carolingian period, beginning with Alamarius of Metz (d. *ca.* 950), and remained so through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. These commentaries were widely read and copied; *De officio missae* has over twenty extant manuscripts, more than any other work in Isaac's corpus. The works were written for clergy, religious or diocesan, to explain the inner meaning of outward rituals with which readers would be familiar.[119] Authors also leaned heavily on each other's

[118] See Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, trans. Mark Sebanc and E.M. Macierowski, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998–2009).
[119] Macy, "Commentaries on the Mass," 143–145.

works, frequently borrowing from a more original thinker, such as Isaac, Odo of Cambrai, or Ivo of Chartres.[120]

As much as they were popular in their day, modern scholars have seen medieval Mass commentaries as containing little of theological interest and embodying many of the faults of medieval liturgical practice. In his introduction to *Die Messe in deutschen Mittelalter*, which remains the most extensive published discussion of these works, Adolph Franz wrote that the medieval Church's practice was widely influenced by erroneous and superstitious views about the liturgy prevailing among the clergy and people.[121] Gary Macy notes that this is the typical scholarly response to the Mass commentaries: "Franz represents only the major voice in a chorus of scholars who decry the commentaries as a stage in the decay in the understanding of the liturgy in which the original meaning of the Eucharistic rite was lost under an avalanche of meaningless and disconnected symbolism."[122] In a similar vein to Franz, McGinn writes that the Carolingian period changed the liturgy from communal worship to sacred spectacle. The Mass was no longer seen as "an actual participation in the saving mystery of Christ . . . but a sacred drama that, like scripture, was to be given an allegorical reading to uncover its dogmatic and moral meaning."[123] And in *The Golden Chain* and *The Growth of Mysticism*, McGinn passes over the *De officio missae* with barely a mention and a list of

[120] Reynolds, "Liturgy, Treatises on," 632. In turn, Robert Paululus of Amiens and Sicard of Cremona borrowed extensively from Isaac for their own commentaries.
[121] "Die kirchliche Praxis wurde vielfach von irrigen und abergläubischen, im Klerus und Volke herrschenden Anschauungen beeinflußt" (Franz, *Die Messe im Deutschen Mittelalter*, vii–viii).
[122] Macy, "Commentaries on the Mass," 143.
[123] McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism*, 23.

manuscripts, other than to note in the former that it is "the work that will probably have the least appeal to the modern reader."[124]

Macy himself devotes an article to these commentaries, offering a brief exposition of the most important ones (including Isaac's). He concludes that their importance lies in the way in which they show the religious ideals of the people who formed them, as well as the Eucharistic piety of the time: "a devotion to Christ in the species, but not an adoration of the species; a great compassion and sympathy for Christ in the passion that went beyond ritual actions to make demands in the believer's moral life; and a fresh and alarmingly personal veneration that challenges the standard histories of liturgy and devotion in the Middle Ages."[125] However, Macy does not examine the theological ideas present in these commentaries in detail, or the way in which they relate to the other works their authors produced. Reynolds likewise does not explore the theological ideas of the commentators, though he offers the best historical overview of their work.[126] A number of unpublished doctoral theses are also helpful for understanding medieval Mass commentaries, especially those by Mary Schaefer and Douglas L. Mosey for Isaac. However, they also analyze the *De officio missae* in isolation from the rest of Isaac's theological corpus. The burden of this chapter of the dissertation is to show how the *De officio missae* connects to Isaac's other works and to show the important aspects of his Eucharistic theology in it.

[124] McGinn, *The Golden Chain*, 30. To which Waddell replies: "I dare say Professor McGinn is right. Still, anyone who can read the *Letter to the Hebrews* with real interest and a modicum of understanding is reasonably well placed to read Isaac's *Letter on the Mass*" (Waddell, "Isaac of Stella on the Canon of the Mass," 23–24.
[125] Macy, "Commentaries on the Mass," 158.
[126] Reynolds, "Liturgy, Treatises on."

However, the question remains: Why should we look for serious theological claims in a medieval allegory of the Mass? Does Isaac's treatise have value for contemporary theologians, or is it simply an historical artifact, a marker of the values and exegetical fancy of its time? To help answer this question, we should consider Gaggero's argument that Isaac's allegorical reading of Scripture contains real theological doctrines that are worth taking seriously. Commenting on Isaac's exegesis of the parable of the Good Samaritan in Sermon 6, Gaggero writes:

> At first sight we have here one of those typically mediaeval attempts at a figurative explanation of a passage from Scripture which one is tempted to dismiss at once as mere word-play. If we approach it as an exegesis of the Gospel parable the instinctive reaction is, at least partly, justifiable. But whatever be the position of other twelfth-century writers with regard to the use of Scripture, Isaac's is in most cases—and this is one of them—quite clear. The Scriptural passage is simply a quarry from which he extracts the vocabulary and images which he uses to expound his own doctrine. It remains true, however, that his doctrine is at the same time profoundly Scriptural in spirit and inspiration; not because of its use of Biblical terms but because it is based on a profound penetration and understanding of the theology of Scripture taken as a whole. The immediate problem, then, is to re-state the doctrine without the accidental furniture of Scriptural imagery.[127]

The same principle holds true of Isaac's allegorical exegesis of the Mass. It is understandable for modern scholars to pass over Isaac's allegory as a relic and meaningless for contemporary, allegory-free discussions of the liturgy. But this would be a mistake, for under the schema of sacrifices and offerings and stages of life lies a profound scriptural and theological argument. That argument—the Eucharist is the means by which one joins one's own life of self-offering to that of the Son—is then expanded in illuminating and helpful ways. The fact that these theological ideas appear in allegory

[127] Gaggero, "Isaac of Stella and the Theology of Redemption," 26.

should not discount them, nor should the fact that Isaac employs allegorical exegesis discount the *De officio missae* as a work of real theology.

**VIII. The Eucharistic Theology of the *De officio missae***

Following Gaggero's lead, let us examine the allegorical imagery of the *De officio missae* and its historical background and then consider the theological ideas it contains. The letter opens with a statement of the purpose and occasion of the work. John, the bishop of Poitiers, had asked Isaac to explain "what our purpose is in the sacred canon when we are celebrating the holy mysteries," and Isaac is at last answering his request.[128] He begins by noting that practically everything can be divided into a three-fold action, and, while he does not offer justification for this division, Trinitarian imagery is an obvious reason. In the canon of the Mass, then, Isaac distinguishes "three principal actions which, one might say, take place on three altars, served by a priest performing three functions, and offering a three-fold sacrifice."[129] This is foreshadowed with Moses and the tabernacle in the desert. The tabernacle has an altar of bronze in the forecourt, where animals are sacrificed; an altar of incense within the tent where incense is burned; and the holy of holies, in which is the throne of mercy. The veil that hung between the two altars was torn during the passion of Christ, so that the throne of mercy lay open to the gaze of all. Christ's body is that throne of mercy, nailed to the cross and naked.

Isaac's explanation of the Eucharist in three sacrifices related to the three altars is reminiscent of Alamarius and Ivo's schemes, but not identical to them.[130] The three altars

[128] "quomodo in sacrum canonem, dum sacrosancta celebramus, intendimus" (*De off,* 1889B; Deme, 158).
[129] "Tres enim distinguuntur in sacro canone principales actiones, quibus quasi tria deserviunt altaria, quibus quasi trinus assistit sacrifex, cum quodammodo tribus sacrificiis" (*De off,* 1890C; Deme, 159).
[130] Mosey writes that Isaac explains the Canon as a passage through three sacrifices rather than two, as presented by Alamarius. Likewise, he relates the three altars of the Temple to the *actiones canonis*, while Ivo mentions only two. Nor, he adds, does Isaac view the Canon as a representation of the historical events of the passion as is common in the allegorical authors. Rather, he chooses to write a spiritual commentary

of the Tabernacle provide the superstructure for the three sacrifices, which are the different stages of the human soul's journey to God, offered by the Holy Spirit under the same titles proper to each stage that he uses in Sermon 45. In the sacrifice of compunction, the just Spirit [*spiritus rectus*] offers repentance on the altar of a contrite heart, which is compunction [*compunctio*].[131] Only by repentance can sinners be separated from the devil and proceed into the sanctuary: "They must be stripped of their skins by oral confession, cut into pieces by the confessor's judgment, and consumed in the fire of true affliction." In the second sacrifice, the Holy Spirit [*spiritus sanctus*] offers holiness on the altar of a heart cleansed by repentance, where the sinner no longer laments his sins, but now rejoices over the things of God and gives thanks for virtues conferred on him. This is devotion [*devotio*]. In the third sacrifice, the guiding Spirit [*spiritus principalis*] offers understanding [*intelligentiae*] on the altar of a heart that has been raised up, allowing him to delights in God and enjoy *conversatio* amidst the angels. This is contemplation [*contemplatio*], the fruit of deification in which the soul knows and loves God and rejoices in the resulting union.

These sacrifices are how God's tabernacle is made not with men, but in men, Isaac continues. They are reflected in the canon of the Mass, where the three sacrifices of the slave, the free man, and the man united to God are offered. In the first part of the canon, the priest offers bread and wine to God. This offering of the physical sustenance of life symbolizes the offering of our physical life to God: "We put the knife of abstinence and fasting against our throat when we offer to God our total sustenance.

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based on Old Testament analogy relating the prayers of the Canon to the soul's ascent to God through participation in the passage of Jesus via the sacrifice of the cross (Mosey, "Allegorical Liturgical Interpretation," 133. See also Reynolds, "Liturgy, Treatises on," 632.

[131] Waddell notes that *contritum* literally means torn to pieces, further emphasizing the sacrificial aspect of repentance (Waddell, "Isaac of Stella on the Canon of the Mass," 45.

Afterwards, only out of necessity, and sparingly and reverently, do we eat from our sustenance, as though from the altar of God."[132] The priest next comes to the words of institution, which give new spiritual life. Jesus himself is a new priest who offers a heavenly sacrifice of his own flesh and blood. He offers "the pure victim, holy victim, immaculate victim, the holy bread of eternal life, the chalice of everlasting salvation" which makes us pure, holy, immaculate, which is spiritual and not temporal or corporeal, and is able to satisfy and save eternally.[133]

Since flesh and blood profit nothing (John 6:63), the priest seeks something higher: "Nothing will content him until he is united through the body to God in heaven and is joined to divinity through humanity."[134] However, the priest cannot accomplish this union on his own. Therefore, in the *supplices te rogamur*, he asks that his sacrifice may united to the body of Christ in heaven, where Christ the eternal high priest offers sacrifice to the Father. To signify this, bows before the altar, kisses it, and rises up. Isaac writes: "For just as we partake of the bread and wine of the first altar by the fact that he looks down upon it, so he now asks that, by the power of the sacrament, he may communicate in the truth of that flesh and blood from this second altar, which is beyond the veil in heaven. . . . So the priest asks to be united with the supreme head through the

[132] "Formam vero attende, quam subtiliter et eleganter expressit, dicens: Fige cultrum in gutture tuo. Cultrum quippe abstinentiae et inediae quasi in gutture figimus, dum qui totum victum nostrum Deo obtulimus, de eo postmodum parce et timide quasi de altari Dei ad necessitatem sumimus" (*De off*, 1893C; Deme, 161–162).

[133] As Schaefer notes, Isaac compares the transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ to the Resurrection, which is more common in Byzantine liturgiology and Western (Schaefer, "Twelfth Century Latin Commentaries," 300.

[134] "Amplius autem, quia caro et sanguis non prodest quidquam, secundum verbum, quia spiritus et vita sunt, altius adhuc aliquid expetit, cui donec per corpus in coelo Deo uniatur, et per humanitatem divinitati conjungatur, nihil sufficit, quippe qui scalam sibi erexit, ascendere utique satagit" (*De off*, 1894C; Deme, 163).

Spirit. For the head of Christ is God."[135] For Isaac and his contemporaries, this language was not mere metaphor. Jungmann notes that other theologians of this period—under the influence of the Gallic liturgy—also conceived of the transfer of the gifts to the heavenly altar as a real activity in which the sacrifice of the Mass attains its completion. The *Supplices* thereby becomes a sort of epiclesis, "and actually there is a plea that the power of God might touch our sacrificial gift, but in reverse order, not by the descent of the Spirit, but by the ascent of the gift."[136] This, then, is the completion of the Spirit's offering of souls by which they are incorporated into the mystical body.

In summary, the first offering does us to death [*mortificat*] and is our passion, separating us from the world. The second offering vivifies [*vivificat*] us and is our resurrection, joining us to Christ. The third offering deifies [*deificat*] us and is our glorification. The three offerings also symbolize the offering of the human powers—animal life, rational life, and faith—that is, the whole person to God.[137] That union takes place in and through the body of Christ under its head and thereby to God, the head of Christ:

> For by means of the divine mysteries we are freed from the slavery of the devil through the Son, so that we may be united with the Son to the Father of the family. . . . All the action of the heavenly sacraments is designated to serve this end: that we may be united to one God through Christ and find our joy for ever in him. For though we are many, in this sacrifice we are one bread, one body; and we have only one Head; and he has God for his head. In so far as we are united through One and in One, we are made one spirit with him (1 Cor 6:17).[138]

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[135] "quatenus sicut per ipsum quod hoc inspicit, panis et vini de primo altari sumimus, et in veritate carnis et sanguinis de secundo ultra velum in coelo benedictione olim semini Abrahae promissa, et gratia Mariae allata, virtuti sacramenti ipsius communicet, id est summo capiti per spiritum uniatur. Caput enim Christi Deus" (*De off*, 1895A; Deme, 163).

[136] Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origin and Development (Missarum Sollemnia)*, 1:438.

[137] *De off*, 1895A.

[138] "Ad hoc enim per divina sacramenta a servitute diaboli per Filium liberamur, ut ipsi Patrifamilias cum Filio uniamur. Sic nempe pro servis Filius loquitur Patri: Volo, Pater, ut sicut ego et tu unum sumus, ita et isti sint unum nobiscum (Jn. 17). Omnis ergo actio sacramentorum coelestium huic fini deservire

This schema of offerings and sacrifices should be in the heart of the priest as he stands at the altar, Isaac concludes. There follows a postscript mentioning the English Hugh of Chauvigny's plundering of the abbey, whose primary value lies in dating the work to *ca*. 1167.[139]

Apart from the layers of allegory, perhaps what first strikes the modern reader of *De officio missae* is that the topics most popular and contentious in medieval Eucharistic theology do not appear at all, nor does the technical vocabulary beginning to emerge in the schools in which Isaac studied. There is no discussion of the act of consecration or account of how Christ can be truly present under the species of bread and wine.[140] Nor does Isaac tie his teaching on the Mass to the other question most important to medieval theologians, Eucharistic reception and its benefit. This is all the more remarkable given that the frequent communion of religious who were not priests remained a feature of Cistercian spirituality for a longer period than in other religious orders.[141] For most figures, including William of Saint-Thierry, these questions occupy the central place in their treatment of the Eucharist, but not for Isaac. In part, this is no doubt due to the work's scope. He is not responding to a theological argument or trying to form a fleshed-out Eucharistic theology, as William is. Isaac was asked for a treatise on the meaning of

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dignoscitur, ut sine fine uni Deo per Christum uniti, in Christo delectemur. Ideo unus panis, unum corpus multi sumus; sed non multa capita habemus, sed unum, et cujus caput Deus; quatenus multi per unum, et in uno, uniti, unus cum eo spiritus efficiamur" (*De off*, 1892B–C; Deme, 160–161).

[139] Wolfgang Gottfried Buchmüller, "Einleitung," in *Predigten*, by Isaac of Stella, vol. I, Fontes Christiani 52 (Freiburg: Herder, 2012), 54.

[140] "Isaac is so discreet in his discussion of the consecration that he uses none of the terms which are usual to characterize Eucharistic conversion" (Schaefer, "Twelfth Century Latin Commentaries," 304. See also Macy, "Commentaries on the Mass," 146–147.

[141] Peter Browe, *Die häufige Kommunion im Mittelalter* (Münster: Regensbergsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1938), 92, 123. This was true at least among Cistercian sisters.

the liturgy's actions, and that is what he delivers, with an emphasis on one of his favorite theological themes, the mystical body of Christ.

Moreover, Isaac seems interested in the way in which the dynamism of the Eucharist symbolizes and realizes the different stages of the human movement toward God: compunction, devotion, and contemplation.[142] As Elias Dietz notes, this tripartite schema appears in various forms throughout his corpus and constitutes an element of fundamental importance in his thought. It appears primarily in his earliest sermons on the Sermon on the Mount, "the paramount *locus* for teaching on spiritual progress," and in Isaac's later sermons on the Assumption, as Dietz's chart reproduced below illustrates (though *compunctio* and *devotio* should be added into the first and second columns for the Letter on the Mass):[143]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Sermon 1** | *perversos corrigere* | *correctos dirigere* | *directos suscipere* |
| **Sermon 3** | *incohatio* | *profectus* | *perfectio* |
| **Sermon 5** | *servus* | *amicus* | *filius* |
| **Sermon 52** | *contritio cordis* | *iustitiæ progressus* | *deliciæ* |
| **Sermon 53** | *dilectio præveniens inimicum reconciliat* | *dilectio adiuvans amicum iustificat* | *dilectio subsequens filium glorificat* |
| **Letter on the Mass** | *conversio* | *virtus* | *contemplatio* |

The three stages also appear in Fragment 1 of the Sermons. There Isaac seeks to offer a spiritual exegesis of the story of the Magi, whose gifts of myrrh, frankincense, and gold represent the three stages of the monastic life and their characteristic offerings: recently converted novices (*conversi*) offer the mortification of the flesh; more advanced monks who have been tempted (*temptati*) offer a contrite heart and humble spirit in prayer; and

[142] Raciti, "Isaac de l'Étoile," 2020.
[143] Dietz, "Conversion in the Sermons of Isaac of Stella," 254–255.

old and mature monks who have been tried and made perfect (*probati*) offer the leisure of contemplation and thank the Lord for their intellectual gifts.[144]

As Dietz rightly notes, these stages represent Isaac's appropriation of the ancient notion of the three stages of the spiritual life. They clearly parallel William of Saint-Thierry's stages of animal, rational, and spiritual in the *Epistola ad fratres de Monte Dei*, and would be codified a century and a half later in the classic formulation of the three ways: purgative, illuminative, and unitive.[145] As Fracheboud suggests, Isaac's stages also show the influence of Pseudo-Dionysius.[146] But as is clear from his own prefatory remarks to *De officio missae*, Isaac believed that "practically everything can be comprised in a threefold action."[147] Isaac's threefold understanding of the spiritual life is, like other aspects of the treatise, the manifestation of a more general belief that things should be understood in threes. The three stages of the spiritual life were a scheme that he would adapt to the particular text or point at hand. They were not part of a strong theological argument about the nature of the monastic life, but a pattern for allegorical exegesis—by no means unique to him—that he could employ as he deemed suitable.

