

Becoming One in the Paschal Mystery: Christ, Spirituality, and Theology in Hugh of St. Victor

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Becoming One in the Paschal Mystery: Christ, Spirituality, and Theology in Hugh of St. Victor

Clifton Stringer

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**Becoming One in the Paschal Mystery:
Christ, Spirituality, and Theology in Hugh of St. Victor**

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This dissertation offers a new systematic interpretation and retrieval of the theology and spirituality of the 12th century master Hugh of St. Victor, an interpretation centered on the Triune LORD's unifying and reforming work in history in the three days of Jesus Christ's dying, burial, and rising. Seen from the vantage of Hugh's treatise *On the Three Days*, these 'three days' of Jesus Christ's 'Passover' are, for Hugh, the plenary revelation of the Trinity in history – and so an eschatological disclosure – and are at once the soteriological and spiritual center of his theology. The work of the dissertation is, in part one, to explore the objective polarity of the LORD's work in the three days. This entails an in-depth treatment of Hugh's christology, including the currently contested and historically misconstrued territory of Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union. Moreover, the project brings out the integral connections between Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union and his soteriology of the re-formation of all of history in the three days. This triadic soteriological scheme in turn correlates to three degrees of theological language and of Triune self-revelation in history. The task of part two of the dissertation is to study the subjective polarity of Spirit-enabled human participation in Christ's dying, burial, and rising. Hugh's spirituality and practice of theology are explored as means of human re-formation unto wonder, wisdom, and charity – in short, unto mystical and ultimately eschatological union with God – through participation in the paschal mystery.

These chapters thus systematize and explore aspects of Hugh's thought as diverse as the communal formation at the Abbey of St. Victor, humility, study of the liberal arts and memorization of Scripture, theological meditation, allegorical and tropological biblical interpretation, works of charity, and the responsive eros of Hugh's contemplative mysticism, all as means of sharing, by turns, in Christ's dying, burial, and rising. The third and final part of the dissertation attempts a contemporary practice of Hugonian theology. It places the Hugonian theology retrieved in parts one and two in the context of the reception of *Laudato Si'* in order to offer a christological and mystical companion to Pope Francis' encyclical. It argues that the 'ecological conversion' for which Pope Francis calls, as a subjective participation in Christ, implicitly depends upon a robust enough objective christology to make the summons to particularly 'ecological' conversion coherent and compelling. Hence the contemporary eco-christologies of Sallie McFague and Celia Deane-Drummond are studied and adjudicated. Finally, on the basis of the gains accrued in the course of those eco-christological engagements, a renewed Hugonian christology and soteriology is proposed as a framework for and aid to the spiritual and moral implementation of *Laudato Si'*. Ecological conversion is itself, most properly, a process of human re-formation in the three days of Jesus Christ's Passover, and hence practical efforts to teach and implement *Laudato Si'* benefit from a Hugonian theological and spiritual approach.

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DEDICATION

For Lindsey,
without whose
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too deep to calculate or express, and without whom I would certainly not have completed this project, I give great thanks. It is only appropriate that this dissertation is dedicated to Lindsey, with love.

INTRODUCTION

“[J]ust as we have risen in Him as He rose on the third day, so, too, let us, rising on the third day for Him and through Him, make Him rise in us.”

-Hugh of St. Victor, *On the Three Days* III.27.2

In his programmatic *On the Reduction of the Arts to Theology*, Franciscan spiritual-theological prodigy St. Bonaventure (1221-1274) offers a roll-call of great theologians, triadically patterned and indexed to their area of especial greatness. His list culminates in praise of one: perhaps surprisingly to us, this is Hugh of St. Victor. Drawing attention at length to the peculiarly comprehensive and integrative character of Hugh's theology, Bonaventure writes:

[T]he whole of Sacred Scripture teaches these three truths: namely, the eternal generation and incarnation of Christ, the pattern of human life, and the union of the soul with God. The first is concerned with *faith*; the second with *morals*; and the third with the *ultimate goal of both*. The effort of the doctors should be aimed at the study of the first; that of the preachers, at the study of the second; that of the contemplatives, at the study of the third. The first is taught chiefly by Augustine; the second, by Gregory; the third, by Dionysius. Anselm follows Augustine; Bernard follows Gregory; Richard follows Dionysius. For Anselm excels in reasoning; Bernard, in preaching; Richard, in contemplation. But Hugh excels in all three.¹

Bonaventure's words contain the recognition that things are wonderfully integrated in Hugh which, by Bonaventure's own time, have begun to appear as separate pursuits. At

¹ “... Hugo vero omnia haec.” St Bonaventure, *St. Bonaventure's on the Reduction of the Arts to Theology*, trans. Zachary Hayes (St. Bonaventure, N.Y: Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University, 1996), 44-5. cf. Lk 2:19, Vulgate.

some level, Bonaventure seems to endorse this division, this dis-integration. The doctors, he says, should focus on the content of the faith in a Trinitarian and Christocentric way. The preachers should specialize in the pattern of human life.² And the contemplatives should study the ultimate goal of both: divine union. Bonaventure seems to concede that at least most great Christian theologians cannot or do not integrate all three. Surprisingly, it looks like this separation of specialization corresponds to the discrete gifts of the three most influential patristic doctors in the Latin West of Bonaventure's day: St. Augustine³, St. Gregory the Great, and the writer known as St. Dionysius the Areopagite are each attached to one of the specializations. The medieval doctors cherished most by Bonaventure are, likewise, each marked as especial heir to one of the great Church fathers of old.

But Sacred Scripture is different. The "whole" (*tota*) of Sacred Scripture contains the plenitude of all of these, integrating them in a comprehensive fashion, all ordered to union with God. Hugh of St. Victor's theology does too. *Hugo vero omnia haec*, the Seraphic Doctor tells us.

Cut to circa 1998. The late church historian David Steinmetz surveyed the group of fifteen specialists "in the fields of Old Testament, New Testament, systematic and historical theology, and parish ministry" who comprised the Princeton-based Center of Theological Enquiry's group "The Scripture Project." This group was eventually to

² It is significant in this regard – and perhaps indicative of Aquinas' intended audience – that the bulk of Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* is spent in the volumes of the long *Secunda Pars*.

³ It is a separate matter whether Bonaventure's designation of Augustine as especially concerned with the content of faith *rather than* the pattern of life or union with God can stand up to scrutiny. Suffice to say that *De Trinitate* dominates the early scholastic mind in its reception of Augustine.

publish the landmark scholarly manifesto *The Art of Reading Scripture*.⁴ Steinmetz joked that, all together, this group of fifteen comprised one “Complete Theologian.” This group’s goal was “to overcome the fragmentation of our theological disciplines by reading Scripture together”. A couple of observations can be made from Steinmetz’ insightful joke vis-à-vis Bonaventure’s words above. First, the number of areas of specialization has increased from three to five – but, to tell the truth about the modern theological academy, five isn’t the half of it. Second, the contemplative specialization – which Bonaventure designated as pursuing the unitive goal of all of them – has either been subsumed into the pastoral/preaching specialization or has disappeared entirely. The point of Steinmetz’ joke rings true: in our time, in a way much more acute than in Bonaventure’s time, the study of theology (like the study of much else) is hyper-specialized, disintegrated. There are fifteen people in the room. Theology has, in a visible and tangible sense, fallen from unity and wholeness.

And Steinmetz isn’t the only one joking. In his chapter “Epistemic Virtues of a Theologian in the *Philokalia*”, Frederick D. Aquino offers an incisive reflection on the state of disintegration in contemporary theological education. His account particularly brings out the way in which contemporary theological education attenuates the holistic formation of virtue, wisdom, integrated affectivity, deiform intellectuality – in short, all things needed for divine union. Aquino writes:

Theological education... has become so compartmentalized that integrating cognitive, moral, and affective dimensions of learning is a complex and difficult task to accomplish in theological institutions (e.g., seminary). Though the

⁴ Davis, Ellen F., and Richard B. Hays. *The Art of Reading Scripture*. First Edition edition. Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2003.

formational dimension of theological education does exist in some settings, it has become devalued in status. Specialized training in different fields of knowledge has largely eclipsed the cultivation of Christian character as a part of theological education. Researchers have replaced exemplars of theological wisdom. Theological curricula are “so highly compartmentalized and teaching so committed to ‘speed learning’ (covering large chunks of content quickly)” that little time is committed to the cultivation of requisite intellectual virtues for acquiring wisdom. Students shaped by this pedagogical move, then, assume that understanding (wisdom) comes by digesting and regurgitating large amounts of material. As we have seen, however, forming theological judgment requires induction into long-standing practices that solidify praiseworthy dispositions. The cultivation of the deiform intellect does not occur by digesting isolated facts but connects the relevance of these facts to their ultimate referent through habit and imitation.... Severing knowledge and wisdom has disastrous consequences for the enterprise of theological education.⁵

Aquino brings out the fractious consequences of the complex disintegrations of Scripture study itself from the study of, in Bonaventure’s divisions, Trinity and incarnation, on the one hand, and *vivendi ordinem*, or order of life, on the other – itself encompassing habits of thought, morality, affectivity, liturgical participation, and much else – from the unified and integrating *contemplative* goal of both: *Dei et animae unionem*, the union of the soul with God. Where Steinmetz’ poignant jest holds up a fragmented mirror for our enlightenment, Aquino offers incisive analysis to the same effect: the divisions Bonaventure sought to overcome have multiplied, to the detriment of wisdom and contemplation.

To wax (even more) explicitly theological, the fragmentation of the human person in the fallen state – or “ruin” as Hugh of St. Victor will say – diagnosed so eloquently in Augustine’s *Confessions* and illustrated elegantly in a heightened, modern or proto-

⁵ Frederick D. Aquino, “Epistemic Virtues of a Theologian in the *Philokalia*”, in William J. Abraham, Jason E. Vickers, Natalie B. Van Kirk ed.s., *Canonical Theism: A Proposal for Theology and the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 191.

postmodern pitch in Kierkegaard's pseudonymous works, now mirrors itself in the fragmentation of the modern discipline of theology itself. One might even extend the observations of Steinmetz and Aquino and note that a modern theological faculty reflects not so much the unity of theology but the relation between Kierkegaard and his various pseudonym-characters. In much contemporary theological study, the student is "re-formed" (this term will acquire theological significance for us momentarily) not through encounter with the unity of theology as a holistic response to the incarnate Word attested in Scripture. Rather, the student comes to mirror intellectually and spiritually the *fragmentation* of discrete and apparently autonomous "theological" disciplines. We encounter and become, too often, fragments of theology, fragments of life, fragmented theologians who are fragments of a theologian we've seldom met. Thus we see that, of necessity, the *unity* of the discipline of theology is not ultimately separable from the integrity of the persons such study produces.⁶ Theology is and concerns a way of life, a way of living as a human person among persons in responsive union to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Do both the content which is studied and the *practice* of such study draw one into a way of life with integrity that coheres with the kind of bodily-spiritual creature a human person is in relation to God, self, and world?

The bit about the interconnection of the relations of God, self, and world might bear one further underscoring. The effects of our fallen ruin traveling under the label 'hyperfragmentation' reach far beyond the professional theological academy and the local

⁶ Stanley Hauerwas' rhetorical question remains haunting yet, in light of these reflections, hopefully therapeutic: "Have you ever noticed a correlation between the study of ethics and the quality of the lives of ethicists?"

church: the natural world is bearing the scars of our fragmentation. Pope Francis writes in *Laudato Si'*:

It cannot be emphasized enough how everything is interconnected. Time and space are not independent of one another, and not even atoms or subatomic particles can be considered in isolation. Just as the different aspects of the planet – physical, chemical and biological – are interrelated, so too living species are part of a network which we will never fully explore and understand. A good part of our genetic code is shared by many living beings. It follows that the fragmentation of knowledge and the isolation of bits of information can actually become a form of ignorance, unless they are integrated into a broader vision of reality.⁷

If trinitarian doctrine names the widest intellectual field, the sea unbounded, the ultimate “meta-” site from which Christian thought and spirituality offers “a global interpretation of Christian life and faith and indeed... a global interpretation of reality”, then the ecological crisis in its connection to our fragmentation cries out for theological engagement.⁸ Theologians who can offer compelling global interpretations and personal integrations of life and thought are badly needed.⁹

⁷ Pope Francis, LS, 4.138.