Isaac uses this schema as the interpretive key for the Eucharistic canon because he sees the Eucharist as the Christian life, and in particular the monastic life, *in nuce*. The Eucharistic offering is not just that of the priest, but the monastic community as a whole.[148] Through ascetic practice and monastic obedience, the monk conforms the sacrifice of his life to that of Christ. Isaac writes of monastic obedience nailing the will to

[144] Fragment 1.2–3, 7, in *SC* 339.
[145] Dietz, "Conversion in the Sermons of Isaac of Stella," 255 and notes. See also Blommestijn, "Progrès – Progressants"; Aimé Solingac, "Voies," in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité Ascetique et Mystique* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1994), 1199–1215.
[146] M. André Fracheboud, "Le Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite parmi les sources du Cistercien Isaac de l'Étoile," *Collectanea Ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorum* 10 (1948): 30.
[147] "nos tamen sub trina actione fere universa concludimus" (*De off*, 1890C; Deme, 159).
[148] Schaefer, "Twelfth Century Latin Commentaries," 302.

the cross to be crucified with Christ.[149] As Waddell and Schaefer note, he stresses that the sacrificial heart of the one offering the sacrifice directly informs the quality of his liturgical participation.[150] The Eucharist strengthens the soul to make that sacrifice and is the place where the sacrifices of the monastic life become joined to the sacrifice of Christ and presented to the Father, in symbol and reality.

Through that participation in the sacrifice of Christ, those who receive the Eucharist and live lives of sacrifice are brought into communion with God. More accurately, that participation in Christ's self-offering to the Father is this communion. Schaefer notes that unlike other medieval authors such as William of Saint-Thierry, Isaac does not focus on the way in which the Mass represents the historical events of Christ's passion. Rather, like Odo of Cambrai, Isaac sees the Canon of the Mass as containing Christ's self-offering, and thereby the self-offering of the Church, his mystical body: "The threefold action of the Mass, which inserts us into the mystery of Christ, allows us to ascend with him to the Father. Isaac's analysis of the Mass is in keeping with the ascetical-mystical ascent of the soul to union with God which was the driving force behind the monastic reform movement of the twelfth century."[151] The transfer of the sacrifice from the earthly to the heavenly altar in the *Supplices* is the culmination of this union. The joining of the earthly sacrifice of the Church to the heavenly sacrifice of Christ is an essential part of our communion with God: "It is because of the union of the Church's sacrifice with Christ the High Priest in heaven that we are able to be divinized. .

[149] *Sermo* 15.7–8. See also *Sermo* 27.15ff, where Isaac offers an extended allegory of how the monastic life and its harsh asceticism are patterned on Christ's passion for the crucifying of the son of man and the strengthening of the son of God.
[150] *De off*, 1889B–C; Schaefer, "Twelfth Century Latin Commentaries," 294; Waddell, "Isaac of Stella on the Canon of the Mass," 37.
[151] Schaefer, "Twelfth Century Latin Commentaries," 301–302.

. . Christ is the means whereby we attain union with God. By taking the visible bread and wine from the 'altar outside,' at the level of the visible rite, we receive from the second, the altar within the temple, the truth of the flesh and blood of Christ. This joins us to Christ in heaven; divinized, we are united to God."[152]

This is what Louis Bouyer intuited when he called Isaac's understanding of the triple sacrifice of the Mass the "full and concrete development" of his doctrine of our assumption into the mystical body and the way in which the Church's election is realized in time.[153] For Isaac, the Eucharist is the means of joining one's own self-sacrifice to that of the Church's, which becomes Christ's. This is the sense in which Isaac espouses the common doctrine that the fruit of the Eucharist is the unity of the Church: "For by means of the divine mysteries we are freed from the slavery of the devil through the Son, so that we may be united with the Son to the Father of the family. . . . All the action of the heavenly sacraments is designated to serve this end: that we may be united to one God and through Christ and find our joy forever in him. For though we are many, in this sacrifice we are one bread, one body; and we have only one Head; and he has God for his head."[154]

Isaac's emphasis on the mystical body of Christ also helps explain his unusual depiction of the Spirit offering the Eucharistic sacrifice. One usually thinks of Christ the high priest offering the sacrifice of his body in the Eucharist. But Isaac focuses on the

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[152] Ibid., 305–306.
[153] Bouyer, *The Cistercian Heritage*, 183–185.
[154] "Ad hoc enim per divina sacramenta a servitute diaboli per Filium liberamur, ut ipsi Patrifamilias cum Filio uniamur. Sic nempe pro servis Filius loquitur Patri: Volo, Pater, ut sicut ego et tu unum sumus, ita et isti sint unum nobiscum (Jn. 17). Omnis ergo actio sacramentorum coelestium huic fini deservire dignoscitur, ut sine fine uni Deo per Christum uniti, in Christo delectemur. Ideo unus panis, unum corpus multi sumus; sed non multa capita habemus, sed unum, et cujus caput Deus. . . ." (*De off*, 1892B–C). Gaggero argues that this passage's opening sentence provides the core of Isaac's thought on redemption (25). But Gaggero does not treat the sacrament as an essential means of redemption, as this chapter does. For more on the unity of the Church as the fruit of the Eucharist, see de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*, 83.

fact that the Spirit is the person of the Trinity at work in the lives of the faithful, conforming them to the likeness of Christ, the head of the body. The Spirit empowers them to make a sacrifice of their lives and joins that sacrifice to Christ's eternal sacrifice to the Father. After the Ascension, Christ's offering takes place in heaven, where he sits at the right hand of the Father. Hence the importance of the *Supplices*, when the Spirit completes the unification of the earthly sacrifice with the heavenly one, the presentation of the faithful to the Father as members of the body of the Son. Thus, Isaac's theology of the mystical body underscores how all three persons of the Trinity are working through the Church in the Eucharist, drawing her members into their joy.

**IX. Conclusion**

By studying Isaac's Eucharistic theology together with the rest of his corpus, we can better understand his view of the Son and the Spirit in the Eucharist and the role that the Sacrament plays in sanctification and union with God. Human beings are made with the capacity to love and know so that they can enter into union with God through those faculties. The rational faculties are receptacles by which they receive God, the anthropological foundation for Eucharistic union. With a body and a soul made in the image of God, humans are a microcosm, a symbol and example of the relationship between God and the world, and a point of connection in the universe's chain of being. Since sin severed the bond between God and humanity, the Son came to restore it in his own person and by his reconciling passion, death, and resurrection. Those who are joined to the Son's body the Church are thereby joined to its head, and through him to God the Father. They have Christ sown in their minds and hearts and are capable of knowing and loving him in a manner analogous to self-knowledge and self-love of the persons of the

Trinity. This union takes place in the Holy Spirit, who joins particular believers to the body of Christ and makes his life and benefits their own. With the Spirit in them, the members of the body are filled with the joy and delight characteristic of the Trinitarian communion. Their participation in Trinitarian knowledge and love leads to a participation in Trinitarian affectivity.

The Eucharist plays an important role in this process. Incorporation into the body of Christ begins with baptism but is sustained by the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the way by which Christ joins his members to the mystical body by filling them with the love of the Holy Spirit. It is the action in which the Spirit joins the sacrifices and offerings of their own lives to the great self-offering of Christ to the Father, the place where the Son and the Spirit draw them into the Trinity's love. In this sense, the Eucharist is a microcosm of the spiritual life as a whole, a symbol of the stages of spiritual growth and a reality that makes that growth possible. That growth takes place by the work of the Son and the Spirit, who operate in the Eucharist according to their intra-Trinitarian relations and their missions in the world. The Son performs the work of redemption by the cross and resurrection and is himself the point of union between God and humanity. He bestows the Spirit to join others to him so that they will know and love God as God does, filled with the love and joy that is the Spirit. In the Spirit they are joined to the Son, and through him to the Father. The Eucharist is the liturgical enactment of that union in which the Spirit offers the members of the body of Christ with the offering of its head to the Father.

Many of these themes resonate with William of Saint-Thierry's Eucharistic theology as well, especially that of the roles that the Son and Spirit play in the Eucharist.

Both William and Isaac see the connection between the intra-Trinitarian procession of the Son from the Father and the extra-Trinitarian processions, the Incarnation and the Eucharist. Isaac emphasizes the mystical body of Christ, the rational faculties as receptacles of God, and the symbolic sacrifices of the Eucharistic canon. William focuses on more on Eucharistic presence and reception. Both emphasize the way in which the roles of the Son and the Spirit in the Eucharist mirror their processions in the Trinity, with the Spirit drawing human beings into a relationship with the Son, and thereby to the Father, in a manner analogous to the relations between the Persons themselves. This focus on the role of the Son and the Spirit in the Eucharist and the way in which they draw us into their relations through the sacrament is the hallmark of Cistercian Eucharistic theology.

# Chapter 3: Baldwin of Forde's Eucharistic Theology

## I. Introduction

William of Saint-Thierry and Isaac of Stella defy expectations for monastic theologians. Neither had a long career in the schools, but both engage in serious theological speculation and are acknowledged in scholarship as remarkable, if overlooked, thinkers. Such is not the case with Baldwin of Forde. Baldwin makes few attempts at theological speculation and is more skeptical of reason's ability to pierce theological mysteries. He is also less studied in contemporary scholarship than William and Isaac, apart from the critical editions and articles of David Bell. However, Baldwin's Eucharistic theology merits study alongside that of Isaac and William. His *Tractatus de sacramento altaris* is the longest of the Cistercian Eucharistic treatises, offering commentary on Eucharistic imagery and passages in the Old and New Testaments. In this and in his smaller sermon on the Eucharist, Baldwin depicts the Eucharist as the deep structure of the spiritual life that shapes how the sacraments, faith, and a life of monastic obedience converge in a monk's ongoing conformity to Christ. Faith serves as the object of Baldwin's other treatise and is an important theme in his writing as a whole. Faith in the mysteries of Christ serves as a means of receiving Christ in the soul.

After examining Baldwin's biography and a review of the literature, we turn to his thought on the relationship between faith and reason. The chapter continues with an examination of Baldwin's metaphysics of Eucharistic change and presence, his understanding of Eucharistic reception, the way in which food serves as an image connecting various aspects of the Christian life, and the monk's ongoing path of imitation of Christ through obedience. It concludes with Baldwin's treatment of the eschatological

and ecclesial fruit of the Eucharist and the way in which the Trinitarian processions form the economy of salvation, in particular as revealed through the Eucharist.

## II. Biography

Little is known of Baldwin's early life. While Gervase of Canterbury claims that he was born at Exeter of a humble family, another source attests that his mother could read Latin, a sign of an aristocratic background.[1] Jean Leclercq speculates that he may have been the student of Robert Pullen, who taught at Exeter from 1133–1138, and later master of the school at Exeter. Baldwin traveled abroad for a time, at least in Italy: The first document to mention him is a letter of Pope Eugene III making him the tutor of Gratian, the nephew of Innocent II, in 1150. After this, Baldwin returned to Exeter. He became archdeacon of Totnes, probably in 1161. Near the end of 1169—the height of the Becket controversy—he resigned to enter the Cistercian abbey of Forde, of which he was made abbot in 1175. Five years later he was made bishop of Worcester, and in 1184 archbishop of Canterbury and primate of all England. He accompanied Richard the Lionheart on his crusade and died in Acre (not Tyre, Bell says, against Leclercq and others) in 1190.[2]

## III. Literature Review

Bell has clarified that Baldwin's theological corpus contains two treatises, *De commendatione fidei* and *De sacramento altaris*, along with twenty-two sermons that were later edited and, in some cases, amalgamated to render them as more literary

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[1] Baldwin of Forde, *Spiritual Tractates*, trans. David Bell, vol. 1, Cistercian Fathers Series 39 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1986), 9.
[2] Jean Leclercq, "Introduction," in *Le Sacrement de l'autel*, by Baldwin of Ford, vol. 1, Sources Chrétiennes 93 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1963), 8; David Bell, "Baldwin of Ford and Twelfth-Century Theology," in *Noble Piety and Reformed Monasticism*, Cistercian Studies Series 65 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1981), 136–137.

tractates. All except for three tractates were written during his abbacy at Forde.[3] Although Baldwin wrote other theological works, none survive, and since the thirteenth-century biblical *catenae* containing excerpts from Baldwin do not include extracts from texts other than these, it is possible that his extant works were the only ones in circulation after the twelfth century.[4] Some of Baldwin's letters as archbishop survive as well, but serve more interest for historians of Britain than historians of theology.[5] All of his theological treatises and sermons have been edited, the sermons and the *De commendatione fidei* in a critical edition by Bell in the *CCCM* and the *De sacramento altaris* in a diplomatic edition in the *Sources chrétiennes*.[6] (Translations of the latter text also exist in Italian and Spanish.[7]) Bell's translation of the sermons. Bell also translated Baldwin's sermons—arranged in their edited form as tractates—in two editions from Cistercian Publications and, together with Jane Patricia Freeland, his sermons on obedience and on the cross as well as the *De commendatione fidei*.[8] These editions serve as the primary-source foundation for this dissertation.

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[3] Baldwin of Forde, *Spiritual Tractates*, 1986, 1:11.

[4] David Bell, "The Corpus of the Works of Baldwin of Ford," *Cîteaux* 35 (1984): 226; Bernard-Joseph Samain, "Deux traités inédits de Baudouin de Ford: Le De Oboedientia er le De Sancta Cruce," *Cîteaux* 39 (1988): 10, n.8.

[5] William Stubbs, ed., *Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I: Epistolae Cantuarienses–The Letters of the Prior and Convent of Christ Church, Canterbury from A.D. 1187 to A.D. 1199.*, vol. II (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1864).

[6] Baldwin of Forde, *Balduini de Forda: Opera*, trans. David Bell, *CCCM* 99 (Turnholt: Brepols, 1991); Baldwin of Forde, *Le Sacrement de l'autel*, ed. J. Morson, trans. E. de Solms, 2 vols., *Sources Chrétiennes* 93 and 94 (Paris, 1963). As Didier and Krisak note, the *SC* edition of the *De sacramento altaris* is not ideal because it uses only six of the twelve extant manuscripts. Furthermore, it was intended to be a provisory edition, but has now become the standard, since no one has made a full critical edition or is likely to for some time (J-Ch. Didier, "Le De Sacramento Altaris de Baudouin de Ford," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 8 (1965): 59; Anthony F. Krisak, "Baldwin of Forde's 'Sacrament of the Altar': Its Contribution to a Medieval Understanding of the Eucharist as Sacrifice" (STD Diss., Catholic University of America, 1989), 75.

[7] Baldwin of Forde, *Il sacramento dell'altare trattato* (Milano: Jaca Book, 1984); Baldwin of Forde, *El Sacramento del Altar*, trans. the Benedictine Nuns of St. Scholastica, Padres Cistercienses 3 (Azul, Argentina: Monasterio Nuestra Senora de los Angeles, 1978).

[8] Baldwin of Forde, *Spiritual Tractates*, 1986; Baldwin of Forde, *Spiritual Tractates*, trans. David Bell, vol. 2, 2 vols., Cistercian Fathers Series 41 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1986); Baldwin of Forde,

Baldwin's theology has the least serious scholarship of the three Cistercians studied in this dissertation. Landgraf and Guébin's articles would be of interest for those examining the manuscripts, which is no longer as necessary thanks to Bell's work.[9] Hallet's articles offer a synopsis of Baldwin's thought on the common or monastic life.[10] Didier's review of the *SC* edition of the *De sacramento altaris* offers helpful background on it, while his article on Baldwin and the rise of devotion to the Sacred Heart offers little to a broader scholarly understanding of Baldwin's theology.[11] Pellegrino catalogues Baldwin's use of Augustinian terms and phrases in the *De sacramento altaris*, but provides little further analysis.[12] Morson's "Baldwin of Ford: A Contemplative" and Hontoir's study of Cistercian devotion to the Blessed Sacrament are likewise of little help.[13] Grosse largely cites Bell and offers little on top of Bell's analysis; Malaspina does the same with Leclercq and Biffi.[14]

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"The Sermons on Obedience and the Cross by Baldwin of Forde," trans. David Bell and Jane Patricia Freeland, *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 29 (1994): 241–90; Baldwin of Forde, *The Commendation of Faith*, trans. David Bell and Jane Patricia Freeland, Cistercian Fathers Series 65 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2000).

[9] Arthur Landgraf, "The Commentary on St. Paul of the Codex Paris Arsenal, Lat. 534 and Baldwin of Canterbury," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 10 (1948): 55–62; P. Guébin, "Deux sermons inédits de Baldwin, archevêque de Canterbury, 1184–1190," *Journal of Theological Studies* 13, no. 52 (1912): 571–74.