⁸ The quotations are from Khaled Anatolios’ analysis of the ‘comprehensive trinitarianism’ of the age of Nicaea. “Trinitarian doctrine emerged not from some isolated insight into the being of God, such that its meaning might be grasped from a retrieval of that particular insight, or from some creaturely analogue that somehow approximates that insight. 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. Its historical development thus presents a dramatic demonstration of Karl Rahner’s characterization of trinitarian doctrine as the summary of Christian faith. To appreciate the meaning of trinitarian doctrine today, one must learn from the systematic thrust of its development how the entirety of Christian faith and life means the Trinity. Put differently, the suggestion is that we may *perform* the meaning of trinitarian doctrine by learning to refer to the trinitarian being of God through the entirety of Christian existence.” Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Press, 2011), 8.

⁹ While it feels audacious and perhaps delusory to place my retrieval of Hugh’s doctrine in the context of the ecological crisis – how much use could a 12th century theologian possibly be? – yet, in Hugh’s own theological terms, it would be a theological failure, and a soteriological failure of nerve, to neglect to take into account one’s own context within salvation history – ecological crisis and all – in the receptive-constructive task of christocentric theological thinking. *Historia fundamentum est.* cf. chapter 8 below.

In light of all the above and in accord with Bonaventure's perhaps wistful rumination, I suggest that we could do far worse than learn from Hugh of St. Victor in the course of seeking an integrative path forward. Hugh of St. Victor, as the first and most influential of a distinguished line of Augustinian canon scholar-mystics who taught at the Abbey of St. Victor in 12th century Paris, is a witness to a way of *practicing* the *craft* of theology that progressively reforms and reunifies the self in the image of the Triune LORD. Moreover, for Hugh, theology exists within a capacious spirituality ordered to union with that LORD. Studying theology Hugonically, the self is integrated in accord with the christocentric and integrated nature of Scripture itself, and of the creation itself, as the Triune LORD is working to restore and reform it in Christ's dying, burial, and rising. I think it is not too much to suggest that Hugh has something to say to us today in our ecclesial, modern, postmodern, public, personal, ecological, and academic contexts.

Hugh's claim is, I argue, ultimately, that the practice of theology within spirituality is itself a certain mirror of the union enjoyed in and wrought by the person and work of Christ. The way in which the Triune LORD unites a human nature in the person of the Son, itself disclosed most fully in the three days of Christ's own Passover, itself determines the form of the spirituality in which theology might best and most integratively be conceived and practiced. The practice of theology, for Hugh, emerges as a receptive-constructive *craft* based on the spiritual and intellectual reception of the form of Christ dying, buried, and rising, thence to integratively construct thought and life in pursuit of union with God. All things, for Hugh, are being re-formed and unified – becoming one – in Jesus Christ's 'three days.' This dissertation then, with one eye to the

twelfth century and one to today, works to retrieve Hugh of St. Victor's distinctive and distinctively integrated christology, spirituality and theological practice.

The present study, I note, is not the first modern study to notice the integrated character of Hugh's thought. In the mid-20th century Beryl Smalley observed Hugh's terrific integration of exegesis, theology, and mysticism to situate him as a kind of tragic figure standing, necessarily if also heroically, on the cusp of the disintegration of Scripture, theology, and spirituality.¹⁰ For Smalley, such disintegration was ultimately good: it liberated the literal text of Scripture from theology and mysticism. Yet, I argue, the time has come to concur instead with St. Bonaventure. We ought look to Hugh of St. Victor as a witness to the christocentrically integral nature of theology. There is a yet appreciable aspect in which Hugh is always beyond our divisions and bifurcations. He bears witness to the possibility of the unity of the mystic and the scholastic, the monastic and the secular, the teacher and the preacher; of the historical theologian, systematic theologian, and practical theologian; and of the biblical scholar, the philosopher, and the ethicist. We ought find him, in this respect, and as far as we ever may, a model for emulation.¹¹

¹⁰ Smalley, Beryl. *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*. 1st edition. Notre Dame, In.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989. This work, originally published around 1940, was many times revised.

¹¹ The potential worth of Hugh as a salve to our present state of fragmentation, disciplinary and otherwise, has not been lost on researchers whose interest in Hugh has been primarily historical. Rorem writes, initially quoting Hugh: "'Learn everything," he said, and thus he taught not only all of theology in its broad sense (biblical, doctrinal, practical, philosophical) but also history and grammar, geometry and geography. The organization of such learning and teaching was his distinctive contribution to the development of medieval thought. How to hold so much together in one unified and holistic package of learning and life could also be his contribution to our own age of specializations to the point of fragmentation." Rorem, Paul. *Hugh of Saint Victor*. 1 edition. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3.

0.1 **CHRIST, SPIRITUALITY, AND THEOLOGY: READING HUGH
THROUGH *ON THE THREE DAYS***

Hugh's short treatise *On the Three Days* culminates in a scene in which self and world are being united to God in the three days of Jesus Christ's dying, burial, and rising. That is, the human person responsive to the LORD through memory, intellect, and will discovers that she has been, in a prior way, enfolded within the Triune LORD's self-manifesting and re-forming work in the paschal mystery. The objective and subjective polarities of this unification of all things in the paschal mystery receives sustained attention especially in chapters 1 and 4 below – in addition to being the structuring theme of this project as a whole! – and it suffices for now to say that Hugh in this treatise offers a systematic vista in which the person of Christ, as he dies, is buried, and rises, is the center of everything: in the paschal mystery, the Trinity in eternal act is manifest, history is unified, the font and goal of sacramental life is present, and human persons, responding, are united to God. Everything is triadic and unified, from the Triune LORD to history's ages to the human soul.¹² It is, in short, a synthetic passage *par excellence* in a thinker whose synthetic and integrative gifts are something of a signature.

Yet, accounts of Hugh's theology – even those who engage him from a systematic vantage in terms of theology or pedagogy – have not taken the triads disclosed in this

¹² Hugh's comprehensive *triadic* vision here suggestively foreshadows Bonaventure's own elegant if sometimes ingenious triadic gymnastics. For an elegant moment, see, e.g., the conclusion of his *Disputed Questions on the Mystery of the Trinity* (q 8 resp ad 7): "Therefore it follows that eternal life consists in this alone, that the rational spirit, which emanates from the most blessed trinity and is a likeness of the trinity, should return (*redeat*) after the manner of a certain intelligible circle – through memory, intelligence, and will – to the most blessed trinity by God-conforming glory" (Hayes p. 266, *Opera* 5:115).

passage into account when interpreting Hugh's corpus as a whole.¹³ This is a significant lacuna, and not just with respect to interpretations of Hugh himself. Reading Hugh christocentrically and with the weight on the paschal mystery has the potential to initiate revisions, and shed new light, in the study of the Early Franciscan intellectual tradition from the circle of thinkers around Alexander of Hales and reaching a certain initial culmination in Bonaventure. Moreover, there are strong warrants for attempting such a rereading of Hugh's theology, both external/theological and internal/textual. Externally, *On the Three Days* gives the possibility for reading Hugh's already-masterfully studied pedagogical genius as itself christocentrically normed, that is, normed by that which is at the center of Christian thought and life. Systematic theology in the 20th century, whether Protestant, Orthodox, or Catholic, has been shaped in significant measure by the 'christological revolutions' of Barth, Bulgakov, and von Balthasar, and 21st century theology continues to be shaped by reference to this legacy, whether by means of appropriation or contestation. For instance, the contemporary eco-christological approaches of Sallie McFague and Celia Deane-Drummond, both treated in chapter 8, must be understood, though differently, in light of this 20th century christological context. The retrieval of Hugh's thought is both enriched by the context created by the great 20th century christologians, yet Hugh remains (to borrow a felicitous phrase from Paul Rorem) "his own Victorine" – offering a christocentric theology that appears in its own distinctive integrity, neither Barthian, nor Bulgakovian, nor Balthasarian.

¹³ Andrew Salzmänn, however, in his Boston College dissertation, has noticed the pneumatic quality of the third member of Hugh's triads, and so explored Hugh's practices with regard to pneumatology.

The internal and textual warrants for the present project are, if anything, even stronger than the external. As has been noted, a pervasive feature of Hugh's theological thinking is the presence of a variety of triads. It is seldom noticed that these triads tend to culminate in the third member in a way that becomes theologically perspicuous, and maximally resonant and coherent, when seen within the matrix of the unification of all things happening in the three days of Jesus Christ's own Passover. Plenary exemplification of this claim will be given in the course of this project – which, in its second part, explores the coherence of Hugh's re-formational theology reading it as a process of transformation in relation to chapters thematized 'Dying', 'Buried', and 'Rising'. The presence of triads running throughout Hugh's thought means that each day of the paschal mystery corresponds to a loose, but readily discernible, associative and 'semantic field.' Hence the present project, it is urged, can train readers to interpret Hugh with superior credential.

And this brings me to the subtitle of the present work: "Christ, Spirituality, and Theology in Hugh of St. Victor." The first of these – 'Christ' – relates to both the objective and subjective polarities explored in the present dissertation, while the other two terms, 'Spirituality' and 'Theology' denote the subjective. Part I of the present project, beginning with and moving beyond *On the Three Days*, interprets Hugh's objective christology in a way that brings out the internal coherence of the person and work of Christ in his thought. Part II, also building from *On the Three Days* as its foundational text, unfolds the second and third terms: 'Spirituality' is the all-encompassing term for pneumatically-enabled human participation in the paschal

mystery ordered to union with the LORD, while ‘Theology’ connotes the practices of memory and meditation which conduce and order oneself and others to contemplative, and ultimately eschatological, union. Hugh’s theology, we can see from this approach, is a distinct species of ‘comprehensive trinitarianism’ – a way of thinking which works to refer self and world to the Triune LORD ranging across the whole of Christian experience of the world.¹⁴ The distinctive features of Hugh’s comprehensive trinitarianism will come out, a bit further, in my summary of the chapters below.

A word, finally, on the basis of my lead title – “Becoming One in the Paschal Mystery.” The ‘becoming one’ refers to the way in which I see, in Hugh’s theology, persons united to the Triune LORD through participation in Christ according to the three days of the paschal mystery. This is the site of creation’s re-formation and so of mystical and eschatological union. The idea of ‘passing over’ into union (following purgation and illumination, depending on the context) matters for Hugh in a way to which there has not been sufficient attention, particularly in relation to the structural connections his lexical decisions invite. He employs the *trans*- root suggestively in a way that invites a structural interpretation. In *On the Three Days*, Hugh speaks of fear passing over into wonder as Christ re-forms the human person in the three days;¹⁵ elsewhere he speaks of passing through purgation¹⁶ and of the martyrs passing through martyrdom;¹⁷ elsewhere

¹⁴ Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, 8.

¹⁵ *On the Three Days* III.27.1.

¹⁶ e.g., *Sed uult, ut electi sui per uarias tribulationes et temptationes plurimas purgandi transeant...* (*Noah’s Ark* 4.5, CSMV p. 127, Sicard p. 91). The notion of passing through purgations appears in various places in Hugh’s works.