[10] Charles Hallet, "Notes sur le vocabulaire du 'De vita coenobitica seu communi' de Baudouin de Ford," *Analecta Cisterciensia* 12 (1966): 272–78; Charles Hallet, "La communion des personnes d'après un oeuvre de Baudouin de Ford," *Révue d'ascetique et de mystique* 42 (1966): 405–22.

[11] Didier, "Le De Sacramento Altaris de Baudouin de Ford"; J-Ch. Didier, "Baudouin de Ford et la dévotion au Sacre Coeur de Jésus," *Cîteaux* 26 (1975): 222–25.

[12] Michele Pellegrino, "Reminiscenze bibliche, liturgiche e agostiniane nel 'De sacramento altaris' di Baldovino di Ford," *Révue des études augustiniennes* 10 (1964): 39–44.

[13] John Morson, "Baldwin of Ford: A Contemplative," *Collectanea Ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorum* 27 (1965): 160–64; M. Camille Hontoir, "La Dévotion au saint sacrement chez les premiers cisterciens (XXIIe–XIIIe siècles)," in *Studia Eucharistica: DCC Anni a Condito Festo Sanctissimi Corporis Christi 1246-1946* (Brussels: Uitgeverij Paul Brand, 1946), 1932–56.

[14] Stefano Maria Malaspina, "Un modello di teologia eucaristica medievale: il De sacramento altaris di Baldovino di Ford," in *Estetiche monastiche : atti del III Convegno "San Bernardo di Clairvaux," Abbazia di Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, Roma, 17-18 ottobre 2008* (Milano: Edizioni Eleniane, 2009), 109–20; Jeremiah Grosse, "Abbot Baldwin of Ford on the Sacrament of the Altar," *Downside Review* 127, no. 449 (2009): 269–78.

A number of scholars incorporate Baldwin into broad studies of medieval theology.[15] Holböck and Tavard note the ecclesiological and eschatological implications of Baldwin's Eucharistic theology: the Eucharist as a sign of the life of the Church and means of its unity now, a unity brought to perfection in the life to come.[16] Throughout *Corpus Mysticum*, de Lubac makes reference to Baldwin as an example of the shift he traces in language about the mystical body of Christ in the high Middle Ages.[17] In *Medieval Exegesis*, he also uses *De sacramento altaris* as a representative example of figural exegesis, as does Leclercq in *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*.[18] In his analysis of medieval debates about Eucharistic change, Jorrisen names Baldwin as an important example of arguments for transubstantiation according to the methods and sources of monastic theology.[19] And Neunheuser refers to Baldwin's argument that the coining and use of *transubstantiation* has *homoousios* as its model.[20] Macy categorizes Baldwin's Eucharistic theology as an example of the mystical approach of Anselm of Laon and Hugh of St. Victor, "holding the salvific function of the Eucharist to exist in the

[15] This section is adapted from Krisak, "Baldwin of Forde's 'Sacrament of the Altar': Its Contribution to a Medieval Understanding of the Eucharist as Sacrifice," 93–96.
[16] Ferdinand Holböck, *Der Eucharistiche und der mystische Leib Christi in ihren Beziehungen zueinander nach der Lehre der Frühscholastik* (Rome: Verlag "Officium Libri Catholici," 1941), 170; George Tavard, "The Church as Eucharistic Communion," in *Continuity and Discontinuity in Church History: Essays Presented to George Huntston Williams*, ed. Timothy George and F. Forrester Church (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979), 93–97.
[17] Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages: A Historical Survey*, trans. Gemma Simmonds, et al. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).
[18] Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, trans. Mark Sebanc and E.M. Macierowski, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998); Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, trans. Catharine Misrahi (New York: Fordham University Press, 1982).
[19] Hans Jorissen, *Die Entfalung der Transsubstantiationlehre bis zum Beginn der Hochschtolastik* (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlasbuchhandlung, 1965), 15–16.
[20] Burkhard Neunheuser, *Eucharistie in Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, vol. 4b, Handbuch der Dogmengeschichte, IV (Freiburg: Herder, 1963), 29.

spiritual union with Christ which the sacrament symbolized."[21] This is true, but, as this dissertation will show, incomplete; Baldwin's insistence on and interest in transubstantiation's compatibility with orthodoxy is not simply "mystical" in this sense. Lepin sees Baldwin as following in the footsteps of Peter Lombard and his disciples in arguing that the sacrifice of Christ is represented figuratively in the Eucharist; the Eucharist is not a literal re-sacrificing of Christ. Lepin also emphasizes how Baldwin sees the Eucharist as a work of love in terms that Thomas Aquinas will later adopt.[22] In Mantuano's study of how the mystical signification of the Eucharist became a historical-exegetical one, Baldwin serves as a prominent example of the former.[23] However, Mantuano adds little to a scholarly understanding of Baldwin's theology beyond the fact that he uses figural exegesis in his understanding of the Eucharist. Javelet likewise uses Baldwin in his monumental study of image and likeness, but does not offer an extensive analysis of his thought.[24]

Krisak's STD dissertation on Baldwin's Eucharistic theology and the medieval understanding of sacrifice offers a summary of the secondary literature and of the whole *De sacramento altaris*.[25] Krisak then seeks to apply Baldwin's theology to contemporary theological questions, in particular those that faced ecumenical representatives of the

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[21] Gary Macy, *The Theologies of the Eucharist in the Early Scholastic Period: A Study of the Salvific Function of the Sacrament according to the Theologians c.1080–c. 1220* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 98–99.
[22] M. Lepin, *L'idée du Sacrifice de la Messe d'après les théologiens depuis l'origine jusqu'à nos jours*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1926), 159–161. For more on Baldwin's influence on and similarity to Thomas Aquinas, see Hontoir, "La Dévotion au saint sacrement chez les premiers cisterciens (XXIIe–XIIIe siècles)," 138.
[23] Luigi Mantuano, "Mystica significatio nei commentari del XII secolo sulla liturgia," by B.-M. Tock (Turnholt: Brepols, 2005).
[24] Robert Javelet, *Image et ressemblance au douzième siècle: de Saint Anselme à Alain de Lille*, vol. I, II vols. (Paris: Éditions Letouzey & Ané, 1967).
[25] Krisak, "Baldwin of Forde's 'Sacrament of the Altar': Its Contribution to a Medieval Understanding of the Eucharist as Sacrifice."

Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion in the 1980s. He argues that for those who worry that Catholic theology would imply that Christ is sacrificed again in the Mass, Baldwin offers a more nuanced understanding of Christ's present sacrifice in the Eucharist as distinct from his original sacrifice because transubstantiation is true and mystical. Moreover, Krisak continues, Baldwin sees the importance of the Eucharist in its sharing and reception, not simply its consecration. These allow theologians to escape the narrower confines imposed by scholastic theology, and perhaps to make progress in ecumenical dialogue. Krisak's work is helpful as a summary and basic analysis of Baldwin's salient themes, but it makes a straw man of scholastic Eucharistic theology.

The essential work on Baldwin comes from two scholars: David Bell and Jean Leclercq. In his introductions to the *SC* edition and to the Jaca Book Italian–Latin edition, Leclercq offers helpful syntheses of Baldwin's biography, theology, and place within the context of medieval theology.[26] In the preface to his critical edition and in a series of articles, Bell gives Baldwin a fuller scholarly treatment, with respect to his place in twelfth-century theology, the establishment of his corpus, his theology of the monastic life (a more thorough examination than Didier's), and his Eucharistic theology.[27] While others scholars will be incorporated where appropriate, Bell and Leclercq provide the secondary-source foundation for this chapter.

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[26] Leclercq, "Introduction"; Jean Leclercq, "Prefazione," in *Il sacramento dell'altare trattato* (Milano: Jaca Book, 1984), 7–26.

[27] Bell, "Baldwin of Ford and Twelfth-Century Theology"; David Bell, "Heaven on Earth: Celestial and Cenobitic Unity in the Thought of Baldwin of Ford," in *Heaven on Earth*, ed. E. Rozanne Elder, Cistercian Studies Series 9 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1983), 1–21; Bell, "The Corpus of the Works of Baldwin of Ford"; David Bell, "Baldwin of Ford and the Sacrament of the Altar," in *Erudition in God's Service*, Cistercian Studies Series, XI (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987), 217–42; Baldwin of Forde, *Balduini de Forda: Opera*.

## IV. Faith and Reason

Baldwin's understanding of faith is important to his theology as a whole, and to his Eucharistic theology in two ways. First, Baldwin sees the Eucharist as a way of testing and strengthening faith, which is important for his theology of Eucharistic presence and reception. Second, Baldwin connects the generation of the Son from the Father, the Incarnation, and the Eucharist as mysteries through faith in which the soul is united to God. Therefore, before examining Baldwin's Eucharistic theology, we must first become acquainted with his understanding of faith, particularly as distinguishd from reason. Although the controversy with Abelard was behind him, Bell writes, Baldwin "was a man standing on the threshold of scholasticism and not much liking what he saw."[28] True to the stereotype of monastic thinkers—which they themselves sometimes employed as a rhetorical stance—he held a profound skepticism of the ability of human reason to attain wisdom by its own efforts. In the *De commendatione fidei*, Baldwin writes that those who chased after learning by land and by sea did not find wisdom, including Plato. True wisdom "is not from the school of the Academicians or the Stoics, nor did it emanate from any other sect of similar error: but because they did not find the way of discipline, they perished."[29]

This shows, he continues, that "the wisdom of God, therefore, is not investigated by the subtlety of human reason exalting itself on high, nor is it acquired by going on long voyages to bring it back from the ends of the earth. It comes instead from heaven, and it instructs us and admonishes us to despise earthly things and to love those that are

[28] Baldwin of Forde, *The Commendation of Faith*, 18.
[29] "Hec ergo sapientia non de scola academicorum uel stoicorum, alterius ue similis erroris secte manauit, sed illi uiam discipline non inuenerunt, propterea perierunt" (*CF* 25.3; English translations found at the same place in the text of CF 59).

heavenly."[30] This is not to say that we should tell an inquirer simply to have faith. Rather, as much as we should continue to search for the reasons for our faith, we should not exceed the boundaries of what that faith has given us. And we should not spend great efforts seeking to reconcile scripture with philosophical sources or penetrate the mysteries of faith with speculative investigation. Instead, we should use those mysteries as springboards to wonder, devotion, and praise. We can see what Baldwin means more concretely in his exegesis of the Passover lamb as a figure of the Eucharist. He considers the instructions of God that none of the lamb is to remain the next morning; if any does, it is to be burned with fire (Ex 12:10). Baldwin writes that this can be understood as an image of when we hear the theological explanation of a Catholic teacher, but are unable to penetrate the whole depth of the mystery. In this case, we should acknowledge our weakness and "burn the rest in fire," that is, to leave our understanding humbly to the power of the Holy Spirit: "Therefore we burn with fire what we leave to the Holy Spirit. Likewise we burn the remainder when we humbly venerate with the fervor of pious devotion what we are unable to comprehend."[31]

However, this rule does not apply to all Christians in the same way. Many of the faithful revere the sacraments out of simple faith, Baldwin notes. It is not necessary that they have a deeper knowledge of mystical language or the mysteries of signs and

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[30] "Dei ergo sapientia nec subtilitate humane rationis in alta se erigentis inuestigatur, nec labore longinque nauigationis acquiritur, ut de remotioribus finibus adducatur, sed de celo ueniens erudit nos, et admonet terrena despicere et amare celestia. Mundum autem despicere: hoc est mare transire, et enauigatum post se relinquere. Celestia amare: hoc est spe et desiderio in celum tendere" (*CF*, 25.4).

[31] "Si autem, assumpto vicino qui junctus est domui, non potest totus agnus comedi, id est si, doctore catholico exponente, non potest tota profunditas hujus mysterii penetrari, quid faciendum est nisi quod sequitur, in quo infirmitati nostrae consulitur? *Si quid*, inquit, *residui fuerit, igne comburetis*. Quod ex agno remanet igne comburimus, quando hoc quod penetrare non possumus potestati Spiritus sancti humiliter committimus, ut non superbe quis audeat contemnere quod non intelligit. Igne ergo comburimus, quod Spiritui sancto relinquimus" (*De sacramento altaris* (hereafter *SA*), 440; English translations of the SA are mine).

sacraments. However, such knowledge of mysteries is more necessary for those in authority. They should engage in theological study so that they can understand better the faith that they will hand on to those in their charge, especially for the sake of stirring up their devotion.[32] That study should consist primarily in a deeper understanding of the text of scripture, not in speculative theories. The great and profound mystery of the new and true sacrifice does not fall under human reason and cannot be explained worthily with arguments of human wisdom. But a person can investigate the institution of the sacrament, its cause, truth, efficacy, and dignity, as well as the explication of its figures in the words of Scripture and (to a lesser extent) the Fathers. We ought to search these texts with pious investigation "so that the knowledge of faith does not depart from the line of truth and the confession of our mouth lacks all suspicion of falsehood."[33]

Baldwin's concern here is to safeguard faith as a means of union with God, not to demean reason, and it is important to note that distinction. For all his concern and skepticism about rational inquiry, Baldwin upholds the common medieval conception of reason as the likeness of the image of God in us, the transcendent faculty that corresponds and is formed to the divine Logos.[34] But reason should not be given completely free rein. Rather, it should be exercised in obedience to God, just as the will should be humbled to the direction of reason.[35] Furthermore, as Holdsworth notes, during Baldwin's abbacy Forde became the English Cistercian house richest in theological writers, a development

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[32] *SA*, 348.
[33] "Sed institutionem hujus sacramenti et causam, veritatem, virtutem, dignitatem quoque et figurarum significationem, ex ipsius Dei verbis et eorum in quibus locutus est Deus, secundum ea quae utriusque testamenti sancta prodit auctoritas, pia inquisitione investigare oportet; ut conscientia fidei non recedat a linea veritatis et oris confessio omni careat suspicione falsitatis" (*SA*, 74).
[34] For example, *Sermo* 4.32–36.
[35] cf. Baldwin of Forde, "The Sermons on Obedience and the Cross by Baldwin of Forde," 35–37.

largely due to him.[36] An abbot deeply opposed to the exercise of reason could not have fostered the growth of such theological minds. The best description of Baldwin's understanding of the relationship between faith and reason, then, comes from Sheedy's assessment of it for pre-scholastic authors in general: "It is incorrect, therefore, to set up authority and reason as two conflicting sources of knowledge, as if a man in following authority was compelled to abdicate his reason and in following reason must reject the argument of authority. The object of faith, though not derived from reason, requires the use of reason to express the truths of faith and their relations to each other, and to draw out the conclusions implicitly contained in the revealed principles."[37]

One purpose of the Eucharist, then, is to purify reason so that it can better understand the truth and be further conformed to the image of God. This purification is first a matter of humbling. Baldwin describes the Eucharist as a test of faith, in which faith and reason fight. Faith is keen and conquers reason, gouging out its eye.[38] When seen in light of Baldwin's other writing, the metaphor is an excessive corrective; if faith wounds reason, it wounds in order to heal. He goes on to say that we should possess a devout ignorance of the sacraments and not seek to comprehend them within the limits of human reason. Instead, we should see our inability to comprehend the mystery as an occasion for purification in which reason is humbled under faith to undo the pride of

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[36] "The attempt to compare his achievement with that of his contemporaries shows very clearly that there was no Cistercian house so rich in writers as Ford, with the possible exception of Rievaulx. This seems to have been largely due to Baldwin. There is no trace of a literary tradition there before his time, but with it appear a circle of writers, of whom at least two, John and Roger, sought inspiration and approval from him" (C.J. Holdsworth, "John of Ford and English Cistercian Writing 1167–1214," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 11 (1961): 132.

[37] Charles E. Sheedy, *The Eucharistic Controversy of the Eleventh Century against the Background of Pre-Scholastic Theology* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1947), 14.

[38] "In primis fides et humana ratio compugnant, et hoc agitur inter eas ut altera alteri oculum eruat; nec est finis huius pugne citra alterius excecationem. Habet enim humana ratio oculum suum, habet et fides suum. Oculus rationis quasi lippus est, et sepe uisibilia et prope posita uidere non potest. Oculus autem fidei acutus est, quo inuisibilia Dei intellecta conspiciuntur" (*Sermo* 4.21).

reason in the fall.[39] And if reason does not hinder faith, it can find Christ hidden in the sacrament of the Eucharist just as it finds him hidden in the form of a servant in the Incarnation and from the beginning of time in the bosom of the Father. The Eucharist is the greatest test of this faith, and therefore the best way of strengthening it.[40]

## V. Introduction to Baldwin's Eucharistic Theology

With this examination of the relationship between faith and reason in mind, we now turn to Baldwin's Eucharistic theology proper. This appears primarily in two sources, his first tractate and the treatise *De sacramento altaris* (hereafter *SA*, to distinguish it from William of Saint-Thierry's treatise by the same name). Bell argues that the tractate is formed from two sermons that have been edited together. He is less sure of the provenance of the first, but believes that the second is an address to priests from Baldwin's tenure as bishop.[41] *SA* comes from the time of Baldwin's abbacy, and between Bell and Leclercq we can date it from 1175–1180.[42] Like Isaac's *De officio missae*, *SA* was written at the request of a bishop seeking insight into the mystery of the Eucharist. In this case, it was Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter, who asked Baldwin to write some instructions on the true sacrifice to strengthen the faith.[43] Baldwin's work focuses on this theme of sacrifice, beginning in the New Testament and looking back to the Old. It traces how the truth and grace of the new covenant is given in bread and wine, and how the same had been prefigured in the paschal lamb, manna, and other signs.

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[39] "Bona cecitas est, in seipso magna non uidere, et que scire non licet, pie ignorare. Propterea in celestibus mysteriis et diuinis sacramentis, omnis impia dubitatio a corde nostro procul pellenda est, omnis curiosa inquisitio compescenda est, ut fides, que habet ueritatis conscientiam, habeat etiam piam ignorantiam" (*Sermo* 4.35).
[40] "Sed de fide nunc agitur, que multis modis a Deo temptatur, et in hoc sacramento maxime ad probationem exercetur" (*Sermo* 4.7).
[41] Baldwin of Forde, *Spiritual Tractates*, 1986, 1:65 n.1.
[42] Leclercq, "Introduction," 9–10; Bell, "Baldwin of Ford and Twelfth-Century Theology," 136.
[43] *SA*, 70–72.

Leclercq reckons that most of Baldwin's scriptural sources come from the daily office and the missal. He frequently employs the Psalms, and almost all the fragments of the Old Testament or New Testament on which he comments appear in the missal, either in the canon or in the gospels and epistles, especially in Easter and in the prophecies and readings of Holy Saturday. The fact that these latter appear on the night of the Lord's Passover from death to new life indicates to Baldwin that they have a Eucharistic cast. Hence, Leclercq concludes, we can consider the work to be a mystagogy similar to that of the Greek Fathers, but also a liturgical commentary. Above all, it is a scriptural commentary—a work as much about the Bible as about the Eucharist—that examines these two forms under which the Word of God is given to us. We know the Eucharist by Scripture's testimony, and the grace of the Eucharist helps us find in the Bible a doctrine that makes us participate better in the Eucharistic sacrifice.[44] In a sense, *SA* is an exegetical manual for Scripture that will be primarily encountered in the liturgy and interpreted in light of its place in the liturgy, even as that Scripture, in turn, gives the liturgy its meaning. In the Mass, word and worship are understood through each other.

Baldwin draws on the Fathers as well, but to a much lesser extent than William. The Rule of St. Benedict, Pseudo-Dionysius, Hilary, Ambrose, and Jerome are in the background, as is Augustine. Among his contemporaries, Baldwin borrows from John of Fécamp and derives his understanding of the cenobitic or common life, in part, from Aelred. As with William, there are resonances with Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, but it is difficult to establish a definitive link. Perhaps Baldwin's greatest influence, in terms of

[44] Leclercq, "Introduction," 33, 42–43. Leclercq also notes that Baldwin tries to adopt the style of the Bible as his own: "Il s'efface devant la parole de Dieu, il parle le langage commun de toute l'Église. Il écrit en style biblique, non content d'emprunter à la Bible ses expressions, il pense avec elle, comme elle, et sur le même mode: son style intérieur est celui de la Bible" (Ibid., 25).

his method of exegesis, comes from Origen.[45] Baldwin quotes two passages of Origen's seventh homily on Exodus and makes other clear references to Origen's exegesis of the second Passover, manna, and the Sabbath.[46] Medieval theology often builds on patristic theology, continuing to work out what the latter began. In this way, *SA* uses Origen's method to better understand how the Old Testament prefigures and is understood in light of the New, how the same truths are revealed more deeply over time under different signs.

While he may borrow from Origen, scholars agree that Baldwin is no Origen. Didier calls him a second-rate author who reveals the interests and spirit of his times, a tad harsh but not entirely misplaced.[47] Leclercq is more gentle: "Baudouin de Ford n'est pas un théologien subtil."[48] But scholars also agree that Baldwin is not interested in the theological debates of his day or in producing a great work of speculation. His treatise is not polemical, though it does touch on two controversies of his day. First, the question of the Greek objection to the Western use of unleavened bread, to which Baldwin (like other Latin authors) replies that Christ himself used unleavened bread, and that even though the Truth has come, signs such as unleavened bread still have a role to play. Second, Baldwin argues for the orthodoxy of the term *transubstantiation*, which we will examine in greater detail below.[49]

But even as he defends its use, Baldwin is not interested in investigating the finer points of Eucharistic change, the real presence, or the essence of sacrifice; as Leclercq

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[45] Ibid., 43–44; Baldwin of Forde, *Spiritual Tractates*, 1986, 1:26–27; Krisak, "Baldwin of Forde's 'Sacrament of the Altar': Its Contribution to a Medieval Understanding of the Eucharist as Sacrifice," 88–89.
[46] Baldwin of Forde, *Le Sacrement de l'autel*, 1:64–67.
[47] Didier, "Le De sacramento altaris de Baudouin de Ford," 59.
[48] Leclercq, "Introduction," 12.
[49] Bell, "Baldwin of Ford and Twelfth-Century Theology," 137–138.

puts it, he is content to state the fact of the Mass. Instead, Baldwin focuses on the reasons why Christ instituted the Eucharist, the way in which the Eucharist meets human needs, and how we should read the institution narrative.[50] He seeks the transformation of his reader by helping him better receive Christ in Scripture and the Mass. Hence Bell concludes that *SA* may be seen as "a call for spiritual reform, for a return to the gospel text . . . a call for a return to the theory and practice of faith at a time in history when faith and charity were conspicuously absent. It is a work which looks beyond the conflicts of the Fathers to the text of the scripture, and which looks beyond the complexities of ecclesiastical and secular politics to the words of Christ." In this way, it is more similar to Baldwin's tractates and *De commendatione fidei* than to technical Eucharistic treatises, such as those of Guitmund of Avesa or Alger of Liège.[51] Baldwin's call to return to Scripture has a goal typical of monastic theologians. He is interested less in understanding the mystery of the Eucharist, how it is accomplished, than in seeking its connection to other mysteries in the Christian Mystery and the end to which they all lead: union with the Triune God in this life and the next.[52] His response to the Eucharist is *admiratio*, wonder and astonishment. Wonder at the mysteries that faith makes present enkindles charity and desire for that union which is its end.[53]

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[50] Leclercq, "Introduction," 12–15.
[51] Bell, "Baldwin of Ford and the Sacrament of the Altar," 234.
[52] Leclercq, "Introduction," 17; Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, 211, 222.
[53] On this point Leclercq is worth quoting at length: "Baldwin of Ford often describes his attitude in the presence of the Eucharist by these two words: *stupor et admiratio*. He is surprised, rapt, as in an ecstasy, in a state which partakes both of the immobility caused by astonishment and the spontaneous élan provoked by enthusiasm; he never grows accustomed to the sublime realities on which his glance lingers; his wonder never diminishes; he marvels at the mystery Revelation proposes for contemplation, and he also marvels at the fact that men believe in it in the Church: he marvels at the faith. His admiration rewards and, at the same time, stimulates his faith, and these two dispositions of the soul augment each other mutually. They awaken the intelligence and all the other faculties of man: reflection and understanding are benefitted by admiration and, in turn, foster charity and all the other virtues, and mystical experience and asceticism flow from them. The thought of Christ, his words, his works, and his sacraments may produce two reactions in

## VI. Eucharistic Metaphysics of Presence and Change

Take, for example, Baldwin's articulation of Eucharistic. In his tractate on the Eucharist, Baldwin writes that the Eucharist is the sacrifice of truth. There is no falsehood or trickery in it, but only truth: evident truth, the visible form of bread, and hidden truth, the true substance of Christ's flesh. He continues: "Before the consecration, we have here the true substance of bread, but in the consecration, it is transubstantiated [*transsubstantiatur*] and changed by virtue of the power of the words into the true flesh of Christ. After the consecration, the whole of Christ, who made darkness his hiding-place, is hidden under the visible form."[54] On the one hand, this is a straightforward doctrinal statement: Baldwin sees the Eucharistic change as a change of substance from bread and wine to body and blood under the constant appearance of bread and wine; a change that takes place by the words of Christ speaking through the priest; a change whose result is the presence of the whole Christ in each of the Eucharistic species; a change that is properly called transubstantiation.

But Baldwin does not make this statement for the sake of offering a lengthy defense of it or a deeper examination of its meaning. Rather, in *SA*, he meditates on each of these doctrinal principles he has laid out as ways of growing in faith. Commenting on Christ's blessing of the bread at the Last Supper [*benedixit*], he writes that Christ's blessing did not multiply bread as at the feeding of the 5,000, but—without changing its form—changed its substance into another substance, a substance that did not begin to

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man: either we understand the truth, or by the infusion of a higher grace, we experience something sweet: in either case, we are admiring and astounded, *admirantes et stupentes*; through the process of understanding and through some higher perception, we feel something of God's sweetness and we delight in and long for the full manifestation of the reality which is given us under the veil of faith and the sacraments, and we long for our true homeland" (Ibid., 226).

[54] "Ante consecrationem quidem est ibi uera substantia panis, sed in consecratione potenti uirtute uerborum transsubstantiatur et mutatur in ueram Christi carnem. Post consecrationem, totus Christus sub specie uisibili absconditus est, qui posuit tenebras latibulum suum . . ." (*Sermo* 4.3).

exist but that existed before. This change is hidden from eyes of flesh and human reason and is only visible to the eyes of faith. The grace of the miracle and the grace of the faith necessary to perceive it are both astonishing gifts of God.[55]

Baldwin then notes the similarity between the act of creation and transubstantiation: As God creates with the words "let there be," so he effects the Eucharistic change with the words "This is my body."[56] This change allows Christ to be fully present in all parts of the sacrament. The fraction divides the sacramental body of Christ on the altar, not the body's substantial presence. Each person receiving a piece of the host receives the body entirely.[57] And the appropriate term to describe this change is *transubstantiation*, even though that word is a linguistic novelty [*verborum novitas*] and not scriptural. The proclamation of the faith uses many words to describe Eucharistic change in the tradition of the orthodox Fathers, Baldwin writes, but the piety behind those words is one. By the power of blessing, the bread becomes the body of Christ. It is made the body of Christ, it is transubstantiated, changed, converted into the body of Christ. It is acceptable to introduce a term to describe the change, he argues, just as the Fathers did with *homoousion* and *persona* to describe the consubstantiality of the Father and Son and

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[55] "Verum haec benedictio, de qua nunc agitur, non panem in suo genere multiplicavit, non in numero vel quantitate auxit; sed majori admiratione, non mutata forma, substantiam mutavit in aliam substantiam, non quae tunc esse inciperet, sed quae antea extitisset. *A Domino factum est istud et est mirabile in oculis nostris*, sed in oculis cordis, non in oculis carnis. Nam ab oculis carnis abscondita sunt haec. Oculis quoque humanae rationis sunt clausa; sed solius fidei oculis mirabiliter conspicua. Stuporis magnitudo et vehementia admirationis, cum sine aliqua fide esse non possint, ipsam fidem sic permovent, ut pariter miretur hoc a Deo fieri et ab homine credi. Utrumque enim mirabile est. Sicut enim a Deo mirabiliter efficitur, sic ab homine mirabiliter creditur; unde qui non credunt hoc fieri plus mirantur hoc credi. Utriusque autem rei, videlicet facti quod creditur et fidei qua creditur, unus est auctor Deus, utrobique mirabilis, et in virtute facti et in gratia fidei" (*SA*, 122–124).

[56] *SA*, 142.

[57] *SA*, 126.

the Trinity. These terms do not come from Scripture, but they do affirm the truth and proclaim the faith taught therein for the perfection of the saints.[58]

Baldwin's goal is the correct articulation and strengthening of the faith he has received, not further speculation to better explain divine mysteries, because the Eucharist functions as an important object of faith. He argues for a term such as *transubstantiation* because it clarifies what a believer holds by faith, but he does not think that the mystery of Eucharistic change requires further investigation.[59] His argument might be personal, as well. Goering has hypothesized that the term *transubstantiation* may have been first used by Robert Pullen in Paris around 1140.[60] If this is the case, Baldwin's defense of the term would come thirty to forty years after he could have learned it in Exeter while studying under Pullen. It would be understandable to come to the aid of his teacher's term, especially if others attacked it as unsuitable for not appearing in Scripture.

The connection to Pullen aside, for Baldwin the importance of that mystery is twofold. First, it makes Christ present so that we can receive him sacramentally. Second, the real but invisible change leaves room for faith as a means of union with Christ.[61] Indeed, the Eucharist can only be acknowledged and received by faith. It is a prime example of the limits of reason and faith's triumph over it. Baldwin emphasizes this

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[58] "Et cum sit in hac fidei confessione multa verborum diversitas, una est tamen fidei pietas et individua confessionis unitas. Et quamvis haec nomina, mutatio, conversio, cetera que similia mutationem vel conversionem indicantia, quantum ad hanc fidei confessionem, magis novae inventionis esse videantur quam evangelicae vel apostolicae traditionis, sanctis tamen doctoribus quos dedit Deus in ministerium fidei, in consummationem sanctorum, placuit ob piam fidei confessionem hujuscemodi verbis uti. Nec judicanda est profana verborum novitas, quam induxit sanctorum patrum auctoritas, et fidei pietas, et ipsius confessionis necessitas. Aliquo nimirum modo oportuit dici, quod omnino debuit credi. Non sine exemplo est quod loquimur. Nam hoc nomen homousion, et hoc nomen persona, alterum ad fidem consubstantialitatis Patris et Filii, alterum ad fidem Trinitatis, ambo autem ad veritatis assertionem fidei que professionem, a sanctis patribus assumpta sunt, licet de novo aut veteri testamento auctoritatem non habeant" (*SA*, 148).

[59] cf. Bell, "Baldwin of Ford and the Sacrament of the Altar," 217.

[60] Joseph Goering, "The Invention of Transubstantiation," *Traditio* 46 (1991): 157.

[61] *SA*, 146.

when discussing how the Eucharistic change is true and mystical. It is true because it does not take place simply according to figure or appearance but according to substance. This defies the reason of the philosophers, who thought that they could close the laws of nature in exact boundaries and indubitable definitions. In so doing, they ignored the wisdom of God hidden in the mystery that their logic could not comprehend. The Eucharist triumphs over their reason, prideful curiosity, and quest for glory.

The correct response to the Eucharist, Baldwin concludes, is to confess the truth of the substantial change with firmness and constancy, though the appearance remains in an ineffable and incomprehensible way. We believe it is so and we ignore the "how" with simplicity, which helps our souls grow in humility and makes faith more meritorious. We do not know "how" now but we will know it later, when the effect of the mystery comes to its consummation in us. This consummation is shown in the change of bread into the body of Christ itself. And it is in this sense that the Eucharist is mystical, signifying the grace itself, which is at work in us.[62] That focus on the effects of grace (union and

[62] *SA*, 205–211, especially: "Fides itaque nostra, verbis ipsius Dei immobiliter fundata, incerto humanarum opinionum non jactatur, sicut nutabunda et fluctuans; sed veritate subnixa et super firmam petram divinae auctoritatis solidata, inconcussa constat et inconvulsa; et si quid diffinitionibus philosophorum contrarium continet, cedere debet opinio veritati, ut veritas fidei in omnibus triumphet, destruens *omnem altitudinem extollentem se adversus scientiam Dei, et in captivitatem redigens omnem intellectum in obsequium Christi*. Quidquid in mysteriis fidei sua profunditate modum humanae intelligentiae excedit et fines humanae rationis transcendit, Deo committendum est, ei que reservandum, qui tempore opportuno mysteria nunc operta revelabit his qui, verbis ipsius debitam reverentiam exhibentes, firmiter fideliter que credunt, non haesitantes de fide verborum, quamvis ratio modi interim non eluceat. Vult etenim Deus arcana sua nobis et a nobis credi, sed modum ad tempus ignorari, ut habeat fides meritum, et quod nunc occultum est reservetur ad praemium. Habet itaque simplicitas fidei piam conscientiam et piam ignorantiam; piam quidem conscientiam in his quae Deus credenda mandavit; piam vero ignorantiam in his quae non quaerenda abscondit. Utraque autem, pietas conscientiae scilicet et ignorantiae, apud Deum gloriam habet et laudem, dum mens humana coram Deo humiliatur, ut credat quae dixit, et a superba et curiosa inquisitione compescitur, ne quaerat quae non dixit. Utrobique ergo fides proficit ad meritum, et in utraque simplicitate confidenter suspirat ad praemium; *qui enim ambulat simpliciter, ambulat confidenter*. Simpliciter ergo et confidenter, firmiter et constanter, teneamus, credamus et confiteamur, quod substantia panis in substantiam carnis Christi mutatur, manente tamen specie panis, mirabiliter et ineffabiliter et incomprehensibiliter. Indubitanter credimus quia ita est: quomodo autem hoc sit adhuc simpliciter ignoramus. Nondum de modo scimus; sciemus autem postea, cum virtus hujus mysterii in nobis fuerit

conformity to the image of God in Christ) instead of the means of grace (the real presence and transubstantiation) is typical of monastic theology as a whole.[63] Baldwin is not uninterested in doctrine or theology, but he is more interested in the way in which particular doctrines impact the lives of those who hold them. Transubstantiation and Christ's real presence matter because they are the means by which Christ gives himself to those who believe in him, but also because they correctly describe an important object of faith, challenge and strengthen that faith, allowing the faithful the opportunity to cleave more to the one in whom they have faith, and to grow in the love that comes from wonder at his mysteries.

## VII. Eucharistic Reception

In a similar way, Baldwin's theology of Eucharistic reception is formed by the importance he accords to faith and by his figural exegesis of grace and faith in the lives of Old Testament figures. Most medieval authors distinguish between receiving Christ spiritually and sacramentally in the Eucharist. As we have seen, William of Saint-Thierry thinks that spiritual reception can take place outside the context of the Mass, for example by meditating on the passion.[64] Because this increases the presence of charity in the soul, producing the same spiritual benefit as Eucharistic reception, it is a kind of spiritual reception of Christ. Baldwin adopts a similar understanding of Eucharistic reception, but through the lens of his focus on faith: The two ways in which a believer can receive Christ are by faith and by sacramental reception. Though Baldwin never explicitly calls faith the primary means of receiving Christ, he treats it more than sacramental reception,

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consummata. Consummationem autem indicat ipsa conversio panis in corpus Christi. Mystica enim est, significans gratiam ipsam, quam operatur in nobis" (209–211).