¹⁷ *PL* 176:971D-972A.

of the trials and purgations the Israelites passed through;¹⁸ elsewhere of one emotion passing over into another in prayer;¹⁹ *trans-* words are played upon in *De Vanitate Mundi* to make vivid both the *transience* of the world and the desire of the godly to ‘pass over’ beyond it;²⁰ and things get really interesting when one turns to the major theological loci of christology, theological anthropology, divine union, and eschatology proper. For Hugh, the motive of the incarnation is charity, and he argues that it is only through charity that God can pass over to man, or man responsively pass over to God.²¹ Hugh’s core christological axiom, it is urged below, comes from Gennadius of Massilia: “God assumed man, man passed over into God (*deus hominem assumpsit; Homo in deum transiuit*).” In the constitution of human nature, the human body has passed over into union with the human soul, and this is the analogy by which Hugh bids us contemplate the mystery of the hypostatic union itself – in a drastically more ineffable and mysterious register of course.²² Language of passing over into union is conspicuous in Hugh’s erotically charged mystical commentary on the *Celestial Hierarchy*.²³ Finally, in Hugh’s ‘eschatology of simplification’ in *Noah’s Ark*, he speaks of the senses being converted into reason, and reason into understanding, before understanding “passes over into God.”²⁴ I suppose it is possible that all of this is entirely coincidental for Hugh, yet his use of language of ‘passing over into union’ frequently appears at important joints of his

¹⁸ Or was it the leaders of the Church in comparison with Israel? At present I am unable to locate the passage in the *PL* which I previously discovered.

¹⁹ *On the Power of Prayer*, VTT 4:331-43.

²⁰ *PL* 176:713A.

²¹ *PL* 176:974B.

²² *On the Sacraments* 2.1.11, Deferrari pp. 246-49.

²³ e.g. *PL* 175:1037D.

²⁴ *Noah’s Ark* 1.1.15, Sicard p. 29.

thought; it is, moreover, theologically and ontologically suggestive enough, and fruitful for reflection as a structuring feature of Hugh's thought, that I here go beyond Hugh's words, interpret him 'Hugonianly', and suggest the idea of 'passing over' – and implicitly of Passover – as a theological master concept in relation to which the unity of Hugh's thought may be understood, when we read with the grain of the already supremely unifying vantage of *On the Three Days*. Said in a maximally theological register: the mystery of Jesus Christ's hypostatic identity is the 'Passover' of human nature into the person of the Son (Israel²⁵): the three days are Jesus Christ's own Passover; in Christ humans ("true Hebrews"²⁶) Passover into union with the Triune LORD. Even if Hugh never said it so plainly, it is not eccentric to think that Bonaventure might have read Hugh in something like this way. Hence my title: "Becoming One in the Paschal Mystery."

Of course, the systematic vantage from which I interpret Hugh comes with a corresponding burden since I am, after all, a historical theologian: to wit, keeping distinct, or as distinct as may be and should be, Hugh's own views and my 'Hugonian' interpretation. One of the key signals I will give my reader in the chapters below is, in fact, this somewhat unusual sounding locution 'Hugonian.' It's use is a signal that the vantage I am there inhabiting is in faithful continuity with Hugh, and is so by following the vector of his thought farther than he was able to in the years afforded him here below.

²⁵ Systematically, it should be thought that God's paternal relationship with Israel discloses that in which it participates, i.e. the eternal generation of the Son. Further, Jesus is Israel's Christ. Hence, on both grounds, Israel is a name of the Son of God.

²⁶ Bonaventure, *Itinerarium* 1.9.

0.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

0.2.1 Relevant and Recent Hugh Scholarship

A twofold observation is in order regarding the state of the sources and literature surrounding Hugh of St. Victor. On the one hand, there are a growing number of studies on the thought and theology of Hugh of St. Victor and a widening availability of Hugh's texts in English translation through the Victorine Texts in Translation series from Brepols and New City Press. Hugh, then, is primed to make the move from being primarily a topic for the study of historians to also being a 'living voice' or source and resource for contemporary systematic theological engagement, argument, construction. On the other hand, there remain – perhaps moreso for Hugh than for some of the more prominent medieval theologians (Anselm, Aquinas, Bonaventure, Julian, Scotus, Ockham, etc.) – pregnant gaps in the interpretive literature, and these gaps invite further work in the historically-sensitive interpretation of Hugh's theology.

Three excellent and distinct recent interpretations of Hugh of St. Victor all contribute to my fundamental interpretation of him. The first is Coolman's *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor: An Interpretation*.²⁷ Coolman traces Hugh's theology beginning with creation and proceeding through fall and re-formation in Christ/Wisdom through

²⁷ Boyd Taylor Coolman, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor: An Interpretation*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013). Other important works by Coolman for the present study are: Coolman, Boyd Taylor, "'In Whom I Am Well Pleased': Hugh of St. Victor's Trinitarian Aesthetics." *Pro Ecclesia* XXIII, no. 3 (Summer 2014): 331–54; and *ibid.*, "'PULCHRUM ESSE': THE BEAUTY OF SCRIPTURE, THE BEAUTY OF THE SOUL, AND THE ART OF EXEGESIS IN HUGH OF ST. VICTOR." *Traditio* 58 (2003): 175–200.

Christian practices, culminating in the somewhat uncontrollable eschatological foretaste of God experienced in prayer that Hugh calls contemplation. For Coolman, Hugh's theology is a Christocentric Wisdom theology (in which, Coolman's reader might notice, Hugh anticipates Bonaventure in some crucial respects), whose overarching narrative has to do with the de-formation of the fall and the re-formation and beautification of the human in Wisdom. Moreover, Coolman emphasizes the importance of "practices" for human reformation, and describes these as, in turn, "memory practices", "meditative practices" and "moral practices". In directing attention to the importance of "practice", and the significance of memory, meditation, and virtue, Coolman's work creates space for the present study's exploration of practices as means of participation in the three days of the paschal mystery. Most importantly, from the point of view of the present study, Coolman directs attention to the central structural importance of *form* for Hugh, in relation to which, through a reading of *The Three Days*, I argue that the *form* of Christ's dying, being dead, and rising is of central importance for Hugh's practical theology in ways to which Coolman does not attend. The present study thus, in an important respect, builds on Coolman's work, and offers an enriched interpretation on the basis of one of his central insights.

The second recent work essential to my interpretation is Franklin Harkins' *Reading and the Work of Restoration: History and Scripture in the Theology of Hugh of St. Victor*.²⁸ Harkins receives and extends Zinn's emphasis on the fundamental status of history in Hugh's theology as a whole, as it relates to the restoration of the human in the

²⁸ Franklin T. Harkins, *Reading and the Work of Restoration: History and Scripture in the Theology of Hugh of St Victor* (Toronto: PIMS, 2009).

image of God through an ordered pedagogy. Harkins emphasizes the Augustinian character of Hugh's attention to disorder (through the Fall) and restored order (through ordered reading in the liberal arts then Scripture). A persistent feature of Harkins' Hugh scholarship, within and beyond his monograph, is the care with which Harkins textually demonstrates Hugh's indebtedness to the *first* Augustine, along with various intervening figures in the tradition.²⁹ In addition to its emphasis on history (which receives its own chapter and is reiterated throughout), Harkins' monograph also contains a substantial treatment of memory, including meditative visualization, in the tradition leading up to Hugh, and chapters on the liberal arts and the allegorical and tropological senses of Scripture. In short, Harkins' substantial work on Hugh's attention to Scripture, history, and much else in relation to these will inform the present project in significant ways. Harkins' account creates space for the contributions the present project hopes to make, which involve interpreting Hugh's pedagogy in light of the ways in which it is a means of participating in the three days.

Still more significant to the present project than Harkins' monograph is the article he penned in 2008 about Hugh's christology (along with Achard's), "*Homo Assumptus* at St. Victor."³⁰ In this article Harkins corrects the misreading of Hugh's christology as Nestorian promulgated lately by the great Walter Principe and, before him, Everhard

²⁹ e.g. Franklin T. Harkins, "'Secundus Augustinus': Hugh of St. Victor on Liberal Arts Study and Salvation," *Augustinian Studies* 37, no. 2 (2006): 219.

³⁰ Franklin T. Harkins, "*Homo Assumptus* at St. Victor: Reconsidering the Relationship Between Victorine Christology and Peter Lombard's First Opinion", *The Thomist* 72 (2008): 595-624.

Poppenberg.³¹ The misconstrual of Hugh as Nestorian seems to go back to Thomas Aquinas.³² At any rate, Harkins' article was answered in 2014 by an article by Richard Cross: Cross agrees with Harkins that Hugh is rather anti-Nestorian than Nestorian, thus adding support to Harkins' core insight; and Cross proceeds to disagree with Harkins on every relevant detail of the matter.³³ Several claims are at issue between Harkins and Cross's simultaneously concurrent and divergent readings of Hugh's christology, and I only shed light in my christology chapters (2 & 3) on a small, if centrally important, section of the matter – Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union as it relates, eventually, to the paschal mystery. Nevertheless, the christology articles by Harkins and then Cross – in both their agreements and disagreements – are fundamental to the present interpretation of Hugh.

Third, Paul Rorem's recent *Hugh of Saint Victor* contributes to my basic approach to Hugh.³⁴ Rorem's interpretation follows a pedagogical ordering in treating Hugh's works, an order both discernible in Hugh's own works themselves through his *Didascalicon* and also followed in many respects by the first Victorine editor of Hugh's works: hence, this style of reception allows Rorem's reader to approach Hugh in something like the way the community of Augustinian canons he taught and shaped understood him. Using this approach from Hugonian pedagogy, Rorem's work, which is an introductory work in the best sense, surveys the content of Hugh's major works while

³¹ Walter Henry Principe, *William of Auxerre's Theology of the Hypostatic Union* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1963), 65. P. Everhard Poppenberg, *Die Christologie des Hugo von St. Viktor*. (Westphalia: Herz Jesu-missionhaus Hilstrup, 1937).

³² *ST* IIIa q 2 a 6 and q 50 a 4.

³³ Richard Cross, "Homo Assumptus in the Christology of Hugh of St Victor: Some Historical and Theological Revisions", *The Journal of Theological Studies* vol. 65-1 (April 2014): 62-77.

³⁴ Paul Rorem, *Hugh of Saint Victor*, 1 edition (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

noting and sometimes engaging the most important writers from the previous generations of secondary literature.

In addition to the above contemporary writers who each contribute monographs on Hugh in particular, there are two more contemporary medievalists whose focus, while not solely on Hugh, is nonetheless formative of my perspective. The first is Margot Fassler. In *Gothic Song: Victorine Sequences and Augustinian Reform in Twelfth-Century Paris*, Fassler gives an excellent treatment of Hugh's relation to church art and architecture, liturgy, and music, reading Hugh's theology in the context of the liturgical reform goals of the Augustinian canons.³⁵ Fassler's work is thus important for my communal/ecclesial situation of Hugh's theology.

The second is Mary Carruthers. Carruthers' works *The Book of Memory*, *The Medieval Craft of Memory*, and *The Craft of Thought* are central especially to my chapter IV on meditation.³⁶ Carruthers' insight that meditation is at once memory and imagination, that it is in fact each of these as it is the other, is crucial to my elaboration of the central place of meditation within Hugh's exegesis. Further, lines of insight opened by Carruthers' research into medieval memory techniques and thought-craft are basic to my perspective on Hugh.

³⁵ Margot E. Fassler, *Gothic Song: Victorine Sequences and Augustinian Reform in Twelfth-Century Paris*, 2nd ed. edition (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011).

³⁶ Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, 2 edition (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200*, First Paperback Edition edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Mary Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski, eds., *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, 1st Pbk. Ed edition (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003).