[63] *SA*, 204 n. 1.

[64] See section 1.IX.

relegating the latter to an almost secondary function.[65] For Baldwin, faith is, in a sense, a Eucharistic activity, a thanksgiving and admiration of God as well as a way of receiving Christ into oneself. The Eucharist itself is simply another way by which this same activity takes place.

Baldwin treats the question of Eucharistic reception extensively in three places in *SA*, first in his exegesis of John 6:47–69, the end of Jesus' discourse on the bread of life. There Baldwin argues that because Christ is the bread of life for those who believe in him, "To believe in Christ is to eat the bread of life, it is to possess Christ in yourself, it is to have eternal life. . . ."[66] For Baldwin, believing in Christ is eating Christ. Later in his exegesis of "he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood" (John 6:56), Baldwin explains more. Christ is eaten in two ways because there are two ways of being united to him: faith and sacramental recetion. Through faith we are justified and are made participants [*participes*] in the friendship of God. By faith Christ also lives in our hearts, giving himself to us so that we might know and participate [*participandum*] in him. The angels know the Word by sight [*speciem*]. We, knowing him by faith, eat the bread of angels according to our own mode: "Knowing by faith the only begotten who is in the bosom of the Father, who was sent from heaven to us and became incarnate for our sake, we eat the living bread that came down from heaven. Knowing by faith the flesh he took on for us, given for us in food, we eat the flesh of Christ. There is therefore faith of unity, faith of union, and faith of communion."[67]

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[65] cf. Bell, "Baldwin of Ford and the Sacrament of the Altar," 224.
[66] "Christus est panis vitae credentibus in eum. In Christum credere, hoc est panem vitae manducare, hoc est Christum in se habere, hoc est etiam vitam aeternam habere. Hoc ostendere volens Christus dicit: *Qui credit in me habet vitam aeternam*. Et quid dixerit declarans addit: *Ego sum panis vitae*. . . . (*SA*, 258–260).
[67] "Per fidem autem justificamur, et participes amicitiae Dei efficimur; per fidem habitat Christus in cordibus nostris, et se nobis cognoscendum indulget et participandum. Verbum Patri coaeternum, unum cum Patre Deum verum cognoscunt angeli per speciem. Nos hoc cognoscentes per fidem, panem

This is a key passage for understanding the way in which the Trinitarian mystery shapes the Incarnation and the Eucharist. The great mysteries of the faith serve as the three intertwined ways in which the faithful receive Christ by faith. In a sense, they are the objects of faith by which Christ is consumed. Believing them is a form of eating Christ. Baldwin writes that faith in the unity of the Father and Son is linked to faith in the Trinity and also to faith in the union of divine and human natures in the one person of Christ. By the third object of faith, communion, we believe that the flesh of Christ is given to vivify and sanctify us and is communicated [*communicari*] to us for the remission of sins; what he desired to take from us for our sakes, he now desires that we take in food. Faith of communion is thereby linked to faith of the Passion, which is represented in the offering of Holy Communion.[68] The particular linked pairings that Baldwin describes between the objects of faith do not bear great significance for his theology. The point is rather that these mysteries of faith capture the essence of the truth about who Christ is, the first pair, and what he did, the second—and that the first pair provides the form for the second. Together, knowing Christ in the Father, in the flesh, and in the communion [*participatione*] of the altar are the *summa* of faith, the way by which the soul receives Christ and is nourished on him.[69] Baldwin concludes this passage with even more explicitly Eucharistic language for receiving Christ by faith. All the law and the prophets, all the mysteries of faith have one goal: knowing and loving Christ. The person who meditates on [*sentit de*] these sacraments of unity, union, and communion

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angelorum qui est in coelo pro modulo nostro manducamus. Cognoscentes per fidem Unigenitum *qui est in sinu Patris*, de coelo ad nos missum et propter nos incarnatum, panem vivum qui de coelo descendit manducamus. Cognoscentes per fidem carnem pro nobis acceptam, nobis in cibum datam, carnem Christi manducamus. Est ergo fides unitatis et fides unionis et fides communionis" (*SA*, 268).

[68] *SA,* 268–270.

[69] The fact that the Eucharist is a mystery paired with Christ's procession from the Father and the incarnation will be examined further below in section IX.

eats the bread of angels that is in heaven, the living bread come down from heaven, the flesh of Christ. By eating, he participates in Christ, and by participating in Christ, he eats.[70]

There is another way in which we eat Christ, Baldwin continues, when Christ is not received into our hearts as much by the faith and virtue of Holy Communion as by the eating and reception of his body and blood. In this sacramental reception, Christ is not only present by his divinity, but also by the presence of the same body that redeemed us.[71] One might expect that Baldwin would then explain the particular benefit of Christ's bodily presence, or the conditions required for efficacious sacramental reception. Instead, he ends his exegesis of "he who eats my flesh" and turns to "and drinks my blood," where he explains the doctrine of concomitance (the fact that the body and blood are always received together in the sacrament, regardless of the form in which they are received). He then returns to reception by faith, emphasizing that the one who has faith in the mysteries of Christ eats his flesh and drinks his blood with the mouth of faith.[72] In his exegesis of John 6, then, Baldwin sees sacramental reception as a way of eating Christ similar to faith. More than that, faith in Christ seems to be more important to him. It

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[70] "Summa autem fidei nostrae haec est: cognoscere Christum in Patre, Christum in carne, Christum in altaris participatione. Omnia autem fidei mysteria ad hanc summam colliguntur, et quaecumque scripta sunt in lege et psalmis et prophetis ad hunc finem diriguntur, ut Christus cognoscatur et agnitus diligatur. Quicumque igitur, justificatus per fidem, digne et pie et fideliter sentit de sacramento unitatis, sacramento unionis et sacramento communionis, hic panem angelorum qui in coelo est, hic panem vivum qui de coelo descendit, hic carnem Christi manducat, hic Christum manducando participat et participando manducat" (*SA*, 270).

[71] *SA*, 272.

[72] *SA*, 272–274. Baldwin most likely got this conception from other medieval thinkers: "Both Lanfranc and Alger stress the twofold reception of the Eucharist, *in ore* and *in corde*. One is as necessary as the other. If the spiritual reception is said to be more important than the corporal, this does not mean that the Christ we receive into our souls is different from the Christ of the Eucharistic communion; but only that the spiritual reception is always productive of grace, while the corporeal reception may fail to produce grace because of the evil disposition of the communicant" (Sheedy, *The Eucharistic Controversy of the Eleventh Century against the Background of Pre-Scholastic Theology*, 123). See also Alger, *De sacramentis PL* 180: 773 D, 774 A, 774 D; Lanfranc, *De corpore et sanguine Domini*, *PL* 150: 425 CD.

serves as the primary way by which we participate in Christ. Sacramental reception offers nothing particular or unique in addition to reception by faith, but serves as another mode by which the same union is deepened.

Baldwin's second extended treatment of Eucharistic reception appears in his exegesis of I Corinthians 10:1–4, in which Paul describes the events of Exodus as a participation in Christ, just like the Christian sacraments: "I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same supernatural food and all drank the same supernatural drink. For they drank from the supernatural Rock which followed them, and the Rock was Christ." Paul's claim that the Israelites ate the same spiritual food as Christians further supports Baldwin's understanding of faith as a reception of Christ. According to Baldwin's exegesis of Exodus, the Israelites had faith in the one God and in the savior who was to come. By this faith they truly received the sustenance necessary for spiritual and just lives.

Receiving this sustenance is what is understood by eating Christ, Baldwin continues, so the Israelites can be said truly to believe in Christ, to participate in him, and to eat him. However, this spiritual food is eaten in two ways, by the tasting of faith and the reception of the sacrament. All the just who have existed, in effect, have eaten this spiritual food because they have believed in Christ and, by their participation in him, have received the ability to live spiritually. Moreover, many have eaten the visible manna and died a spiritual death because they did not live spiritually, and many have not eaten

the visible manna and lived spiritually. Hence we can conclude that the latter ate Christ spiritually by faith.[73]

Baldwin sees the main difference between Israel and the Church not in how they receive Christ by faith, therefore, but in their sacramental reception of Christ. Earlier in *SA*, Baldwin notes that the sacraments of the Old Testament had a mystical signification, but the full truth was not yet present. Hence sacraments capable of fully and perfectly sanctifying had to be instituted, which would contain the truth formerly signified, now present. Thus, sanctification could be accomplished in the fullness of grace; the sign could be authenticated by the appearance of truth.[74] This appears difficult to reconcile with what Baldwin writes later in his exegesis of Paul. There he teaches that manna is a visible sign of the Eucharist and the presence of Christ that it contains, but manna does not contain Christ in the same way. The Eucharist has the power to give grace to those who receive it, which manna did not. However, Baldwin concludes, the Israelites who had the same faith as Christians, and believed in Christ, the spiritual manna, were justified by this faith and lived spiritually. They ate the same spiritual food as Christians. Christians, though, receive this food both from the heart and with the mouth in sacramental reception: "From the mouth, we have therefore received one thing, and they

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[73] "Fide ergo participatur, quod justis praestat ut spiritualiter et juste vivant. Christum enim manducare, hoc est spiritualis vitae sustentationem de ipso accipere; et hoc est in ipsum credere; et hoc est de ipso, sicut illi et in illo vivitur, vivere. Haec autem spiritualis esca duobus modis manducatur, gustu fidei et perceptione sacramenti. Unus modus coepit ab institutione novi sacrificii; alter mox ab ipso initio hujus nostrae fidei. Quicumque enim justi fuerunt, hanc spiritualem escam manducaverunt; quia in Christum crediderunt, et spiritualiter vixerunt, et ejus participatione ut spiritualiter viverent acceperunt. Visibile autem manna multi manducaverunt et mortui sunt, morte scilicet spirituali, quia spiritualiter non vixerunt; et multi visibile manna non manducaverunt, et spiritualiter vixerunt, et ideo spiritualem escam manducaverunt" (*SA*, 336–338).

[74] "Mysticam significationem sic habebant ut plena veritas nondum adesset. Oportuit ergo talia sacramenta institui quae plene et perfecte sanctificarent, et significationis veritatem praesentem in se haberent; ne sanctificationi deesset plenitudo gratiae vel significationi exhibitio veritatis. Mutatis igitur promissis et judiciis, praeceptis et sacramentis, oportuit legem mutari, novum que testamentum consummari in plenitudine gratiae et exhibitione veritatis, novis promissis et judiciis, novis praeceptis et sacramentis" (*SA*, 86). cf. Didier, "Le De sacramento altaris de Baudouin de Ford," 63.

another, but in the heart the same thing, we and the others."[75] As in his first treatment of Eucharistic reception, Baldwin sees the Eucharist as a way of participating in the life of Christ by receiving him. But, even if the institution of the sacraments is necessary, they remain secondary to faith. For both the Israelites and Christians, faith is the primary way of receiving Christ and living a spiritual life. Still, Christians live in the time when the fullness of grace has become present through the Incarnation and the Eucharist. The signs that had been prefigured have now become realities.

Baldwin's third examination of Eucharistic reception comes in his exegesis of I Corinthians 10:14–21: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of [Vg. *participamur*] the one bread." Here, Baldwin writes, Paul describes those who, by believing, eat and participate in Christ, and by participating in Christ remain part of the one bread and one body. The Eucharistic bread is truly a participation in the body of the Lord, for it effects what it indicates, which no other food can effect: the unity of the members of Christ's body. Of course, sacramental reception alone is not enough to be part of the body of Christ. Those who only receive Christ in their mouth without receiving him in faith are not members of Christ and do not participate in him. However,

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[75] "Manna autem visibile nec spiritualem gratiam plene in se continebat, nec gratiam vitae spiritualis conferebat; sed spiritualem escam, quae spiritualem vitam dare posset, significabat. Qui ergo visibile manna perceperunt nec crediderunt nec spiritualiter intellexerunt, et ideo spiritualiter non vixerunt, hi corporalem escam ad corporalem refectionem, non spiritualem, manducaverunt. Qui vero fidem quam nos eandem habuerunt, et spirituale manna, panem scilicet coeli et panem angelorum, id est Christum, de coelo venturum crediderunt, et hac fide justificati spiritualiter vixerunt; hi spiritualem escam quam nos eandem manducaverunt. Sed nos eandem escam spiritualem ore pariter sumimus et corde; illi vero visibile manna ore gustaverunt, invisibile autem et spirituale manna, id est Christum, corde crediderunt. Ore ergo aliud nos, aliud illi; corde vero idem nos et illi" (*SA*, 338). They also receive Christ into their hearts when preachers put the Word there, in memory and love (*SA*, 528, 556–558). This is the closest Baldwin gets to the idea of receiving Christ in the memory that so preoccupies William of Saint-Thierry. For more on the distinction between receiving with the mouth and with the heart, see note 71.

Baldwin continues, faith in this flesh taken from us and in this blood poured out for us—given to us as food—pours into us the love of Christ and the love of neighbor on Christ's account. This infused love unites us to and in Christ, so that what he himself asks for us in John 17:20–21 might be accomplished.[76] Here Baldwin again sees the Eucharist as effecting the unity and charity it symbolizes, but places the accent on faith. Believing is the primary way by which we receive Christ and become members of his body. The Eucharist accomplishes this as well, but it is simply another means of effecting and strengthening the unity that comes primarily through faith.[77]

## VIII. Obedience and Imitation

This view of Eucharistic reception could, on the one hand, suggest a low Eucharistic theology that devalues the importance of the sacrament and its benefit. However, another interpretation is possible. It may be that Baldwin sees the Eucharist as more broadly providing the structure for the Christian life. It is not so much that Eucharistic reception is secondary to spiritual reception by faith, in which faith is the primary mode of union with Christ and the Eucharist a kind of second mode. Rather, union with Christ has a Eucharistic shape, and faith, as the *sine qua non* for union with

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[76] "Ad hanc unitatem pertinent, qui de pane et de calice participant non solo ore sed pio corde, hoc est qui in Christo vivunt, et Christum habent inhabitantem per fidem in cordibus suis. Nam qui ex fide vivit, non sibi sed Christo et in Christo vivit, et credendo manducat et participat, et participando in Christo manet una cum multis, qui unus panis, unum corpus sumus. De hac enim participatione intelligendum est quod Apostolus dicit. Nam qui corpus Christi et calicem solo ore percipiunt, et Christum in corde non suscipiunt, ut de ipso et in ipso vivant, sicut a fide qua justus vivit extranei sunt, ita a societate justorum alieni sunt, non habentes cum illis cor unum et animam unam. . . . Efficit enim quod nullus alius cibus efficere potest, nisi solum corpus Domini. Quid est hoc? Videlicet quod *unus panis, unum corpus, multi sumus*. Fides quippe carnis assumptae de nobis, et sanguinis effusi pro nobis, et utriusque ad usum concessi nobis, amorem Christi et propter Christum amorem proximi nobis infudit. Qui infusus nos Christo et in Christo unit, ut compleatur quod ipse postulat pro nobis, dicens: *Non pro his rogo tantum, sed pro eis qui crediturus sunt per verbum eorum in me; ut omnes unum sint; sicut tu Pater in me, et ego in te; ut et ipsi in nobis unum sint*" (*SA*, 366–368).

[77] "Le Christ est en ses membres par la grâce de sa divinité et par la participation sensible au corps et au sang dans lesquels il est présent et nous communique sa vie. La foi et la réception du sacrement eucharistique sont deux façons également nécessaires de manger le Christ" (Leclercq, "Introduction," 39).

God, is Eucharistic. Baldwin's understanding of the Eucharist and obedience further support this hypothesis. For Baldwin sees obedience to the commands of Christ and imitation of him—in other words, the living of the Christian life—as profoundly connected to the Eucharist. It is by imitation of Christ that the union brought about through the Eucharist is realized more profoundly in our lives. And the Eucharist is itself the source of the graces necessary to live out that imitation.

As with faith, we must first understand Baldwin's thought on obedience more generally before examining its intersection with the Eucharist. Baldwin's sermon on the topic, which Bell dates to the time of his abbacy at Forde, focuses on the way in which obedience acts as a cure for our own selfish will, the greatest barrier between us and God. Baldwin cites Saul's refusal to slay the Amalekites, even though he was commanded to do so, as an example of pride. The prophet Samuel upbraids him for this, uttering the words that form the foundation of Baldwin's sermon: "Obedience is better than sacrifices" (1 Sam 15:22). Or rather, Baldwin goes on to say, obedience is the essential component that renders our spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God. Baldwin then goes on to show how obedience is the constant companion of love directed toward God:

> It always assists it—it consists of it, in fact—and it carries out with devotion and despatch [sic] not only all the commandments of God, but even his counsels. . . . Love takes the words which are taken from the mouth of God, sets them on the shoulders of obedience, and, by cooperating with [obedience] and joining with it in upholding part of the burden, the power of love makes whatever burden there is not only light, but even pleasant and sweet. . . . There is no way that any can obey if they do not love, and if they refuse to obey, they do not yet know how to love."[78]

[78] "Obedientia enim ipsa est perpetua comes excellentis illius caritatis que est ad Deum: semper ei assistens, immo in ea consistens, et omnia non solum mandata sed etiam consilia Dei deuote et alacriter exequens. . . . Caritas sermones excipit ab ore Dei exceptos, in humeros obedientie imponit, cooperans et ipsa, et partem oneris cum ea sustinens: immo quicquid est oneris non solum leue, sed etiam iocundum et suaue per uirtutem dilectionis efficiens. . . . Nam nullatenus potest obedire quis si non diligat; nec adhuc

Furthermore, the love of God not only makes obedience easier, but possible at all. Christ came to teach this obedience and to fulfill it so that, in growing in obedience and receiving the merits of his fulfillment, we might be joined to the Father through him.[79]

Baldwin links obedience to the Eucharist in a variety of ways. First, he uses Eucharistic imagery to characterize obedience as the new wine of Christ. In his exegesis of Matthew's institution narrative, he writes that the perfect obedience brought about by the new covenant is the new wine of the new law that Jesus drinks with his disciples. This obedience even unto death is the perfect accomplishment of the law and perfect charity. Whoever takes his joy in this obedience drinks with Jesus, drinks the spiced wine of his chalice, the sweet wine of his pomegranates (cf. Song 8:2).[80] Then, in his reading of John 15:1, Baldwin offers multiple interpretations of Christ's claim, "I am the vine and you are the branches." In the third, taking the perspective of the grace of faith and charity, he sees the Church of the just ones as the vine. The wine of this vine is obedience to the law and the gospel. But while obedience to the law demanded the sacrifice of a lamb, the new obedience demands the sacrifice of oneself, which is the new wine Christ calls unfit for old wineskins (Matt 9:17).[81]

Second, Baldwin repeatedly describes acts of obedience in imitation of Christ as Eucharistic acts which connect symbolically to the celebration of the Mass. He writes that in I Corinthians, Paul explains that when Christ said, "do this in memory of me," *memory* means the proclamation of the death of the Lord, which the Church must always repeat

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scit diligere, si obedire detrectat." (*Sermo* 7.28–29; Baldwin of Ford, "The Sermons on Obedience and the Cross by Baldwin of Forde," 28).
[79] Ibid., 67.
[80] *SA*, 196–200.
[81] *SA*, 200.

until Christ's return. A person makes this commemoration and proclamation by believing, by confessing, and by representing—that is by sacrificing, and by eating and drinking, and imitating his passion.[82] In his commentary on Luke's use of the same words, Baldwin says that with these words Christ charges us to offer him, to eat him, and to imitate him. It is as if he were to say: "You yourselves offer what I offer, eat what I give, do what I do. Suffer for me, as I suffer for you. Give your body and your blood one for another, give your lives one for another, as I give you my body and my blood, and I give my life for you."[83] Baldwin also sees the Eucharistic change of wine into the blood of Christ as a sign of the change in ourselves, when justice delights us so much that we decide to resist injustice to the point of blood.[84]

There are more examples, too. In I Corinthians 10:3–4, Paul writes that "all ate the same supernatural food and all drank the same supernatural drink. For they drank from the supernatural Rock which followed them, and the Rock was Christ." Baldwin comments that we can see the chalice of Christ in this spiritual drink, and the chalice can be spoken of in three ways: as the blood of Christ, shed for us and which we drink from the altar; the passion of Christ, which we are obliged to suffer with him; or the imitation of the passion of Christ, by which we give to the one who suffered for us in return for what he has given us. In keeping with his understanding of the Old Testament, Baldwin

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[82] "Quia Dominus dixerat, hoc facite in meam commemorationem, exponit Apostolus quae sit commemoratio. Haec est scilicet annuntiatio mortis Christi, jugiter in praesenti Ecclesia frequentanda, et usque in adventum Christi non cessatura. Haec autem commemoratio vel annuntiatio mortis Christi fit credendo, confitendo, repraesentando id est sacrificando, et manducando et bibendo, et imitando" (*SA*, 406).

[83] "*Hoc*, inquit, *facite in meam commemorationem*. His verbis nos Christus instituit ad se offerendum, ad se manducandum, ad se imitandum; quasi diceret: Offerte vos quod ego offero; manducate quod ego do; denique facite quod ego facio. Sustinete pro me, sicut et ego pro vobis sustineo. Corpus vestrum et sanguinem vestrum pro invicem date, et animas vestras pro invicem ponite, sicut ego vobis corpus et sanguinem meum do et pro vobis animam meam pono" (*SA*, 226).

[84] "Vinum ergo in sanguinem convertitur cum justitia delectat, et in tantum delectat ut contra injustitiam usque ad sanguinem resistere deliberatum sit" (*SA*, 218).

goes on to say that those who drink this spiritual drink are not only those who receive the sacrament, but all the just who have faith in the passion of Christ from the ancient of days, and live spiritually in this faith, mortifying the flesh with its vices and desires, and bearing a likeness of Christ's passion in the suffering of their tribulations.[85]

Baldwin's exegesis of the institution of Passover in Exodus 12:1–11 contains numerous examples of the connection between imitation of Christ and the Eucharist. Building on Moses' instruction to put blood on the doorposts and lintel of the house, Baldwin comments that the doorposts of our houses are firmness of heart and body in fortitude and patience, and the lintel is pious intention. We put the blood of the lamb on these two doorposts when we imitate the passion of Christ and on the lintel when we direct our intention toward the same imitation.[86] And in another sense, he continues, we put the blood of the lamb on our two doorposts and on the lintel when we receive the blood of Christ in the mouth of the body and of the heart, and when we place our hope not in our own power, but the blood of the lamb.[87] Likewise, what one loves ardently is turned and re-turned again in the heart by continual meditation, and it is as if it were roasted in the fire of love. Therefore, we eat the flesh of the lamb roasted with fire when

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[85] "Potest etiam spiritualis potus pro calice Christi accipi. Calix autem Christi tribus modis dicitur: vel sanguis ipse Christi, qui pro nobis fusus est, quem et nos bibimus in altari; vel passio Christi, quae nos ad compatiendum obligavit; vel imitatio passionis Christi, qua vicissitudinem, pro modulo nostro, et gratiarum actionem pro nobis passo compatiendi referimus. Spiritualem itaque potum biberunt, non solum qui haustu dominici sanguinis in ipsius sacramenti perceptione potati sunt; sed et omnes justi qui a diebus antiquis fidem passionis Christi habuerunt, et in ea fide spiritualiter vixerunt, carnem suam cum vitiis et concupiscentiis mortificantes, et similitudinem passionis Christi in patientia tribulationum suarum praeferentes. Non est enim justus qui non patitur" (*SA*, 342–344).

[86] *SA*, 426–428.

[87] "Alio etiam modo sanguinem agni super utrumque postem et in superliminari ponimus, quando sanguinem Christi ore corporis et cordis sumimus, et totam spem nostram, quae sursum est, non in virtute nostra ponimus, sed sanguine hujus Agni signamus. . . . Sanguinem itaque agni super utrumque postem ponimus, cum corpus et animam dominici sanguinis perceptione communimus. In superliminari sanguinem ponimus, cum hujus sanguinis virtute salvari credimus, qui justitiae nostrae fiduciam non habemus" (*SA*, 430).

we gather avidly and receive into ourselves the example of the passion of Christ, by a love determined to imitate him.[88]

Baldwin also connects worthy, efficacious reception of the Eucharist to imitation of Christ. First, he insists that those who do not live Christ-like lives will not benefit from Christ's real presence in the Eucharist. In his tractate on the Eucharist, Baldwin writes: "This sacrifice which we are now discussing is not only a sacrament which sanctifies us, but it contains in itself an example which we should imitate. It is a sacrament through the mystery of faith and an example of the way we should live. As a sacrament [it brings about] the humbling of our will, and the sacrament benefits those who imitate the example. Those who do not imitate the example, the sacrament does not benefit."[89] He goes on to say that those who annul the sacrament in themselves are guilty of the death of Christ, and insult the entire Trinity.[90] Here Baldwin resembles many other medieval authors who taught that "the sacrament is only productive if it results in a union of charity and love among the members of the Mystical Body of Christ."[91] As he puts it in Tractate III, "The charity of God and obedience are bound each to each with an unbreakable bond and in no way separated from each other."[92] Eucharistic union and the union of living charity through obedient imitation of Christ must go together.

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[88] "Potest etiam ignis referri ad caritatem, qua nos Christum diligere debemus, sine qua ad carnes agni nemo dignus accedit. Propterea jubemur carnes assas igni comedere et recte. Nam quod ardenter amatur, jugi meditatione in corde versatur et calore amoris quasi in corde assatur. Assum ergo comeditur, cum exemplum passionis Christi per amorem imitationis avide glutitur et intra nos recipitur" (*SA*, 432). Baldwin further develops the metaphor on pp. 434–436.

[89] "Sacrificium hoc de quo nunc agitur, non solum sacramentum est ad sanctificationem, sed exemplum in se continet ad imitationem. Sacramentum per mysterium fidei; exemplum ad formam uiuendi. Sacramentum ad humilitatem rationis; exemplum ad humilitatem uoluntatis. Illis quidem prodest sacramentum, qui imitantur exemplum. Qui non imitantur exemplum, nec illis prodest sacramentum" (*Sermo* 4.40).

[90] *Sermo* 4.54–55.

[91] Sheedy, *The Eucharistic Controversy of the Eleventh Century*, 123.

[92] "Caritas autem Dei et obedientia indiuiduo nexu sese complectuntur, et ab inuicem non disiunguntur.

Baldwin intends this as a moral exhortation to those who receive, but also argues that the Eucharist gives the grace that makes this imitation possible. In his exegesis of Luke's institution narrative, he focuses on Luke's account of the words of institution: "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood" (Luke 22:20). The key to understanding these words is that the new covenant is a new law, which contains a new pact and a new promise; it imposes a new obedience to the point of death and promises a new heritage. By faith in this new chalice and by receiving it worthily, we are helped and strengthened to accomplish this obedience and to obtain our promised inheritance: The cause, efficacious principle [*virtus*], and *ratio* to accomplish what the new covenant commands and obtain what it promises are found in Christ and, specifically, in the chalice (in the first sense of that image). If there is any grace or virtue—any faith, hope, or charity—in a person, Baldwin concludes, it all has come from the Eucharistic blood of Christ.[93]

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Nam quod caritas sine obedientia non sit, Dominus ostendit, dicens: *Si quis diligit me, sermonem meum seruabit*: hoc est, precepta mea custodiet, et in custodiendis illis michi obediet. Ostendit quoque obedientiam sine caritate non esse, cum dicit: *Qui non diligit me, sermones meos non seruat*. Si ergo qui diligit obedit, et qui non diligit non obedit, consequens est ut nec sit caritas sine obedientia, nec sine caritate sit obedientia" (*Sermo* 9.40).

[93] "Ex his exemplis colligi potest qua ratione digne possit intelligi quod a Domino dictum est: *Hic est calix novum testamentum*. Novum sane testamentum nova lex est, continens novum pactum novum que promissum. Novam enim oboedientiam imponit et novam hereditatem repromittit. Haec est oboedientia usque ad mortem: illa est vita aeterna post mortem. Fide autem hujus calicis digna que perceptione adjuvamur et confirmamur ad hanc oboedientiam implendam et hanc promissionem obtinendam; et utriusque rei causa et virtus in hoc calice constituta est, ut vere dictum sit: *Hic est calix novum testamentum*. . . . *Hic est*, inquit, *calix novum testamentum*; ac si diceret: Hic constituta est causa et virtus et ratio implendi quae in novo testamento praecepta sunt, et obtinendi quae promissa sunt. Hic est finis et consummatio legis; hic est plenitudo gratiae et veritatis; hic est *mysterium fidei*, firmamentum spei, testimonium dilectionis meae, exemplum oboedientiae vestrae, *pignus hereditatis* vestrae, sacramentum innovationis vestrae, confirmatio religionis vestrae. Novum enim testamentum est in meo sanguine confirmatum, nullo que ritu deinceps mutandum, ut sit legitimum sempiternum. Hic calix amatorium poculum est, quod nobis Christus confecit arte quam ipse novit. . . . Si qua est fides ergo nostra, si qua spes, si qua caritas, si qua patientia, si qua humilitas, si quid gratiae, si quid virtutis, si quid laudis coram Deo in nobis est, totum de hoc calice propinatur. Hinc enim manat omnis gratiarum divisio; huc ergo redeat omnis gratiarum actio" (*SA*, 230–236). Not only that, the relationship between Christ and the soul forged in the Eucharist allows Christ to live and work through it; as Paul says, "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 4:20; see also *Sermo* 6.6).

In summary, as Jean Leclercq puts it, the imitation of Jesus Christ by the practice of the virtues has its source in the Eucharist and must therefore also be its consequence. Union with Christ in the Eucharist is not only a matter of knowing what he is and what he did for us, but a commitment to imitate him, to obey his Father, and even to the point of death if necessary, to drink with the Savior the chalice of renouncing one's own will and to be glad in this obedience.[94]

## IX. The Fruit of the Eucharist, Eschatological and Ecclesial

It is therefore correct to note, as Gary Macy does, that Baldwin sees spiritual reception of the Eucharist as connected to living a life of faith and love and imitating the sufferings of Christ, and that this spiritual reception can take place apart from sacramental reception.[95] But Baldwin sees imitation of Christ as connected to sacramental reception. Biffi summarizes it in these terms: the imitation of Christ is the fulfillment of the plan or pattern of the spiritual life according to the passion of Christ, which takes place through the mediation of the Eucharist.[96] Obedience in imitation of Christ is empowered by the gifts of grace that Christians receive from the Holy Spirit through the Sacrament. Different gifts are given to different people depending on their need.[97] Baldwin addresses this in his exegesis of I Corinthians 10:16–17, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we

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[94] "L'imitation de Jésus-Christ par la pratique des virtus a sa source dans l'Eucharistie; elle doit en être en même temps comme la consequence. . . . s'unir au Christ n'est pas seulement connaître ce qu'il est, ce qu'il a fait pour nous, c'est s'engager à l'imiter, c'est déjà commencer à le faire: obéir à son Père, et jusqu'à la mort s'il le faut, boire avec le Sauveur le calice du renoncement à la volonté proper et se réjouir de cette obeisance" (Leclercq, "Introduction," 41).
[95] Macy, *The Theologies of the Eucharist*, 99.
[96] Inos Biffi, *Cristo Desiderio Del Monastico: Saggi Di Teologia Monastica* (Milano: Jaca Book, 1998), 58.
[97] *SA*, 154.

who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." Participation is an appropriate term for the fraction of bread in the Eucharist, Baldwin writes, because everyone receives a part. All receive equally because all receive a piece, but all do not receive in the same way. The same grace acts in all who receive the sacrament worthily, but it acts efficaciously in different ways.[98]

Likewise, Baldwin bases his final exegesis of manna on Wisdom 16:20–21: "Instead of these things you gave your people the food of angels, and without their toil you supplied them from heaven with bread ready to eat, providing every pleasure and suited to every taste. For your sustenance manifested your sweetness toward your children; and the bread, ministering to the desire of the one who took it, was changed to suit every one's liking." Jesus is this manna, he comments, and in him all find a different savor, according to their needs. Christ will not have the same savor for the beginner as for the more experienced in faith, nor for the more active as for the more contemplative.[99] Each receives and delights in the grace most proper to his state in life.

The graces that believers receive in the Eucharist have as their fruit communion with God in beatitude and in the Church on earth. Baldwin's treatment of the former is less extensive than the latter. As with his writing on obedience, he uses imagery of food and drink to describe how the Eucharist is a foretaste of beatitude. Since the food of Christ is to do the will of the Father (John 4:34), the food of Christ is the salvation of the

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[98] *SA*, 360.

[99] "Hoc cuique sapit, secundum quod eligit et diligit. Sunt diversi ordines et mores justorum, diversae professiones et conversationes, diversa vota et studia; et his omnibus se indulget benignitas Christi, qui suavis est universis, omnibus se impertiens et singulis sui saporis condimenta dispertiens. Aliter enim sapit poenitenti et incipienti, aliter proficienti, aliter pervenienti, aliter in vita activa, aliter in contemplativa, aliter utenti hoc mundo, aliter non utenti, aliter coelibi, aliter conjugato, aliter abstinenti qui sapit diem inter diem, aliter ei qui sapit omnem diem. Dulce sapit manna cum necessitates relevat, cum infirmitates curat, cum tentationes mitigat, cum conatus adjuvat et spem confortat" (*SA*, 566).

world, for which he hungers and thirsts.[100] Once that salvation is accomplished in the resurrection, he drinks the new wine of happiness and establishes our right to share the same wine as well.[101] The blood of Christ obtains for us the joy of eternal salvation, which is the wine of happiness he invites us to share. Therefore wine, which Baldwin calls the first chalice, signifies salvation because it gladdens the heart of man. The second Eucharistic chalice of Christ's blood brings that salvation about. The joy of eternal salvation is thus what the first chalice signifies and what the second chalice realizes, the end and fruit of them both.[102]

Baldwin also conceives of the Eucharist as a pledge of future glory that even now serves as a foretaste of that glory. Because we possess Christ, we already possess the excellent grace that Christ promises and guards in us. This grace serves as a deposit that he will deliver at the eschaton.[103] As David Bell puts it, "For Baldwin, too, the Eucharist sustains us in our journey to the next world and guarantees our safe arrival. It is . . . a foretaste (*praelibatio*) which prepares us for the full meal of paradise."[104] Baldwin further argues that of the various sacraments, the Eucharist is given specifically to prepare its recipients for beatitude. He teaches that the fruit of the promises made to Abraham (Gal 3:16) is the grace given in baptism and the Eucharist. In baptism, the believer puts on Christ and finds remission of sins. In the Eucharist, he eats him and finds

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[100] *SA*, 178.
[101] *SA*, 185.
[102] "Secundum rationem praemissorum quaerenti de quo genimine Christus loquatur, de vino scilicet primi calicis an secundi, responderi potest locutionem de genimine figurari, ut quod dictum est intelligatur de alterius significato, et de alterius effectu, et de utriusque fine. Sanguis enim Christi operatur nobis gaudium aeternae salutis, quod est vinum laetitiae, quod etiam in vino prioris calicis significatur quadam ratione similitudinis, quia vinum laetificat cor hominis. Gaudium ergo aeternae salutis alterius calicis significatum est, et alterius effectus, utriusque autem finis et utriusque fructus" (*SA*, 187).
[103] *SA*, 260. See also pp. 511–513 for an allegory of the same based on reserving and eating manna in Exodus 16:22.
[104] Bell, "Baldwin of Ford and the Sacrament of the Altar," 229.

a preparation for eternal life. Baptism sanctifies us; once we are sanctified, the Eucharist beatifies us.[105] Leclercq observes that for Baldwin, Christ instituted the Last Supper not for the present life but in view of eternal life, which the present life begins. Since the Last Supper is an intermediary before the supper of eternity, the Eucharist is the sacrament of eternal life.[106]

Baldwin also sees transubstantiation as the figure and efficient cause of human nature's passage from the state of grace to that of glory. When considering the mystical sense of the Eucharistic change of bread and wine, he writes that the whole Church is the body of Christ and is also one bread with many grains. Those who are in the Church and also in the body on earth will be changed into a more glorious nature. This change can be compared with transubstantiation in degree, but not in kind: It is not a substantial change, but its magnitude is such that it resembles one. Likewise, the change of wine into Christ's blood signifies the perfection of a moral good in a person's life.[107]

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[105] "Fructus promissionum gratia est quae datur in baptismo, item gratia quae datur in dominici corporis et sanguinis sacramento. Ibi peccatorum remissio: hic ad capessendam vitam aeternam salutaris praeparatio. Ibi Christus induitur: hic manducatur. Hi sunt primitivi fructus interim percipiendi; donec evacuetur quod ex parte est, et veniat quod perfectum est, ut videamus Deum deorum in Sion. Christus autem, ipse promissus et promissor, tandem veniens, sicut ante una cum Patre ipse promiserat, duo sacramenta, in aqua scilicet baptismi et mysterio corporis sui, instituit; quibus nos sanctificaret ut sanctificatos beatificaret" (*SA*, 322–324).