In addition to the above writers, the work of a number of contemporary and 20th century writers is also relevant to my project in minor and background ways. C. Stephen Jaeger treats Hugh's *de Inst.* against the backdrop of the earlier cathedral school model of education.³⁷ Lenka Karfíková treats Beauty in Hugh's thought.³⁸ Edgar de Bruyne treats Hugh's aesthetics in the context of other medieval figures.³⁹ Grover Zinn explores the 'mandala' character of Hugh's spiritual drawings, which connects to my exploration of the synthetic and divine unitive aspirations of Hugh's *Ark* treatises.⁴⁰ In a number of important and relevant studies, Roger Baron attends to Hugh's spirituality and pursuit of Wisdom.⁴¹ Beryl Smalley gives an early and influential Anglophone account of Hugh's exegesis, capturing the comprehensively exegetical and synthetic vision of Hugh's theology and mysticism, and opining, as already noted, about the inevitable failure of such a unified project in subsequent generations and centuries, and gently castigating Hugh for his allegoresis and mystical proclivities out of sympathy for the aspects of his thought that seem like precursors to modern historical critical biblical studies.⁴² De Lubac, for his part, does not share Smalley's lack of sympathy for premodern spiritual exegesis, leading him to criticize her in the long section devoted to Hugh in the third

³⁷ C. Stephen Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 950-1200* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

³⁸ Lenka Karfíková, *De Esse Ad Pulchrum Esse. Schönheit in Der Theologie Hugos von St. Viktor*, vol. VIII, Bibliotheca Victorina (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols Publishers, 1998).

³⁹ Edgar de Bruyne, *Etudes d'esthétique médiévale, tome 1* (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1998).

⁴⁰ Zinn, "Mandala Symbolism and Use in the Mysticism of Hugh of St. Victor," *History of Religions* 12, no. 4 (1973): 317–341, doi:10.1086/462685.

⁴¹ Roger Baron, "Science et sagesse chez Hugues de Saint-Victor." (Paris, Lethielleux, 1957); Hugh of Saint-Victor? *La contemplation et ses espèces*, Monumenta Christiana selecta ; v. 2 (Issued also as the editor's thesis, Paris, with title: De contemplatione et ejus speciebus, 1958); Roger Baron, *Etudes sur Hugues de Saint-Victor* (Paris Desclee, De Brouwer, 1963).

⁴² Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*.

volume of his still in many respects unsurpassed *Medieval Exegesis*, in which he highlights Hugh's admirable balance as a thinker and the tropological orientation and emphasis of Hugh's concerns.⁴³ Finally, René Roques treats Hugh in a section of *Structures théologiques*, in which he mentions the importance of humility in Hugh's thought, an understudied feature of Hugh's thought whose importance I begin to bring out in chapter 5.⁴⁴

0.2.2 Literary Prospectus

This dissertation is uniquely poised because, in no small part, of the excellent theological and historical literature on Hugh that has emerged – in English no less – in the last decade. Coolman, Harkins, and Rorem loom large – Coolman and Harkins on my committee – and the all-important caveat about seeing further standing on the shoulders of giants applies manifestly to the present project.⁴⁵ These writers display a depth and breadth in textual and historical attentiveness to which, all too often, I only aspire. Nevertheless, it is the opinion of this author that this project is in an important respect enabling us to see farther. Rorem notes that *On the Three Days* is “full of significance

⁴³ Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, Mich. : Edinburgh: Eerdmans, 2009).

⁴⁴ René Roques, *Structures Théologiques, de La Gnose À Richard de Saint-Victor; Essais et Analyses Critiques.*, [L.éd.], Bibliothèque de l'Ecole Des Hautes Etudes. Sciences Religieuses 72e v (Paris, Presses universitaires de France, 1962).

⁴⁵ Andrew Salzmänn's as yet unpublished Boston College dissertation grasps and explores the importance of the third member of Hugh's triads in its connection with pneumatology and spirituality. This generation of monographs is itself made possible in part by giants Fassler and Carruthers, both still doing excellent work in Victorine studies.

for Hugh's overall theological output"⁴⁶ and this high estimate still hazards being too low. Coolman has noted that Hugh's theology admits coherence from many perspectives, and this is correct. Yet, the present project proceeds in the conviction that the vantage of Hugh's theology from the paschal mystery is the best vantage from which to see and synthesize all, or at any rate much, that is best in his theology, while creating the opportunity of sidelining that which is worst, which is to say his Pelagian-controversy-era Augustinian doctrine of grace in which the LORD seems to grant the grace which alone saves from eternal damnation all too sparingly.⁴⁷ In particular, the present project offers the vantage from which to deepen the aptness of Coolman's interpretation of Hugh as a theologian of 're-formation' while disclosing and exploring, as Coolman's monograph does not, the christological outworking of this claim with regard to the three days of Christ's saving work. In short, to say that Hugh's is a theology of re-formation means it is a theology in which all things are being reformed in Christ's paschal mystery, in which they are incorporated by the Holy Spirit. The rich textual, historical, and pedagogical attentiveness of Rorem's and Harkins' studies – including in Harkins' case a rich attention to Augustine himself along with Hugh's sources in the prior Latin tradition – is also best understood as a means of subjective participation in Christ's objective work.

⁴⁶ Rorem, *Hugh of Saint Victor*, 62.

⁴⁷ This approach, note, proceeds at one level from theological convictions I bring to the text, which are themselves influenced by the 20th century ecumenical Barth-Bulgakov-Balthasar 'christological revolution'. At another level, it proceeds from a tension it finds within Hugh's own thought – which I do not draw out – between his claim in his doctrine of God that goodness/kindness is most fundamental in God and the limited election tradition he inherits from Augustine. To be clear, in my exposition of Hugh (in partial contrast to the 'Hugonian' constructive framework I develop) I do not, or do not intend to, flatly contradict his explicit statements; rather, I showcase as implicitly all-sufficient the christocentric portions of his thought, and those which are hence in accord with his own view of divine goodness.

Likewise, Harkins' very important overturning of the Aquinas-Poppenberg-Principe claim that Hugh's theology is perhaps unintentionally Nestorian points us to christology and paschal mystery as the heart of Hugh's whole theological perspective. Indeed, another key contribution of the present project is to do the systematic work of connecting Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union with his doctrine of the atonement in order to disclose the linguistic coherence of his christological and soteriological thought. Moreover, treating Hugh's thought from its paschal center – locus at once of Trinity, history, contemplation, morality – discloses and makes possible a new assessment (which I don't here offer) of the extent to which Hugh's synthesis enables his followers in the Victorine-Franciscan stream, particularly Bonaventure (which Bonaventure himself perhaps noticed).

Finally, a note about the present project with respect to the long and fundamental contribution of Margot Fassler. As these chapters were being revised for my March 2018 dissertation defense, I had the pleasure of hearing Fassler lecture on Hugh and the liturgy of the Abbey of St. Victor – a site for which we have, she emphasized, more resources than any other of medieval times.⁴⁸ With respect to the Victorines, we are rich in material culture! The present study is a systematic and historical retrieval of Hugh's theology, almost entirely inattentive to both liturgy and material culture. Yet, I think I am on solid ground in suggesting that this study is a fine (dare I hope) counterpart to Fassler's study, coming from the systematic side where hers comes from the material and liturgical. To say that paschal mystery is theologically central is to say that liturgy is

⁴⁸ This was at Villanova University's annual Patristics, Medieval, and Renaissance Conference in 2017, at which Fassler was a keynote speaker.

central, and vice versa. To identify paschal mystery as the key objective polarity of Hugh's theology is to say that song and eucharist are, for Hugh as for his brother canons, the people they serve and the lay scribes they employed, the central space of the responsive and participatory subjective polarity. The incarnate Word personally died and rose in history and sent his Spirit, and all the Victorine paths of scholarship and studiosity, of meditation and contemplation, thence lead to the liturgy, again and again. So I hope the present theological study might be, in whatever small ways it may turn out to be, a worthy companion volume to *Gothic Song*, which everyone already knows is a great book anyhow.

0.3 THE CHAPTERS

This study is comprised of three parts and a total of eight chapters: three chapters in Part One, four in Part Two, and one long chapter in Part Three. Part One explores the objective polarity of Hugh's thought, Part Two the subjective, and Part Three attempts a contemporary 'Hugonian' theological engagement with *Laudato Si*'s call for ecological conversion as it relates especially to eco-christologies.

Chapter 1 is titled, "Unification in the Paschal Mystery I: The Triune LORD's Act *in se* and in the Soteriological Economy in Hugh of St. Victor's *On the Three Days*."

This chapter brings out the way in which the paschal mystery is the central re-forming form, or instantiation of divine form impressing creaturely matter, in history. The Triune

LORD is revealed in the three days of the paschal mystery which themselves unite and enact the work of the LORD – appropriated to the Holy Spirit – in history’s three ‘days’ or ages. Another way to say this is that history, as a whole, mirrors the three days of the paschal mystery by which God unites creation to God. Chapters 2 and 3 deepen the treatment of the objective polarity begun in Chapter 1 by treating Hugh’s christology, both the hypostatic union and the work of Christ. Chapter 2, “The Identity of Jesus Christ: Hugh’s Objective Christology of Assumption and Passover,” argues first that in Hugh’s theology the motive for the incarnation is love, and its goal saving union. I then interpret Hugh’s doctrine of the hypostatic union itself, and show that in Hugh’s understanding Christ’s human nature is constituted as assumed by, and so having passed over into, union with, in, and as the divine person of the Word/Son. Hugh’s preferred analogy here comes from his theological anthropology, and I investigate Hugh’s doctrine of the hypostatic union with reference to the debate between Franklin Harkins and Richard Cross. Moving into Chapter 3, “Dying, Buried, Rising: The Three Days of Hugh’s Objective Soteriology and the Degrees of Theological Language,” I argue that Hugh’s doctrine of the hypostatic union – which I have in Chapter 2 characterized as one of ‘hierarchical identity’ – matters to Hugh due to soteriological concerns: only a doctrine of the hypostatic union which affirms that all that Christ does and suffers is really done and suffered (paradoxically) by the impassible divine Son is capable of consonance with the Church’s core biblical and creedal narrative, and so orthodoxy. The three days of the paschal mystery, for Hugh, work to re-form the human person so as to produce (ultimately eschatological) divine union. Progressive re-formation is the signature of

Hugh's soteriology of the 'days.' I accordingly suggest that adequate interpretations of Hugh's soteriology ought to read his diverse elements with the synthetic grain of his own thinking. The example I explore at greatest length is Hugh's reception of Anselmian theological notes regarding the work of Christ. On the scheme of the three days, which I argue also works as a scheme of the degrees of perfection of theological language (since it correlates to the historical revelation of the full Trinity of persons which alone, and pneumatologically, makes possible the highest recognition: *Deus caritas est*), Hugh's Anselmian notes, I show, are the language of 'day one' or of Good Friday. They are the least revealing of God's essence, and yet have an essential role to play in the process of human reformation. The turn to language, in its coincidence with reformation in Christ, at the end of Chapter 3 itself prepares the way for my identification in Chapters 5-7 of relatively discrete 'lexical fields' which themselves correspond to the three days of the paschal mystery and to their re-forming work.

Part Two is titled, "Subjective Christological Polarity: Spirituality and Theology in Christ," and its first chapter is Chapter 4, "Unification in the Paschal Mystery II: Human Participation in the Triune LORD's Re-Forming Activity in Hugh of St. Victor's *On the Three Days*." This chapter, recall, is the subjective counterpart to Chapter 1. In Chapter 4, then, I lay the foundation for the rest of Part Two by exploring initially the spirituality and theology which characterize *On the Three Days*. This involves investigating the way in which Hugh's various triads correspond to the three days "for us and for our salvation", with attention to one triad especially and in particular: the triad of intensities of intellectual activity: cogitation, meditation, contemplation. This triad is key

because of its relation to Hugh's practice of theology. The practice of theology, for Hugh, is comprised of meditative practices which are ordered to contemplative union with God and to works of love. The three remaining chapters of Part Two are their own triad, thematized according to the three days of Christ's Passover: Chapter 5 is "Dying", Chapter 6 "Buried", and 7 "Rising." These explore, in an in-depth way – or as in-depth as has been possible in the time in which I have been able to work on this dissertation – the spiritual and theological practices by which we participate in Christ and so pass over into union with the Son who brings us into the shared and eternal life of the Trinity. Major emphases of Chapter 5, "Dying," include memorization, humility, and history, while Chapter 6, "Buried", traces the practices (meditative and exegetical and with respect to both Scripture and the world) by which, hidden away and in an outward silence, we interiorly ascend and are illumined by the Truth of the incarnation. Hugh's theological practice is diagnosed as receptive-constructive: receptive of the forms of Christ revealed in history, and on their basis constructing theological thought ever higher, ever deeper, ever anew in pursuit of Christ's own fullness. Chapter 7, "Rising", brings with it heavy connotations of love, joy, and divine desire: practices of love for God and neighbor, and the love for which we long and pant by mystical prayer for the nuptial union with the Son only realized in the eschaton – itself the topic explored last.

To wax 'Hugonian', there is already a 'structural' completeness to the dyad of Parts One and Two, and yet, as Hugh's triads themselves make so exquisitely clear, this dyad needs to be fulfilled and completed in love as a triad. Hence, Part Three, comprised of one long chapter, aims in a new way at both the mystical and the practical fullness of

love in Hugh's thought. This is an attempt at Hugonian theology today, prompted by *Laudato Si'* and in remembrance of our historical context of ecological decline.

Springing from Byrne SJ's criticism that *LS* is light on biblical, and specifically Pauline, christology, I move into a mystical, systematic, and practical key. The subjectively christological "ecological conversion" for which Pope Francis calls depends on a thick enough objective christology to render its mystical and moral summons crystal clear, coherent, and compelling. Yet, christology is notably in deficit in many eco-theologies, which all too often do the heavy lifting from one or another rendition of the doctrine of creation alone. I hence engage two living eco-theologians who offer systematic christologies: Sallie McFague and Celia Deane-Drummond. McFague's christology is, I argue, inadequate in various respects and, in specific, inadequate to the need *LS* addresses, while Deane-Drummond's christology is in crucial respects very adequate. Hence, I draw on Deane-Drummond's christology to dialogically (if all too briefly) update Hugh's vision in *On the Three Days*. This all has a mystical and practical payoff. In the structure of *LS*, I argue, the three days of the paschal mystery are discernible. This is a key to effective spiritual, pastoral, and personal-moral appropriation of the encyclical. Further, I hazard the suggestion that the Church's taking seriously the implementation of *LS* might look like the promulgation and promotion of a revised Cursillo-style retreat, since this retreat form already accentuates our spiritual participation in the 'three days' in sequence.

0.4 BON VOYAGE!

To the reader who has read this far I owe a debt of gratitude as he or she passes over to Chapter 1. Maybe the dissertation itself will pay it? – and yet, I hope that it will not so pay it as to keep me from remaining in it. “Owe no one anything, except to love one another.”⁴⁹ And I am in a deeper debt still to another group who may or may not appear. An introduction, after all, “is only the cradle of a book, letting it glide toward the water and toward the open sea, so that it may begin its crossing. A welcome to those who embark for the second time!”⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Rom. 13:8; Søren Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, ed.s, trans.s Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University, 1995), 175-204.

⁵⁰ Jean-Louis Chrétien, *The Unforgettable and the Unhoped For*, trans. Jeffrey Bloechl (New York: Fordham, 2002), xxii.

PART ONE

1.0 UNIFICATION IN THE PASCHAL MYSTERY - OBJECTIVE POLARITY: THE TRIUNE LORD'S ACT IN SE AND IN THE SOTERIOLOGICAL ECONOMY IN HUGH OF ST. VICTOR'S ON THE THREE DAYS

Hugh's early treatise *On the Three Days* culminates in a dazzling display in which all ontological levels of reality, all history, and the individual human person responding to divine grace are being *integrated within* the Trinity's self-manifesting and reconciling act in Jesus Christ's dying, being dead, and rising. All things, in both 'vertical' (ontological and hierarchical) and 'horizontal' (historical) axes, are recapitulated and united in the event of the paschal mystery. The scope of the recapitulation – emerging from the eternal Wisdom of God and the Triune God's immanent love-life and recapitulating the entire developing field or 'order' of created history – is universal. Hugh here presents us with the practice of Trinitarian doctrine as a global interpretation of reality emerging from within and oriented toward the Triune God's self-manifestation and self-signification in Jesus Christ's Passover through death to eschatological eternal life.⁵¹ I suggest that in *On the Three Days* Hugh gives us this spiritual-theological practice in the form of a repeatable and adaptable *outline* which offers much to nourish

⁵¹ On the practice of trinitarian doctrine as evoking a global interpretation of reality see Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 8.

our reflection about the contemporary practice of theology within the historically-situated Christian faith. This chapter begins our reception of Hugh's practice of Trinitarian doctrine in history.

The task of the first chapter of this project is to show what Hugh is doing theologically and christologically in *On the Three Days*, particularly in its dramatic ending, in a way that will ground our approach to and reception of Hugh's spirituality and practice of theology in the chapters that make up Part Two. In this chapter, then, I begin by exploring *On the Three Days* from the objective polarity of the LORD's act, exploring each of the levels of ontological and historical reality thus entailed, in a way that will be continued along the subjective polarity in Chapter 4. Chapter 4 is foundational to Part Two as this chapter is foundational to Part One. Part One explores the LORD's act in Christ's Passover – its subsequent chapters dig deeper into Hugh's christology – while Part Two investigates the spirituality and meditative practice of the human response. This dance of the two parts applies *in nuce* to chapters 1 and 4 as foundational to the other chapters.⁵² Taken together, one can see from these two Parts that the paschal mystery itself looms large as a spiritual, existential, and, in a particular mysterious way, *historical* context for Hugh's theological practice. I will hence argue below that the

⁵² Chrétien elegantly gives voice to the state of affairs to which Hugh also bears witness: "For the Christian faith, this song [of the world that offers the world to God] is possible only by an *event* that precedes our own possibilities, and springs from the loving divine freedom alone. The only song that irreversibly says *Yes* is the Paschal song: it takes place only in the passion and resurrection of the incarnate Word.... No one participates in resurrection unless they have truly participated in death.... The recapitulation or bringing together (*anakephalaiôsis*), 'under Christ as head' of 'everything in the heavens and everything on earth' spoken of in the Letter to the Ephesians is the very event, the very advent, of the offering of the world to God, the site from which the song of the world becomes possible." Jean-Louis Chrétien, *The Ark of Speech*, trans. Andrew Brown (New York: Routledge, 2004), 146.

paschal ‘form’ here displayed should be understood as the most normative and decisive instance of divine form impressing itself on created matter in Hugh’s theology. This decisive instantiation turns out to have implications for the overarching biblical or soteriological narrative shape of Hugh’s thought, and for the particular concepts he employs. Hence, the ‘three days’ of the paschal mystery are the key to what Hugh means, most deeply, by ‘form’ and ‘reform’ in his theology. The paschal mystery is the form that norms Hugh’s practice of theology: it is the form and the divine act by which the human person repeatedly reforms herself cooperatively in the Spirit (as explored in Part Two). Moreover, I show that there is an underappreciated and significant pneumatological and eschatological strain in the theology Hugh offers in *On the Three Days*, one significant to my overarching argument in this project.⁵³ The main story in this chapter, as in *On the Three Days*, is that the LORD is uniting all things to God in the three days of Christ’s Passover.

1.1 THE UNIFICATION OF ALL THINGS IN THE TRIUNE GOD’S PASCHAL WORK – HUGH’S CULMINATION IN *ON THE THREE DAYS*

The theologian who tasks herself with showing what Hugh is doing at the end of *On the Three Days* faces a challenge. Hugh’s conclusion on the one hand ties together in

⁵³ While ‘history’ is recognized as an important theme in Hugh, eschatology is not. This is largely (and understandably) due to the fact that the later sections of *On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith* are often quotations from Augustine and others, without much of Hugh’s own voice. They seem unfinished.

an impressive integration what has come before in his treatise. To fully appreciate what Hugh does here is thus to appreciate what he has done in this treatise prior to this moment. Yet, on the other hand, even a close reading of the path of the treatise leading up to Hugh's culminating finish does not adequately prepare Hugh's reader for what she sees there. The finishing integration arrives with an interruptive force, making all that has come before warm and luminous in ways it would not otherwise be. Indeed, Hugh's conclusion can be described as "stunning" without any hint of rhetorical excess.

Thus, instead of preparing us for what Hugh does, I am going to let us be stunned by it. I invite you, reader, to stand with me, so to speak, on a great mountain precipice from which we can see a vast distance, the surrounding valleys and villages and the sunrise, so that we look together at the magnificent view Hugh offers us, before we discuss what it is we have seen. As I have intimated, this approach might not lend an altogether different experience from that of the first-time sequential reader of Hugh's text. It is only just before the sentence with which I begin that Hugh tips his hand for his reader to see the deep meaning of the 'three days' his title mentions. The allusion, textually, is to Hosea 6:2's "He will bring us to life after two days, and on the third day he will raise us up."⁵⁴ Hugh has been working with various triads throughout his text,

⁵⁴ Kereszty notes that this is the only Old Testament passage that explicitly associates 'raising up' with the 'third day'; hence it is an Old Testament allusion which would have been noticed by the early Christians as pertaining to Jesus Christ only if, he argues, they already thought of the resurrection as accomplished on the third day. "Why does the kerygma claim that Jesus "was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures"? The only Old Testament text that mentions some sort of resurrection on the third day is Hosea 6:2: "On the third day he will raise us up, to live in his presence." The prophet is speaking here about the metaphorical raising up of Israel after Israel was rent and struck for her guilt. This text then seems an unlikely choice for describing the personal resurrection of Christ, unless the apostolic Church understood from the beginning that Jesus has embodied in himself and lived out the destiny of the eschatological Israel. The phrase "on the third day" in Hosea 6:2 seems to have directed the disciples to this prophecy. "On the third day," however, could have caught the

and finally we start to hear about these three days. Moreover, the genre of Hugh's treatise (about which I will say more below) is itself a matter of complexity, and yet, as Hugh's translator, Hugh Feiss, points out, it is "written in a captivating Latin style" (51). The partially sermonic, spiritual style of Hugh's rhetoric lends itself to being experienced in a substantial dose, prior to discursive analysis. So, let us listen and look together. Here are the last two and a half paragraphs of Hugh's treatise.