[106] "L'Eucharistie est donc le sacrement de la vie immortelle. L'espérance chrétienne qui s'y alimente porte avant tout sur la vie bienheureuse, et elle engendre la conviction ferme que la vie présente n'est qu'un état intermédiaire et transitoire. La vie mortelle est l'attente d'une autre vie, et la transsubstantiation est la figure et la cause efficace d'une autre transformation : la nôtre, c'est-à-dire de notre nature passant de l'état de grâce à la gloire (Leclercq, "Introduction," 17).

[107] "Substantialis mutatio veri panis in verum corpus Christi mutationem mortalis vitae in immortalem vitam sic quodammodo operatur et sic significat, ut tamen ex aliqua parte dissimilis sit et ex aliqua parte similis. Nam, ut ait Apostolus: *Unus panis unum corpus multi sumus, omnes qui de uno pane et de uno calice participamur.* Tota enim Ecclesia in universa electorum multitudine unus panis est, et ipsa tota corpus Christi est. Et quicumque in corpore et de corpore Ecclesiae sumus, unus panis sumus, et membra Christi sumus, et per quamdam mutationem quasi aliud erimus quam nunc sumus, quia *nondum apparuit quid erimus*. Mutatio tamen, quae circa nos futura est, naturae quidem erit in alteram gloriam, sed non in alteram naturam. Tanta tamen et talis erit mutatio, ut illi substantiali mutationi ex aliqua parte possit assimilari. . . . . Virtus itaque hujus mysticae mutationis consummatio est beatae vitae. Sed quoniam ad consummationem beatae vitae rectissime pervenitur per consummationem justitiae, id est bonae vitae, ipsa

We see here how the fruit of the Eucharist is not only grace working in an individual Christian to unite him to God in this life and the next, but also to make him a member of the body of Christ on earth, the Church. Union with God takes place in the context of union with the Church. Baldwin sees ecclesial unity, like that of all Christian communities, as modeled on the communion of the Trinity. Hence David Bell writes, "The unity of any community, therefore, whether angelic, human, Christian, or monastic, is what it is by imitation of the unity of the Trinity, and the characteristics of the Trinitarian unity are thus the ideal characteristics of any community."[108] The force uniting all of these communities is the same as that which unites the persons of the Trinity: the self-giving, self-emptying charity that is the Holy Spirit.[109]

In his tractate on the common life, Baldwin expands on this. God infuses Christians with this charity to reveal the divine nature to them and to draw them into a God-like union with each other and with God. Although this gift may come through one divine operation, it is especially associated with the Holy Spirit. Building on Paul's greeting in Ephesians 4:3, Baldwin writes that the charity of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit bring unity of spirit and communion. While Baldwin distinguishes between them for the sake of fidelity to Paul's phrasing, it is clear that these pairs are synonymous, for he goes on to say that the charity of God is necessary for the common life.[110] Later in the sermon he explicitly says that "If we love God with one heart and one soul in accordance with the purity of our profession, there is no doubt that the charity of

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quoque consummatio bonae vitae per conversionem vini in sanguinem nobis suggeritur, et si advertere delectat salubriter intimatur" (*SA*, 214–216).

[108] Bell, "Heaven on Earth," 4. See also Hallet, "La communion des personnes," 405–408.

[109] This idea of the Holy Spirit as communion and charity lies at the heart of Baldwin's theology and shows his deep dependence on Augustine, in particular Augustine's pneumatology (Bell, "Heaven on Earth," 5). For more on the sources of Baldwin's understanding of communion, see Ibid., 11.

[110] *Sermo* 15.51.

God will be poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit and that the one Spirit of God will animate all of us as if we were one body. None of us then will live for himself, but for God, and all of us together will live in unity of spirit through the one spirit that dwells in us."[111] We see here that common orthodox faith is a requirement for the indwelling of the Spirit and the gift of charity. In a passage immediately following, Baldwin writes that works of charity are also necessary, the way by which we preserve the charity of God in ourselves.[112] This communion is also present among those who participate in the sacraments rightly and in unity with the Church, but schismatics and those who refuse the yoke of canonical obedience and humility annul the power or fruit [*virtus*] of the sacraments in their lives.[113]

In *De sacramento altaris*, Baldwin draws more connections between the common life, charity, and the Eucharist. We see this when Baldwin considers the reasons why the Eucharist is called holy communion. First, it is a *communicatio*, because it is given and received in common. Second, the blood in the chalice realizes in us the charity by which all things become common, and what belongs to each becomes common to all (cf. I Cor 10:16).[114] The Eucharist, then, serves as the vehicle for the charity that binds the Church

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[111] "Si unanimiter et concorditer secundum professionis nostre puritatem Deum diligimus, procul dubio caritas Dei per Spiritum sanctum diffunditur in cordibus nostris, unus que Spiritus Dei quasi unum corpus omnes nos uiuificat, ut nemo nostrum sibi uiuat, sed Deo, utque omnes nos simul, per unum spiritum qui habitat in nobis, in unitate spiritus uiuamus" (*Sermo* 15.61). See also 15.71.

[112] *Sermo* 15.66.

[113] "Fidem enim habent, et qui opera digna fidei reuerentia non habent; et sacramentis ecclesie participant, qui uirtutem sacramentorum indignis moribus in sese euacuant. Proinde qui in fidei confessione sacramentis communicant, alii ab aliis, sicut boni a malis, ab inuicem diuisi sunt. In his numerari possunt scismatici, qui canonice obedientie iugum detrectant, ficti que fratres, qui humilitatem christiane professionis magis simulant quam seruant. Omnium autem iustorum, qui in fide et obedientia fidei congrua ecclesiasticis sacramentis participant, una est peculiaris specialis que communio, cui non communicat alienus" (*Sermo* 15.35–36).

[114] "Hac auctoritate Apostoli potus iste communionis nomen habere potest, ut sacra communio dicatur. Communicatio enim intelligi potest, quia in commune datur vel accipitur, communio vero quia in commune habetur. Alia etiam ratione potest dici communio. Hic enim sanguis caritatem operatur in nobis, per quam omnia communia fiunt, et quae propria sunt singulorum communia sunt omnium" (*SA*, 358).

together. We are made one body by the charity by which Christ loves the Church and we the Church love Christ and each other.[115] That charity is the gift of the Spirit, which we receive from Christ when we receive him in the Eucharist. The Eucharist is, as Leclercq puts it, "*un exemple efficace*" that signifies and makes present the virtues of Christ, especially his charity. It shows what we are to do to imitate Christ's love and gives the charity—the Spirit—needed to do that.[116] When this happens, Christ is active and receptive through us, the members of his body. He gives the gifts necessary to live the Christian life and receives them back in us, accepting and offering what we receive and offer as his own as part of incorporating us into his self-offering in thanksgiving to the Father—a union that is Eucharistic in the literal sense of the word.[117]

## X. The Trinitiarian Dimensions of the Eucharist

Baldwin describes the way in which the Spirit unites believers to Christ in charity through the Eucharist in his tractate on common life. The common life, Baldwin writes, is

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[115] *SA*, 362–364. Baldwin consistently uses *diligo* as the verb to love for both divine and human love, while the love by which God loves the Church and the Church loves God is *caritas*: "Unum corpus sumus per caritatem, qua Christus diligitur sicut Sponsus, qui et Ecclesiam diligit sicut corpus suum. . . . Recte ergo per unitatem corporis significata est unitas Christi et Ecclesiae, quam operatur caritas Christi qua ab Ecclesia diligitur, diligens ipse prior ut a dilecta diligatur" (364). In one case, he distinguishes between the love by which God loves us, the love by which we love God, and the love by which we love our neighbors: "Est autem dilectio qua a Deo diligimur; et est dilectio qua Deum diligimus. In utraque manemus si Christum diligere perseveramus. Custodit enim Dominus omnes diligentes se. Est quaedam dilectio qua fratres et proximos nostros in Christo diligimus sicut membra Christi et corporis ejus quod est Ecclesia" (276). In this case, however, the love is always *dilectio*, and the distinctions do not bear the same theological significance as they would for later medieval authors. The emphasis rests more on the one Spirit of charity uniting the whole body, whom we receive in the Eucharist and whereby we remain in Christ's love (cf. John 6:56).

[116] Leclercq, "Introduction," 39.

[117] "Omnis gratiarum actio causam respicit beneficii. Sed licet prius sit gratiam conferre quam referre, nonnumquam tamen pro certitudine rei futurae gratiarum actione beneficium praevenitur. Sciens ergo Christus quanta sit gratia hujus ineffabilis sacramenti, quanta que bona hinc ab ipso sint nobis conferenda, sciens quoque quanta mala mox ab ipso pro nobis sint perferenda, pro utraque causa gratias Patri agit, videlicet pro bonis praestandis et pro malis tolerandis. Utraque enim nobis prosunt. In tantum nos amat Jesus, ut pro nostris bonis gratias agat tamquam pro suis. Et bona utique nostra non sunt nisi ejus dona. Ipse tamen, qui dona tribuit, gratias agit, sicut solet qui accipit; reputat enim sibi dari et a se gratias deberi, cum nobis praestatur. Instar enim muneris habet accepisse, cum dederit. Hoc autem facit intima illa caritas, per quam nos sibi jungit ut membra, ut accipiat in nobis quicquid dederit nobis" (*SA*, 152).

not only the pattern of the life of angels handed on to the Apostles and thereby to us; it flows out of the Fount of life itself.[118] The description of the common life of God that follows is the closest Baldwin comes to an exposition of the relations of the Trinitarian persons. God is one undifferentiated life shared by three persons. This begins with the Father sharing his life with the Son: "So great is the charity of the Father that the life he has in himself he also gave to the Son to have in himself, so that the Son, who is the equal of the father and who shares in common the glory of the Father in all the fullness of eternal honor and indivisible power, might be one life with the Father."[119] Everything that the Son is or has substantially, he receives from the Father. The life that the Father and Son share is, itself, the Holy Spirit, who is charity and the bond and communion of both. Their love is one in honor, power, and operation, while each person is distinguished by the relations proper to him.[120]

The Father and Son always bestow the Holy Spirit on the Church through the Son. Baldwin uses two symbols from the Old Testament to describe this dynamic: The Holy Spirit is the oil of anointing poured over the head of Aaron the high priest, who symbolizes Christ, and running down the collar of his robe, which is the Church.[121] Christ is also the spiritual rock mentioned in I Corinthians 10:4, and the spiritual drink is the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from Christ as the love and mutual union of the Father and

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[118] *Sermo* 15.4.

[119] "Tanta est autem caritas Patris, ut uitam quam habet in semetipso, hanc et Filio daret habere in semetipso, ut una uita sit cum Patre Filius coequalis Patri, et consors paterne glorie in omni plenitudine eterni honoris et indiuidue potestatis" (*Sermo* 15.18). See also 15.20.

[120] "Vnus est amor eorum, et honor indiuiduus; una uirtus et indiuidua operatio; tanta que communio, ut Filius dicat ad Patrem: Et mea omnia tua sunt; et tua mea sunt" (*Sermo* 15.21). "In illa etiam summa et indiuidua Trinitate est una unitas, una eternitas, una uirtus, una uita, una essentia, tribus personis communis; proprietate uero persona a persona discernitur, quibus est una beatitudo communis. Nec commune bonum impedit, quod solus Pater Pater est: Pater enim non sibi Pater est, sed Filio, quem de sua substantia genuit, et gignendo dedit ei uitam habere in semetipso" (*Sermo* 15.70).

[121] *SA*, 130 and n.3. Baldwin takes this image from Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 132, 7–9 (*CCSL* 40, 1931–1933).

Son and is given by Christ to those who believe in him, according to the distribution of diverse graces.[122] The metaphor of spiritual drink is apt, for Christ gives the gift of the Spirit through the Eucharist. And for Baldwin, as for William and Isaac, the Spirit's procession from the Father through the Son determines the way in which the Spirit is given to the Church to bring about her union with God.

While he does examine how the relations of the Trinity form the economy of salvation and the Eucharist with respect to the Spirit, Baldwin treats the role of the Son in both much more extensively. In his examination of the connection between the Incarnation and the Eucharist, as well as the way in which the Son's generation from the Father forms them, we see the Trinitarian dimensions of the Eucharist most clearly in Baldwin's work. In his tractate on the Eucharist, Baldwin describes how after the consecration of bread and wine Christ is hidden under their visible form, attributing to him the words of Isaiah 45:15: "Truly, you are a God who hides yourself, O God of Israel, the Savior." Baldwin comments: "Christ was hidden from the beginning in the bosom of the Father; afterwards, he was hidden in the form of a servant which he assumed; and now he is hidden in the sacrament which he instituted. Faith finds him hidden in the bosom of the Father; no less does faith find him hidden in man; and it is faith which finds him hidden in the sacrament."[123]

Likewise, as mentioned above, Baldwin argues that Christ is consumed by faith in the unity of Father and the Son, the union of the human and divine natures in the Son's incarnation, and the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Knowing Christ in the

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[122] *SA*, 340–342; *Sermo* 21.15.

[123] "Absconditus fuit Christus ab initio in sinu Patris. Absconditus fuit postmodum in forma serui quam assumpsit. Absconditus est et nunc in sacramento quod ipse instituit. Absconditum in sinu Patris fides inuenit. Absconditum quoque in homine inter homines fides nichilominus inuenit. Inuenit et ipsa fides in sacramento absconditum" (*Sermo* 4.4).

Father, the flesh, and the communion of the altar all share the end of making us know and love him.[124] The Eucharist is not a second-tier Christian truth, but one of the great mysteries of the faith along with the Incarnation and the Trinity. As Jean Leclercq comments, Baldwin sees the believer as participating in the grace of the whole economy of salvation in the Eucharist, which is itself a real participation in the life and work of the incarnate Word, who unites believers to the Father (and to each other) in the Spirit.[125] That life, of course, is shaped according to the relations of the Trinity, which thereby provide the framework for the rest of the economy of salvation as a whole.

Baldwin demonstrates this in the way in which he connects the Incarnation to the Eucharist. In his exegesis of Matthew's institution narrative, he writes that Christ's taking of the bread can be understood as a sign of his taking of human nature:

> Christ took what nourishes us, when he united himself to man by the mystery of the incarnation. He changed the hay of our flesh into wheat, to nourish us with wheat flour (Ps 80:17 and Deut 32:14). For us he became the grain of wheat that must be sown in a good heart, and multiply abundantly there. He also became bread that strengthens the heart of man for us. Bread in the words of his doctrine, bread in the examples of his life, bread in every gift of spiritual grace, bread in all that comes to console our misery, bread that sustains our life and comforts us in the pains of our pilgrimage so that, fortified by him, we arrive at Horeb, the mountain of God.[126]

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[124] *SA*, 268–270, especially: "Summa autem fidei nostrae haec est: cognoscere Christum in Patre, Christum in carne, Christum in altaris participatione. Omnia autem fidei mysteria ad hanc summam colliguntur, et quaecumque scripta sunt in lege et psalmis et prophetis ad hunc finem diriguntur, ut Christus cognoscatur et agnitus diligatur" (270). See also Leclercq, "Introduction," 40.

[125] "La charité envers les frères et la charité envers Dieu se conditionnent donc: dans l'un et l'autre cas, il s'agit de nous accorder à ce que le Christ fait en nous; en s'unissant à nous, il nous réunit à son Père dans l'unité du Saint-Esprit et nous réconcilie avec notre prochain. La foi requise pour recevoir l'Eucharistie comporte donc ses trois aspects complémentaires: la foie en l'unité, en l'union, en la communion, c'est-à-dire qu'elle a pour objet l'unité de la Trinité, l'union de Dieu et de l'homme dans le Christ, la communion aux fidèles de l'Église dans la charité du Christ. C'est donc toute la 'grâce de l'économie,' *gratia dispensationis*, toute l'oeuvre de salut, à quoi l'on participe dans l'Eucharistie. La sainte communion n'est pas d'abord une rencontre individuelle entre l'ame et Jésus, l'occasion d'un colloque affectif ou de relations sentries et éprouvées, d'ordre psychologique, c'est une participation réelle à la vie et à l'oeuvre du Verbe incarné, c'est la condition et le principe efficace de toute vie chrétienne" (Ibid., 40–41).