As he [God] wished to have three days in order to work out our salvation in Himself and through Himself, so he gave three days to us in order that we might work out our salvation in ourselves through Him. But because what was done in Him was not only a remedy, but also an example and a sacrament, it was necessary that it happen visibly and outwardly, so that it might signify what needed to happen in us invisibly. Therefore, His days are external; our days are to be sought internally. (III.27.2)

We have three days internally by which our soul is illumined. To the first day pertains death; to the second, burial; to the third, resurrection. The first day is fear; the second is truth; the third is charity. The day of fear is the day of power, the day of the Father. The day of truth is the day of Wisdom, the day of the Son. The day of charity is the day of kindness, the day of the Holy Spirit. In fact, the day of the Father and the day of the Son and the day of the Holy Spirit are one day in the brightness of the Godhead, but in the enlightening of our minds it is as if the Father had one day, the Son another, and the Holy Spirit another. Not that it is to be believed in any way that the Trinity, which is inseparable in nature, can be separated in its operation, but so that the distinction of persons can be understood in the distribution of works. (III.27.3)

When, therefore, the omnipotence of God is considered and arouses our heart to wonder, it is the day of the Father; when the wisdom of God is examined and enlightens our heart with recognition of the truth, it is the day of the Son; when the kindness of God is observed and enflames our hearts to love, it is the day of the Holy Spirit. Power arouses fear; wisdom enlightens; kindness brings joy. On the day of power, we die through fear. On the day of wisdom, we are buried away from the clamor of this world by contemplation of the truth. On the day of

disciples' attention only if, in their mind, it pointed to a significant circumstance of Jesus' resurrection. It either implies their knowledge of the discovery of the empty tomb on the third day or that of the first appearances of the risen Christ on the third day or, possibly, both." Roch A. Kereszty, *Jesus Christ: Fundamentals of Christology*, 3rd Ed. (Staten Island: St. Paul's, 2002), 40.

kindness, we rise through love and desire of eternal goods. Therefore, Christ died on the sixth day, lay buried in the tomb on the seventh, and rose on the eighth day, so that in a similar way through fear the power of God on its day may first cut us away from carnal desires outside, and then wisdom on his day may bury us within in the hidden place of contemplation; and finally, kindness on its day may cause us to rise revived through desire of divine love. For the sixth day is for work; the seventh, for rest; the eighth, for resurrection. (III.27.4)

In what we have just seen Hugh do, all things (or at least all redeemed things – there are complexities here) are integrated in the paschal mystery, in Christ’s dying, burial, and rising. The paschal mystery is the norming theme of his treatise, unrevealed until the conclusion. Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday – the triduum of the paschal mystery – is, I will argue below, the central *form* by which the LORD, for Hugh, integrates and reforms all things. Hugh’s drawing together of all things within the paschal mystery is thus the culmination of a treatise which, while short, is yet boundless in compendious scope and contemplative potential. Indeed, at the culmination of his treatise, Hugh shows all of creation and history, including his reader, being unified in the three days of Christ’s Passover. Moreover, as Hugh displays it, the paschal mystery is structured somehow trinitarianly.⁵⁵ In encountering Jesus Christ we encounter a divine person who is also fully human, spiritual and material, soul and flesh, such that every ontological order of creation is manifested in Christ’s person. Christ is the Word, soul, and flesh, as Hugh (with much traditional precedent) will say elsewhere – and Christ’s embodiment of all ontological levels of reality would seem to be the necessary condition

⁵⁵ Each of the three days of the paschal mystery corresponds to the progressive and cumulative historical revelation of one of the Triune persons – the resurrection being the initial apocalypse of the Holy Spirit.

for his unifying them all in himself.⁵⁶ As I will eventually discuss below in relation to the practice of theology depicted in this treatise, Hugh locates the discursive theological craft – meditation – within the spiritual life, as responsive inclusion in the Trinity’s action in the paschal mystery. Particularly, Hugh associates the craft of theology with Christ’s being dead, ‘buried’, with a stillness of body, which is yet, at its most intensive levels of activity, brightly alive to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

1.1.1 The Shape of On the Three Days

A sense of the broad shape of the treatise which terminates in the paschal mystery is helpful for understanding all that Hugh draws together in his conclusion. The trajectory of discursive thought which here ends with Christ’s Passover began initially with “visible things” and moved to “invisible ones”: “we passed first from the corporeal creation to the incorporeal, that is, to the rational creation, and then from the rational creation we arrived at the Wisdom of God” (III.25.1). This movement from visible created forms to rational creation, and thence from the human soul to the Unity and Trinity of God, all happens in parts I and II of Hugh’s text. In this itinerary Hugh follows what he calls the “order of cognition” (*ordo cognitionis*, III.25.2, 3). In the third and final part of his treatise, Hugh will follow the “order of creation” (*ordo conditionis*). Having ascended, Hugh will now descend. Having ascended from the visible immensity, beauty, and utility of worldly forms to the persons of the Trinity, Hugh will now descend again, bringing the “light” he or his reader has seen while contemplating the Trinity to

⁵⁶ *On the Sacraments* 2.1.9, Deferrari pp. 230-36.

bear on the task of living spiritually within history. In the words of Paul Rorem, Hugh and his reader now “follow the creator’s own descent, the downward way of creating, from the invisible to the visible, from the rational creature to the bodily creature, in other words, back down to earth.”⁵⁷ Rorem suggests that “[t]his is a complex and important point, a distinctively Victorine turn on spiritual or “mystical” experience” (64). Yet the descent Hugh follows as the ‘order of creation’ is not only a descent downward along a vertical ontological axis. What Hugh actually depicts, particularly in the paschal and personal culmination, is also the order of creation as the order of developing history, the soteriological *ordo* of God’s works of restoration through Christ continuing even into the present moment and beyond. I try to capture this complex intertwining of ontology and temporality in Hugh’s ‘order of creation’ with the unwieldy term ‘ontochronological.’ To say that the order of creation is ontochronological is to say that it follows the unfolding drama of divine action in and as the historied creation. Hugh’s interest in narrating this order includes his concern for the salvation of his reader: in one sense, the treatise’s ending facilitates the reader’s (ideal) response to the Trinity’s elicitation of love in Christ’s remembered Passover. But the scope of history as depicted in the treatise does not end in the present moment with the reader. Rorem rightly observes that there is a “hint of eschatology” here (65). In fact, I think there is more than a hint. I will argue below that attention to the eschatological currents of this treatise, which coincide with underappreciated pneumatological currents, are of more than minor importance for our appreciation of what Hugh is doing. Seeing rightly the relationship between the paschal

⁵⁷ Paul Rorem, *Hugh of Saint Victor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 64.

mystery and Hugh's eschatology is crucial for understanding the way in which Hugh depicts the practice of theology in history. Seeing clearly and vividly the relationships involved is a large part of the 'receptive' portion of this project. To sum up, in his part III (the 'order of creation') Hugh's treatise re-engages the created world in a way textured by the Trinity's restoring acts in all of history, as recorded in Scripture, and culminating in the synthesis of all these things in the paschal mystery.

The various aspects of reality disclosed and united in the paschal mystery in the culmination of *On the Three Days* can be listed, and these aspects determine the order of my exposition in the rest of this chapter and chapter 2. The list runs: (1) the immanent Trinity's eternal act; (2) the Triune LORD self-manifesting soteriologically in the created economy; (3) the drama of corporeal history as the Spirit draws it into the culminating embrace of the eschaton; (4) the norming enactment of divine form within that corporeal history; (5) the Holy Spirit's granting creation saving participation in that norming enactment of divine form, i.e., participation in Christ's Passover; and (5.1) consequently the sacraments and the central form of the liturgy; (6) the human person being reformed in responsive fear/wonder, contemplation, and love; and finally (7) the craft of discursive theology embedded within the spiritual life of response to the Trinity's self-manifestation in the paschal act. Aspects (1) through (5) will be treated in this chapter, (6) and (7) in chapter 2, while the action of the Spirit in the liturgy (5.1) is a kind of hinge between the two chapters, the passage from the objective polarity to the subjective, or, better, the unification of the subjective within the objective.

1.2 OBJECTIVE POLARITY – TRIUNE LORD *IN SE* AND IN HISTORY

1.2.1 The Immanent Trinity

The spiritual life of responsiveness to the paschal mystery Hugh offers in *On the Three Days*, and the craft of discursive theology such a life includes, are ultimately rooted in the inner life of the Triune God. The LORD's inner life is the "region of light" (III.26.1) which the one who contemplates in some sense, and fleetingly, sees, and from which the contemplative returns bearing "light." Hugh maintains that "the day of the Father and the day of the Son and the day of the Holy Spirit are one day in the brightness of the Godhead", and that "the Trinity... is inseparable in its nature" (III.27.3). Moreover, Hugh speaks of God as both the ultimate interior reality and the most comprehensive reality framing all else. In discussing how in the human mind the order of cognition always precedes but leads to the order of creation, Hugh says by way of contrast that "we who are outside cannot return from the things within, unless we first have penetrated the interior things with the eye of the mind" (III.25.3). The Triune God, for Hugh, is the ultimate 'interior thing', the final 'interior reality' the human mind is sometimes given "tenuous admittance" to contemplate (III.25.3). The Triune God is so interior to us that we ourselves appear as relatively "outside" (III.25.3) – a formulation evocative of St. Augustine's claim that God is interiorly nearer to us than we are to ourselves (*interior intimo meo*, in *Confessions* III.6.11). At the same time, Hugh also speaks of God as the most comprehensive reality bounding or framing all else. Perfectly

omnipresent, “filling all things,” God “contains but is not contained” (II.19.11). When we consider Hugh’s conclusion to *On the Three Days*, whether we seek to understand the deepest interior reality mysteriously manifesting itself in the paschal mystery, or whether we think of the ultimate comprehensive frame bounding or including the event of the paschal mystery, we speak of the Triune God, and of that god’s inner life. Whether by the inner or outer mirror, we reflectively pass over to God. It is important, then, to consider briefly Hugh’s discussion of the Triune God in *On the Three Days*.

Hugh’s discussion of the immanent Trinity in *On the Three Days* comes in Part II of his treatise, and represents the apex of the ‘order of cognition’. The inner life of the Trinity is discussed from II.21.1-II.24.2. It is preceded immediately, in Part II, by discussion of the unity of the Creator, and this precedence in itself shows that, for Hugh, contemplative cognition of God’s Trinity is higher than contemplative cognition of God’s Unity, immutability, omnipresence, form, providential operation, Wisdom, etc., where any of these is considered apart from God’s Trinity. Hugh introduces his movement ‘up’ along the path of cognition to the Trinity in God in II.21.1 this way:

From where we first advanced with the eye of contemplation from visible things to invisible things we have traversed the path of inquiry to the point that now we have no doubt that the Creator of things is one, without a beginning, without an end, and without change. We found this not outside ourselves, but within ourselves. We might therefore consider whether that same nature of ours may still teach us something further about the Creator. Perhaps it may show us that He is not only one, but three.

Just as contemplation of our inner nature has shown the Creator’s unity, so our nature, Hugh suggests, can teach us that God is three. Such a claim bespeaks the intimate way in which Hugh thinks the human person is created in the “image of God” (Gen. 1:27).

To show us this divine Threeness on the basis of our interior human nature, Hugh leads us to contemplate the rational mind in the act of understanding (II.21.2).

“Certainly”, he writes, “the rational mind (*mens rationalis*) is one and generates from its one self one understanding (*intellectum*).” Beholding “how fine, true, suitable, and pleasant something is”, the mind “immediately loves it and takes pleasure in it.” Hugh here stresses the simultaneity of the act of understanding and the pleasure, love, and delight it gives: “Simultaneously it sees and is awestruck (*stupet*) and is amazed (*miratur*) that it could have found something like that.” The particular act of human understanding, for Hugh, already contains within it a kind of aspiration for eternity: “It would be very glad to gaze upon that thing always, to have it always, to enjoy it always, to delight in it always.” Moreover, even as every particular act of human understanding contains a yearning for eternity, so too the mind, in actively understanding a particular thing with pleasure, loves the whole of reality: “That something pleases the mind through, and because of, itself. There is nothing beyond that something that the mind seeks, because in it the whole (*totum*) is loved.” And, as the mind enjoys the whole of reality in understanding a particular object, there is a sweetness and a peace which suggest the delight and restfulness of eternity: “In [understanding its particular object], contemplation of truth is delightful to see, pleasant to have, sweet to enjoy (*ad fruendum dulcis*). With it, the mind is at peace with itself and never affected with tedium regarding its secret, as it rejoices in its only, but not solitary, companion.” In his treatment of the human act of understanding, Hugh does not attenuate the affections or the sensorial quality of understanding: to understand something is also to taste fleetingly the pleasure of eternal

rest; and an act of understanding is always a foretaste of eternal rest in the cognition of reality as a beloved whole. The implication of this is that, for Hugh, the human act of understanding always has both a sapiential character (as in the association of wisdom, *sapientia* with *sapor scientia*) and, as such, is textured by a longing for the eternal Trinity in God, which Hugh will contemplate through the appropriation of Wisdom to the Son. And there is more. The sapiential character of the human act of understanding finds its fulfillment in love or joy, as it rejoices in the known. Love, for Hugh, is the fulfillment of the wise act of understanding: this relationship reflects the order of the Triune life itself in which the Spirit or Love eternal completes the eternal and incomprehensible act who is God. The human act of understanding reflects this order in God, and has a sort of triadic, sapiential, communal and loving quality. To delight in the feel of one's active understanding is itself evocative of interpersonal communion, of sharing love with another. Yet I am ahead of myself.

Having described the human act of particular understanding in both its aspiration and feel, Hugh next defines it by a clear triadic structure: "Consider these three: the mind, understanding, love (*mentem, intellectum, amorem*). From the mind is born understanding; from the mind and understanding together, love arises" (II.21.3). We here begin to glean in the human mind's act of loving understanding the image of the inner life of the Trinity, and the relationships become clearer as Hugh proceeds: "Understanding arises from the mind alone, because the mind generates (*genuit*) understanding from itself. But love arises neither from the mind alone nor from understanding alone, for it proceeds (*procedit*) from both." Hugh thus describes the structure according to which

Latin Christians affirm that the Father generates the Son from himself, while the Holy Spirit is the love between the Father and the Son proceeding from both. Yet, having described a likeness to the life of the Trinity in the human act of understanding, Hugh is quick to differentiate: “This is the way it is in us. Reason truthfully suggests that it is far different in the Creator” (II.21.4). The difference Hugh emphasizes is that whereas the human mind (*mens*) exists in a way temporally prior to any particular act of understanding and loving, the relationships of persons in the Trinity are co-eternal. They are, as it were, logical relationships, but not at all chronological relationships.

Perhaps what is most interesting in Hugh’s description of the inner life of God, here, is that prior to using the names “Father”, “Son”, and “Holy Spirit”, Hugh begins speaking of the relationship of “the Creator” and “Wisdom”. He does so in terms distantly evocative of biblical passages like Prov. 8:22ff and Wis. 7:22-8:4. It is instructive to observe the way Hugh’s discursive contemplation develops along a continuum of analogy from seeing God’s Wisdom as an essential attribute to recognizing it as an appropriate name for the Son. He writes:

Because we believe that He always was, we must confess that He always had wisdom also. For if He is said to have been at some time without wisdom, there is no way someone could be found who would later make Him wise or from whom he would receive wisdom. It would be totally absurd and foreign to all reason to believe that He who is the fount and origin of all wisdom existed at some time without wisdom. Therefore, wisdom was always in Him, always from Him, and always with Him. Wisdom was always in him, because He who always was wise always had wisdom. Wisdom was always from Him, because He gave birth (*genuit*) to the Wisdom that He had. Wisdom was always with Him, because once born He did not separate Himself from the one who bore Him. He is always born and is always being born, neither beginning to be when He is born, nor ceasing to be born after He has been born. He is always being born because He is eternal; He is always born because He is perfect. Hence, there is one who gives birth and one who is born. The one who gives birth is the Father; the one who is born is the Son.

Because the one who has given birth has always given birth, He is the eternal Father. Because the one who has been born has always been born, He is the coeternal Son of the Father.

The Holy Spirit, here named as Love, is not far behind:

The one who always has had Wisdom, always has loved Wisdom. He who always has loved has always had Love. Therefore, Love is coeternal with the eternal Father and Son. Moreover, the Father is from no one, the Son is from the Father alone, but Love is simultaneously from the Father and from the Son.

Hugh now (II.21.5) maintains the continuity between his discernment of a Trinity of persons with his earlier discernment of the Unity of the divine substance. “So we are forced,” he writes “by unassailable, true reasoning to acknowledge in the Godhead both a trinity of persons and a unity of substance... the three are one (*unum*), because in the three persons is one substance, but the three are not one (*unus*), for just as the distinction of the persons does not divide the unity of the Godhead, so also the unity of the Godhead does not confuse the distinction of persons.”

Hugh has shown us that the human act of understanding, which always has the quality of a sapiential-loving ‘tasting *and* seeing’⁵⁸, is a kind of temporal microcosm of the inner eternal life of the Trinity as contemplated by means of God’s Love of his Wisdom, understood and felt as a fitting analogy. Moreover, this oft-called ‘psychological’ analogy is, for Hugh, not at all in conflict with the more ‘interpersonal’ love emphasis Richard of St. Victor picks up: for Hugh the psychological moves along an analogical continuum into divine attributes and interpersonality.

Yet, having established his own distinctively sapiential rendition of the so-called psychological analogy of the Trinity, Hugh is not yet finished contemplating the inner life

⁵⁸ cf. *gustate et videte* in Ps. 33:9 Vulgate, or 34:8 in most modern English versions.

of the Trinity. Far from it. If in the analogy thus far Wisdom has been in a certain way the key term, here Love comes to the fore – in a way that accords with the way Hugh will later clarify that the “third day” continues and completes the other days. “But it is desirable”, Hugh tells us (II.22.1), “to consider a little more closely how it may be said that the Father loves his wisdom.” In the divine activity of love, Wisdom is beloved in a way that is surpassingly prior to God’s love for all creation, all of Love’s “works”: “let it be far from our minds to believe that God loves His Wisdom on account of the works which He did through Her, when, on the contrary, He loves all His works only on account of Wisdom.” This is manifest in Sacred Scripture, for Hugh, when the Father says “This is my beloved Son in whom I am pleased”.⁵⁹ As Coolman has argued, Hugh’s theological aesthetics is thus grounded in the inner life of God.⁶⁰ What is key for the present reading is that it grounds all of Wisdom’s providences, most decisively the paschal mystery as the distinctive and culminating form of God’s action in history, in the inner love-life of God. Wisdom begins as a christological category, and finds its consummation within pneumatology without ceasing to be christological – and this trinitarian ordering structure will reappear in the theological understanding of history Hugh offers in *On the Three Days*. No less is the holistic spiritual response of the human person, inclusive of theological thinking, included within Wisdom’s providences culminating in Love. All is included in Wisdom as, at once, the Beloved eternal Son of

⁵⁹ cf. Mk 1:11; Mt 3:17; Lk 3:22.

⁶⁰ Coolman, Boyd Taylor, ““In Whom I Am Well Pleased”: Hugh of St. Victor’s Trinitarian Aesthetics.” *Pro Ecclesia* 23:3 (2014), 331-54.

God, and in Wisdom as the essence of God, and in Wisdom enacted in history in Christ's recapitulating Passover. Hugh writes,

In Wisdom is all beauty and truth. She is totally desire, invisible light and immortal life. Her appearance is so desirable that She can delight the eyes of God. She is simple and perfect, full but not excessive, alone but not solitary, one and containing all.

Hugh's claim that Wisdom is supremely beloved of the Father, before all the works of creation, now elicits the question about whether the same can be said of the other persons of the Trinity (II.23.1). Namely, do all these persons who have the same nature have also the same will? Do all will to love the same and reciprocally? Hugh avers that "we will easily find out these things, if we recall to memory the things that have already been said." He answers that if "the Father and the Son and the Love-of-the-Father-and-the-Son are one and are one God, then, since in God alone is true beatitude, it is necessary both that each loves himself and each loves the others reciprocally" (II.23.2). If the persons of the Trinity were united in nature but opposed in will, they would be, he says, not happy, but supremely unhappy. Has Hugh observed unhappy marriages? Can canons regular achieve supremely unhappy community? The gymnastic plasticity of Hugh's discursive dynamism is on display in his conclusion:

Therefore, as Father and Son and the-Love-of-Father-and-Son are one in nature, so also they cannot *not* be one in will and love. They love themselves with one love because they are one. What each loves in the other is not different from what each loves in Himself, for what each *is* is not different from what the other is. What the Father loves in the Son is identical with what the Son loves in Himself, and what the Love-of-the-Father-and-the-Son loves in the Son is what the Son loves in Himself. Similarly, what the Son loves in the Father, that the Father loves in Himself, and what the Love-of-the-Father-and-Son loves in the Father, that the Father loves in Himself. Likewise, what the Father and Son love in their Love is what the Love-of-the-Father-and-Son loves in Himself. Likewise, what the Father loves in Himself is what He loves in the Son and in their Love, and what the Son

loves in Himself is what He loves in the Father and in their Love, and what the Love-of-the-Father-and-the-Son loves in Himself is what He loves in the Son and in the Father. (II.23.3)

In Hugh's verbal virtuosity, the Trinity's unity of will as love refracts through the three persons in a contemplative bloom of crystalline beauty and intellectual abandon – the limit of the heights to which Hugh's discursive contemplation here leads his reader, beyond which, perhaps, only love tastes and sees, as this very logic, this very wisdom, is transfigured in its own culmination in and as love.⁶¹

The dizzying and surpassing inner love of the Trinity into which Hugh guides our contemplations is in some way – and this is our central point – the eternal pattern of the Trinity's developmentally-proceeding creation and culminating historical self-manifestation in the paschal mystery, inclusive of humankind's graced responding. Passing again over his previously cited verse about the Father's pleasure in the Son, Hugh now boldly unfolds it sermonically in the voice of the Father (II.24.2):

“Whatever pleases me does so in Him and through Him. For He is the Wisdom through whom I made all things. In Him I have eternally arranged whatever I have made in time. And the more perfectly I see each work of mine to be in harmony with that first arrangement, the more fully I love it. Do not think that He is only the mediator in the reconciliation of humankind, for through Him also the creation of all creatures becomes praiseworthy and pleasing in my sight. In Him I consider all the works I do, and I cannot *not* love what I see is similar to Him whom I love. The only one who offends me is the one who departs from His likeness.”

Within the inner life of the Trinity, we thus see that Hugh grounds creation, redemption, and – rhetorically – the tropological exigency of the ‘order of creation’ which will

⁶¹ Hugh's view is not so far from the insight that supreme interpersonality coincides with and even entails a supreme unity of nature and will or love. cf. q 2 a 2 of St. Bonaventure, *Disputed Questions on the Mystery of the Trinity* trans. Zachary Hayes (St. Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute, 1979), 147-158.

proceed from the love of the Triune God. Our spiritual and theological posture of responsiveness to the divine act in the paschal mystery is thus situated within the dizzyingly multifaceted and essentially simple love-act of “God only wise”.⁶² By our spiritual participation in Christ, we come to image the supremely Tri-Personal Love.

1.2.2 The Triune Act in the Soteriological Economy.

The paschal mystery represents the culminating, recapitulating, and supremely unifying divine work in creation’s restoration. Hugh tells us that “Christ died on the sixth day, lay buried in the tomb on the seventh, and rose on the eighth day” (III.27.4). Christ’s paschal mystery is the extent and pleromatic heart of the LORD’s saving work in creation, extending, as it does, all the way into external, material corporeality as “sacrament” and “example” (III.27.2). Each “day” in the paschal mystery is appropriated revelationally to one of the Triune persons: Good Friday to the Father, Holy Saturday to the Son, Easter Sunday to the Spirit. The paschal mystery is thus the culmination and maximal material-spiritual instantiation of the Triune God’s activity in the created order as discussed in *On the Three Days*.

Hugh begins discussing the re-forming economic work of the Trinity as soon as he transitions to discussing the order of creation.⁶³ As Hugh transitions from treating the

⁶² “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”, Walter C. Smith, 1867.