[126] "Naturae nostrae susceptio non incongrue intelligitur quasi quaedam panis acceptio. Accepit Christus unde nos pasceret, cum per Incarnationis mysterium hominem sibi uniret, nostrae carnis foenum vertens in

Baldwin goes on to specify that his blessing of the bread symbolizes his sanctification of himself for man, and the breaking of the bread, the communication of sanctifying grace to men.[127] These actions of the Mass show the intimate symbolic connection between the different parts of the economy of salvation. The Eucharist and the Incarnation help interpret the other. The Eucharist's re-presentation of the events of salvation history encompasses not only the Passion but the Incarnation as well.

The connection between the Eucharist and the Incarnation is not only symbolic. The two events are connected by the same end and origin: Christ desiring to live with his people to bring them to participate in the Trinitarian communion. More than that, Baldwin argues that the Eucharist is an intensification of the Incarnation, a way of making Christ even more intimately present to the soul. This appears in Baldwin's exegesis of John 6:27, "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you; for on him has God the Father set his seal." He draws on Augustine and Hilary, who focus on the fact that the Father marks Christ with his seal in order to make him the food of salvation.[128] Baldwin takes their argument further. He writes that even though Christ was the bread of angels

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frumentum, ut nos cibaret ex adipe frumenti et satiaret de medulla tritici. Factus est nobis granum frumenti, in corde bono seminandum et uberius multiplicandum. Factus est nobis et panis qui cor hominis confirmat; panis in verbo doctrinae, panis in exemplo vitae, panis in omni dono spiritualis gratiae, panis in omni consolatione nostrae miseriae, panis vitam nostram sustentans et in labore viae nos confortans, ut in ejus fortitudine perveniamus ad montem Dei Horeb" (*SA*, 128).

[127] "Si acceptio panis in coena, et benedictio et fractio, secundum mysticam significationem intelligi debent; juxta praedictum modum Christus panem accepit quando hominem sibi univit, benedixit quando propter hominem seipsum sanctificavit, fregit cum gratiam sanctificationis hominibus communicavit" (*SA*, 134).

[128] Augustine, *In Johannis evangelium*, *CCSL* 36, 25.11; Hilary, *CCSL* 62A, *De Trinitate* 8.44. Hilary's exegesis bears citing to demonstrate Baldwin's particular focus: "Vnigenitus uero Deus et per sacramentum salutis nostrae hominis filius, uolens proprietatis nobis paternae in se significare speciem, signatum se a Deo ait. Et hoc ideo, quia uitae aeternae escam filius hominis esset daturus, ut per hoc potestas in eo dandae ad aeternitatem escae intellegi posset, quia omnem in se paternae formae plenitudinem signantis se Dei contineret: ut quod signasset Deus non aliud ex se quam formam Dei signantis ecferret."

with the Father, he wanted to make himself man among men so that man might eat the bread of angels. Christ himself is the food that endures for eternal life, which he gives by the sacrament of the economy of salvation [*per sacramentum dispensationis*] according to which he desired to be the Son of man. The Father marked him with the seal of the oil of happiness so that he could give us this food.[129] In short, the same desire for presence and union drives the Incarnation and the Eucharist.

A similar line of argument appears more directly some pages later in Baldwin's exegesis of John 6:57: "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me." Perhaps no other single verse captures as well the connection between the relations of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Eucharist. Baldwin focuses on the two terms sending [*missio*] and eating [*manducatio*]. He writes:

> Sending and eating can therefore can be compared on account of their similar results. The sending makes Christ live because of the Father, insofar as he is lesser than the Father [in his human nature]; the eating makes us live because of Christ, who as the mediator of God and men reconciles to the Father those who live because of him, just as he lives because of the Father. The life of Christ because of the Father and our life because of Christ look back at each other through a similar cause, intention, and end, that is by proceeding from their source, tending toward it, and arriving there. For the former and the latter return to that place whence they begin; it gives itself to the one by which it was brought together; it is returned to the one by whom it is received.[130]

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[129] "Cibum autem permanentem in vitam aeternam Filius hominis dat, per sacramentum dispensationis qua fieri voluit Filius hominis. Nec dare non potest, quamvis Filius hominis est; hunc enim Pater signavit Deus. Hunc quippe Pater, ut cibum nobis talem daret, proprio signo singularis sanctitatis a ceteris discrevit, ungens eum oleo exultationis prae participibus suis" (*SA*, 246).

[130] "In hac autem comparatione, qua nunc utitur Christus, bina et bina mutua collatione sese respiciunt. Missio enim et manducatio per similem efficientiam sibi conferri possunt. Efficit enim missio ut vivat Christus propter Patrem in quantum minor est Patre: efficit manducatio ut nos vivamus propter Christum, qui, Mediator Dei et hominum, Patri reconciliat viventes propter se, sicut ille vivit propter Patrem. Vita Christi propter Patrem, et vita nostra propter Christum, per similem causam et intentionem et finem, id est procedendo, tendendo, perveniendo, sese respiciunt. Nam et haec et illa illuc redit unde incipit; ad illum refertur a quo confertur; illi redditur a quo accipitur" (*SA*, 284–286).

Baldwin goes on to explain that eating and remaining or living in Christ are both sign and effects of each other.[131] In this passage, he does not intend *manducatio* to signify the Eucharist alone, but a whole Christian life of faith and action centered on Christ (as noted above in section VII). Still, the logic is the same. Christ's Incarnation provides the template for the Christian life, which Baldwin conceives of in Eucharistic terms. The life we receive from him is like the life his humanity receives from the Father and, indeed, like the divinity he receives as Word. That life comes alive in those joined to Christ by faith and the sacraments, drawing them to Christ and thereby drawing them to the Father, to whom Christ is drawn.

But Baldwin takes the argument further. In his tractate on the Eucharist, he argues that Christ unites himself to us more intimately in the Eucharist because the ontological union of the Incarnation is not enough for him. God was with the Israelites and the righteous of the Old Testament, he writes, but now through the Incarnation he is

> with us by his fellowship in our common nature. But even this extremity of love, when he is with us in such a way, is not enough for Jesus. He clasps us with a tighter embrace and unites [himself to us] in a wonderful way through the sacrament of communion, so that he might be in us and we in him, as he says, "Anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him." But the Christ who remains in us also lives in us, as the Apostle says, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." If Christ lives in us, the Spirit of God also dwells in us, and according to the same apostle, "Anyone who does not have the spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in us, the body indeed is dead because of sin, but the spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him that raised Jesus Christ from the dead dwells in you, he that raised Jesus Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies

[131] "Quod Christus dicit, *qui manducat me vivet propter me*, duobus modis recte intelligitur, aut ratione effectus aut ratione signi. Id enim efficit haec manducatio ut vivamus propter Christum, hoc est per gratiam ejus ad gloriam ejus; et quod vivimus propter Christum signum est quia manducamus Christum. Similiter duobus modis intelligi potest quod praemissum est: *Qui manducat meam carnem et bibit meum sanguinem, in me manet et ego in illo.* In Christo enim manere manducationis effectus est et signum, ac si diceretur: signum quia manducat et bibit hoc est: si manet in me; si vivit propter me" (*SA*, 286).

> also through his Spirit dwelling in you." And the Lord himself says, "Anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life."[132]

Here is the clearest exposition that Baldwin offers of the Trinitarian shape of the Eucharist. In order to draw human beings to himself, God becomes incarnate in the person of Christ. But in order that unity of nature might become more personal and intimate, Christ enters a person in the Eucharist. Reception of Christ's self-gift in the Eucharist entails reception of the Holy Spirit who proceeds from Christ. The Spirit's activity in a person allows him to love as Christ loves. He serves as the bond uniting him to Christ, and thereby drawing him into the embrace of the Trinity. This is the goal of the economy of salvation, at whose apex the Eucharist stands as the climax of that union in this life and as pledge of its consummation in the life to come.[133]

## XI. Conclusion

For all his skepticism of speculative reason's role in theological thinking, Baldwin of Forde has a robust theology of the Eucharist that builds on his theological predecessors in distinctive ways. The Eucharist serves as the nexus of many aspects of the Christian life, which he describes with imagery connected to it. Baldwin sees the ongoing conversion of the Christian life signified in the change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. This change is real and substantial, he argues, best described by the

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[132] "Et his quidem modis fuit cum antiquis iustis. Nunc autem nobis cum est per incarnationis mysterium in communis nature consortio. Nec hoc fine dilectionis contentus est Iesus, ut tantum nobis cum sit. Artiori complexu nos sibi stringit, et mirabiliter unit per communionis sacramentum, ut sit in nobis et nos in ipso, sicut ipse ait: *Qui manducat meam carnem et bibit meum sanguinem, in me manet et ego in illo.* Christus autem qui manet in nobis, uiuit in nobis, iuxta quod apostolus ait: *Viuo autem iam non ego: uiuit uero in me Christus*. Quod si Christus uiuit in nobis, et Spiritus Dei habitat in nobis. Et iuxta eumdem apostolum: *Si quis spiritum Christi non habet, hic non est eius. Si autem Christus in nobis est, corpus quidem mortuum est propter peccatum, spiritus uero uiuit propter iustificationem. Si autem spiritus eius qui suscitauit Iesum a mortuis habitat in nobis, qui suscitauit Iesum Christum a mortuis uiuificabit et mortalia corpora nostra propter inhabitantem Spiritum eius in nobis.* Hinc et ipse Dominus ait: *Qui manducat meam carnem et bibit meum sanguinem, habet uitam eternam*" (*Sermo* 4.16–17).

[133] "Communio autem mensae dominicae a corporali mensa, quae indigentibus communis esse debet, hoc amplius habet: quod communionem verae amicitiae non solum indicat, sed perficit et consummat" (*SA*, 354).

term his teacher Robert Pullen may have been the first to use, *transubstantiation*. Like William of Saint-Thierry, Baldwin has a strong doctrine of spiritual reception. But where William focuses on receiving the Eucharist through meditation and memory, Baldwin places the accent on reception by faith in the truth about Christ. While this could seem to be an attempt to relativize or diminish the importance of receiving the sacrament, understanding Baldwin's doctrine of reception in light of the rest of his theology offers a different interpretation: the relationship with Christ begun by faith is Eucharistic in shape. We receive Christ, grow in love of the Spirit, and respond in wonder and thanksgiving to God's gracious gifts. Sacramental reception of the Eucharist, therefore, deepens the Eucharistic relationship founded on faith without adding something otherwise unavailable. The consequence of this is a life lived in obedient imitation of Christ, who offers himself for his brethren to the Father.

The life in imitation of Christ is empowered by gifts of grace received through the Eucharist. The Eucharist also serves as a pledge of eternal beatitude and as the means and sign of communion with the Church. This takes place by the infusion of the Holy Spirit of charity, who serves as the principle of unity for all true communions, human and divine. But the Spirit is received as he proceeds, from the Son, a reception that takes place most intimately in the Eucharist. Through the presence of the Son and the Spirit, the one who receives them participates in the life of God. This is Baldwin's preferred way to describe the union of the soul with God, which he adopts from Paul's language about participating in the one bread and one cup in I Corinthians 10:16–17. The reception of the Spirit through the Eucharist is one way in which the relations of the Trinity give shape to the Eucharist and to the economy of salvation as a whole. The other appears in

the connections Baldwin draws between the Incarnation and the Eucharist, the latter being a way of making Christ more intimately present to the soul by the reception of Christ and through that, the ongoing presence of the Spirit.

It is important to note Baldwin's frequent pairing of the unity of Father and Son in the Trinity, the union of human and divine natures in the Incarnation, and communion of Christ and the individual believer in the Eucharist. For Baldwin, these serve as the core objects of Christian faith. The Eucharist is not a second- or third-order truth as it is frequently understood to be today; it is not a subset of sacramental theology or liturgical studies. Rather, *transubstantiation* functions like *person* or *hypostasis*, capturing scriptural truth and articulating essential dogma in a trustworthy way. Pairing these three mysteries together succinctly shows how the unity of Father and Son determines the way in which the Son acts for the salvation of the world in the Incarnation and the Eucharist. It further confirms the thesis that the relations of the Trinity are the organizing principle for the whole of the Christian life. It also shows how the Eucharist serves as the climax of the economy of salvation, the place where the ontological union of the Incarnation becomes intimate, personal, and communal, drawing the faithful to Christ and thereby making them partakers of the love shared between Father and Son, which is the Holy Spirit.

# Conclusion

William of Saint-Thierry, Isaac of Stella, and Baldwin of Forde created a distinctly Cistercian body of Eucharistic theology. They were fluent in scholastic terminology and used it to great effect. William's articulation of the metaphysics of Christ's Eucharistic presence in terms of changing substances and remaining accidents, as well as his theology of Eucharistic reception, were later adopted more widely. Isaac of Stella focused on the Eucharist in the great chain of being and the way it incorporates recipients into the mystical body of Christ. Baldwin of Forde was a strong advocate for transubstantiation as the orthodox way to articulate Eucharistic change. But for all their scholastic formation, they were monks at heart, and their focus remained on the role that the Eucharist plays in the return of the human being to God.

They thought that the nature of God as a Trinity of persons united in essence provides the form or structure of that path of return—especially its turning point or climax, the Eucharist. This emphasis on Trintiarian dimensions is the hallmark of Cistercian Eucharistic theology. They saw the Eucharist as an analogue to the Incarnation, another sending of the Son and the Spirit into the world for its redemption, a site where the economic missions of the Trinity take place. It is an act essential to the plan of redemption whereby God enters the world to draw it to God's own self according to the model of the Son and Spirit's processions from the Father. Just as the Son's presence in the Incarnation and death of Christ were necessary for salvation, so is his presence in the Eucharist.

In the Eucharist, God the Father draws those who receive to himself by uniting them to the body and blood of the Son. This unity brings an increase of unity with the

Holy Spirit. Once united to the Son and Spirit, the faithful are united to the Father and to the unity that all three persons share. The Eucharist is, then, not only a site of God's movement toward human beings, but of human movement back toward God. It acts as a kind of pivot point in the economy of salvation: the moment where the outpouring of the Son and Spirit join most deeply with the faithful and draw them back to the Father. And it is also a microcosm—a symbolic representation in miniature—of the steps of that return. The Eucharist also binds the members of the Church, the body of Christ, to each other and to their Head in his act of self-offering to the Father. It connects the meditation, sacrifices, and offering of their own lives to that of Christ, with which they are offered to the Father.

The Cistercian authors hold these ideas in common, but each has particular emphases characteristic of his own theology and the task set before him in his writing on the Eucharist. William has the most developed doctrine of spiritual reception, but also treats physical reception more extensively than his confreres. He sees physical reception of Christ as necessary for the deification of the body, but also as a mysterious moment in which the body of Christ is both in the recipient and with God in heaven. In other words, there is a two-fold participation in the Trinitarian relations in physical reception. The recipient stands with Christ—to whose body he is conformed by his reception—in relationship to the Father, and at the same time stands in a manner analogous to the Father in relationship to Christ, because Christ now also substantially abides in him. That said, William's focus remains on the reception of charity—the Holy Spirit—which can take place through other acts as well, such as meditation on the Passion. Those who receive the Spirit, participate in the divine life in a manner analogous to that life, with the

Eucharist providing a true foretaste of that union in this life even as it furthers those who receive it toward that perfection.

Isaac focuses on the way by which human beings enter into union with God through the rational faculties, which serve as receptacles for receiving God.
With a body and a soul made in the image of God, humans are a microcosm, a symbol and example of the relationship between God and the world, and a point of connection in the universe's chain of being. Since sin broke that chain, the Son came to restore it in his own person. Those who are joined to the Son's body the Church are thereby joined to its head, and through him to God the Father. They have Christ sown in their minds and hearts and are capable of knowing and loving him in a manner analogous to self-knowledge and self-love of the persons of the Trinity. Their participation in Trinitarian knowledge and love leads to a participation in Trinitarian affectivity—joy and delight. The Eucharist plays an important role in this process. It is the way by which Christ joins his members to the mystical body by filling them with the love of the Holy Spirit and the action in which the Spirit joins the sacrifices and offerings of their own lives to the great self-offering of Christ to the Father. In this sense, the Eucharist is a microcosm of the spiritual life as a whole, a symbol of the stages of spiritual growth and a reality that makes that growth possible

Baldwin sees the change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ as a symbol of the ongoing conversion of Christian life. This change is real and substantial, he argues, best described by the term his teacher Robert Pullen may have been the first to use, *transubstantiation*. Like William, Baldwin has a strong doctrine of spiritual reception. But where William focuses on receiving the Eucharist through meditation and

memory, Baldwin places the accent on reception by faith in the truth about Christ. While this could seem to be an attempt to relativize or diminish the importance of receiving the sacrament, understanding Baldwin's doctrine of reception in light of the rest of his theology offers a different interpretation: the relationship with Christ begun by faith is Eucharistic in shape. We receive Christ, grow in love of the Spirit, and respond in wonder and thanksgiving to God's gracious gifts. Sacramental reception of the Eucharist, therefore, deepens the Eucharistic relationship founded on faith without adding something otherwise unavailable. Here Baldwin mirrors William's theology of reception, especially with respect to meditation as a reception of Christ. In both cases, what might seem like a diminution of the Eucharist's significance is actually way of looking at different aspects of Christian life participating in the action at the heart of the Eucharist.

The consequence of this is a life lived in obedient imitation of Christ, who offers himself for his brethren to the Father. Through the presence of the Son and the Spirit, the one who receives them participates in the life of God. The Eucharist serves as the climax of the economy of salvation, the place where the ontological union of the Incarnation becomes intimate, personal, and communal, drawing the faithful to Christ and thereby making them partakers of the love shared between Father and Son, which is the Holy Spirit.

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