⁶³ Hugh’s discussion of the immanent Trinity in *On the Three Days* comes in Part II of the treatise, and represents the apex of the ‘order of cognition’, an apex which, specifically in its Trinitarian and Christological character, itself requires Hugh’s “return” to the “order of creation.” Hugh will always

inner life of the Trinity at the apex of the order of cognition and moves to the ontochronological order of creation, Hugh discursively descends first to the rational creation – the space of angels and of human souls – before descending to the corporeal creation. Yet, before descending to the level of corporeality and materiality, Hugh treats the illumining work of the Trinity in the human mind. It is the light of the Trinity’s inner life, spied by the contemplative, by which God operates in creation to enlighten all souls. This cleansing is described by Hugh in not only Trinitarian but christological terms. In fact, Hugh’s discussion of Jesus as “salvation” in III.26.5 – not yet an explicit discussion of the paschal mystery – is the very context in which temporal, corporeal, historical realities begin to be discussed. Hence, Hugh shows us, within his contemplative and ontological descent, the way in which the person of Christ mediates, uniting to God at once the rational creation and the historical-corporeal creation. He is the Passover for all things to the Father. For Hugh as for St.s John and Paul, creation and history – particularly what Hugh call the “works of restoration” – are “in/through Christ” (Jn. 1:3, 10; Col. 1:16-17). Thus, whereas Hugh established the Wisdom of God (both as an essential divine attribute and as the person of the Son) as the beautiful ordering pattern of creation’s immensity, its formal beauty and truth, and its good utility by which human persons contemplate the inner life of God, Hugh now, in descending and moving forward

stress that, on one level, this return to the order of creation is a result of the frailty of human mutability: “the order of creation always comes again after the order of cognition because, although human weakness is sometimes given tenuous admittance to contemplate interior realities, the ebb and flow of its mutability does not allow it to stay there long” (III.25.3). Yet, just as significant, coinciding with, enfolding, and redeeming this human frailty, Hugh has already offered a Trinitarian and Christological reason – and so a deeper reason – the order of creation follows the order of cognition. To “return” to God after contemplating the Trinity is to “return” to Jesus by imitation and participation in history, on the basis of the sacramental character of the paschal mystery.

in the order of creation, shows us the creational and providential outworking of the Wisdom-Christ pattern. As it is *in se*, so it is *ad extra*: as Wisdom culminates in Love, it discloses in its culminating Goodness the ineffable ground, the paternal font of all divinity and all creation.⁶⁴

In each of the following sections, Hugh's presentation of the contours and aspects of the Trinity's saving work in creation, as it culminates in the paschal mystery, will be progressively unfolded and explored.

1.2.3 The Trinitarian and Paschal Drama of Corporeal History

The paschal mystery, for Hugh, is an historical event which, in its triadic form, sums up the three successive stages of the Trinity's works in history to restore and reform humankind. In fact, Hugh's discourse treats the providentially developing course of corporeal history in a way shaped, at once, by the divine works revelationally appropriated to the persons of the Trinity and by the days of the paschal mystery.

It has often been noted that Hugh gives particular attention to history in his thought, and the exact character of this attention has been debated since the mid twentieth century, most notably by Beryl Smalley and Henri de Lubac.⁶⁵ More recently, Grover

⁶⁴ cf. suggestively *On the Sacraments* 1.2.4-6, 10-12 (Deferrari pp. 31-4) for the order of divine attributes in God which, in Hugh's thought, blossom into the persons to which they are appropriated.

⁶⁵ Smalley argued that, while a mystic, Hugh nonetheless helped establish a space for the modern historical critical study of Scripture. De Lubac rightly counters, in part, by (1) arguing for the identity of Hugh's interest in and further exploitation of the multiple sense of Scripture with that of those interpreters before him running all the way back to Origen, and (2) pointing out the pervasively tropological weight and interest in Hugh's attentions to the literal as well as allegorical senses. Without prejudice to the ways in which Hugh's exegetical craft does indeed attend assiduously to the literal or historical sense – as had Origen's – the present project sounds in agreement with de Lubac,

Zinn began to explore the claim that, for Hugh, *historia fundamentum est*, history is fundamental or foundational, pedagogically and soteriologically in the restoration of the human person.⁶⁶ The work of Franklin Harkins has significantly expanded and deepened this trajectory of interpretation.⁶⁷ Hugh, more than other thinkers of his time (and often before and since) is intrigued by the change and development within history as, most capaciously and normatively, the history of God's saving and restoring works. This historical-developmental emphasis sounds in a distinctive trinitarian key in *On the Three Days*.

When Hugh turns to describe and delimit the successive stages of history in *On the Three Days* he does so in a way that connects their unfolding to the gradual revelation of the three persons in God and to the three days of the paschal mystery.⁶⁸ "First," Hugh writes, "human beings, placed under sin, were rebuked by the law and began to fear God, the Judge, because they knew their wickedness" (III.27.1). The time of the Law, associated with divine judgment and fear, and these divine works are associated with the

on the ground that the three senses of Scripture, for Hugh, are one of his triads, and the pull in his triads is always towards the cumulating culmination of the third member. Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame, 1964). Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture* vol. 3, E. M. Macierowski, trans. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009).

⁶⁶ Grover A. Zinn, "Historia fundamentum est: The Role of History in the Contemplative Life according to Hugh of St. Victor," in *Contemporary Reflections on the Medieval Christian Tradition: Essays in Honor of Ray C. Petry*, ed. George H. Shriver (Durham, NC, 1974), pp. 135-158.

⁶⁷ Franklin T. Harkins, *Reading and the Work of Restoration: History and Scripture in the Theology of Hugh of St Victor* (Toronto: PIMS, 2009).

⁶⁸ For patristic precedent for Hugh's view, consider the words of St. Gregory of Nazianzus: "The Old Testament proclaimed the Father clearly, but the Son more obscurely. The New Testament revealed the Son and gave us a glimpse of the divinity of the Spirit. Now the Spirit dwells among us and grants us a clearer vision of himself. It was not prudent, when the divinity of the Father had not yet been confessed, to proclaim the Son openly and, when the divinity of the Son was not yet admitted, to add the Holy Spirit as an extra burden, to speak somewhat daringly. . . . By advancing and progressing "from glory to glory," the light of the Trinity will shine in ever more brilliant rays." *Oratio theol.*,5,26 (= Oratio 31,26):PG 36,161-163. Quoted in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* no. 684.

person of the Father. “The day of fear is the day of power, the day of the Father” (III.27.3). The first “day” of history, then, spans implicitly, perhaps, from creation, but more explicitly from the fall, and most especially from God’s election of Israel as it receives the covenantal form of Israel living under the Mosaic Law. The emphasis, for Hugh, falls not on the exact span of the “day”, but on the divine action vis-à-vis his people God accomplishes in the day: the rebuke of sin by means of the law which discloses the Father and, inextricably, divine anger at human sin. This span of centuries, this “day”, culminates in, and is recapitulated in, Jesus’ *death* on Good Friday.

It is important to notice that the progression of history’s three “days”, as a metaphor concerned with light or brightness or illumination, tracks the Trinity’s progressive self-revelation in history. In his sense of progressive or unfolding revelation manifesting in turn each of the persons in the Godhead, Hugh’s view, as discussed in my introduction with reference to Joachim de Fiore, is remarkably reminiscent of that of St. Gregory of Nazianzus.⁶⁹ And so the fearful “day” of Israel’s life under divine judgment via the Law is, yet, part of God’s enlightening and reforming work. Commenting on Israel’s recognition of her own wickedness in light of the Law, Hugh writes:

Now, to fear Him was already to recognize (*agnoscere*) Him, because surely they could not fear Him at all, if they had no inkling of Him. Already this recognition was some measure of light. It was already day, but not yet bright, because it was still shadowed by the darkness of sin.

Israel’s life under the divine judgment inscribed in the Law is, then, the morning of the day. Hugh here plays complexly with both a succession of three days as being also, in some sense, an increasing revelation of light within a single day. In the first day, then,

⁶⁹ See note 18 above.

the dark shadows of sin still loom long, yet Israel is being taught to recognize God, and to fear God due to sin.

The first day of history is thus followed by the second day, an increase of the one light. “Therefore,” Hugh writes, “there came the day of truth, the day of salvation, which destroyed sin and illumined the brightness of the previous day.” The Incarnation, for Hugh, is the bright day of truth. Whereas the first day reveals particularly, for Hugh, the divine person of the Father, this second day corresponds to the Son: “The day of truth is the day of wisdom, the day of the Son” (III.27.3). As the sun rises, it destroys and disperses the long shadows of sin. It illuminates all that has come before in the course of Israel’s centuries under the law. A decisive new stage in the Trinity’s self-revelation has come, and this “day” reforms Israel’s fear of God: “It did not take away fear, but turned it into something better” (III.27.1). I will further investigate this transformation “into something better” shortly. Correspondingly – and this is crucial – the clear revelation of the Son increases, but does not supersede, day one’s revelation of the Father. The Father’s love for the Beloved Son makes clear that judgment against sin, and so paternal anger, is not the full picture but occurs within, and because of, a more luminous divine context – itself only fully to be revealed by day three. The second day, for Hugh, culminates in and is recapitulated in – intriguingly – Holy Saturday, the day of Jesus’ burial, as he lies still in the tomb. In its ontochronological trajectory of ‘descent’, the “day” of the Incarnation reaches a limit in the night of the tomb, the night of the Son of God’s burial. But the end is not yet.

The third day, then, follows the first two, and brings with it the pneumatological and apocalyptic fullness of light. Hugh writes,

there was not yet full brightness, until charity was added to truth. For Truth himself says: *“I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when that Spirit of truth comes, he will teach you all truth;”* “all truth,” in order both to take away evils and to reform good things. (III.27.1)

Hugh quotes from John 16:13 in which Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit. The third day of history, then, begins with Resurrection and Pentecost. The pentecostal beginning of Christ’s Church is the new and final day of divine revelation, and of the fullness of divine action, the revelation of the Spirit or Love. “The day of charity is the day of kindness, the day of the Holy Spirit.” Divine action through the fullness of truth or love will, Hugh says, both remove evils and “reform good things.”

In the movement from the first “day” of history to the second, and from the second to the third, there is succession in which the previous does not pass away, but in which the previous is completed and transformed. Hugh bids us pay attention to the relations between these days as they bear on human reformation:

Notice, there are three days: the day of fear, which makes evil manifest; the day of truth, which takes away evil; the day of charity, which restores good. The day of truth brings light to the day of fear; the day of charity brings light to the day of fear and to the day of truth, until charity is perfect and all truth completely manifest, and fear of punishment will pass over (*transeat*) into reverent fear.

As one day succeeds another, the light of the previous day remains, even as it is supplemented and so transformed. The goal of the whole progression is the full manifestation of all truth and the perfection of love. Fear of punishment, like Christ himself as he dies a paschal sacrifice, *passes over* or undergoes a transitus into something new: “reverent fear.” For Hugh, history’s successive ages or days, as they are included in

the three days of Christ's paschal mystery, serve the illumination and reformation of humankind. The third day of history includes the time in which Hugh, and we, live, yet it also exceeds Hugh's and his readers' present moment. This day, the day of the Spirit and of resurrection, is the day of perfecting in charity unto the eschaton. The fullness of this day's brightness is, in fact, the eschaton. When Hugh claims that on this day good things are reformed, he means that we are being reformed in Christ through being ordered, through Christ's resurrection, to our own resurrected life. The Trinity's revealing work, the divine act of self-manifestation and self-signification, is entailed as well: the trajectory of Hugh's thought is implicitly that the person of the Holy Spirit is not fully revealed – and so made invisibly visible to the human contemplative gaze – until the eschaton. The Spirit of Christ only fully appears when all the dead are luminously raised. God's *works* manifest the Holy Spirit when all creation resurgently beholds the children of God and the New Jerusalem like a bride descends (cf. Rom. 8:19; Rev. 21:2). And recall, again, in this light, Hugh's point that the third day completes the illuminations of the second and the first. The Son's apocalypse, the interruptive first-fruits of which is his own resurrection, is only pleromatic when he is seen embodied in many risen sons, and the full revelation of the children is likewise and simultaneously the full revelation of the Father. Hugh does not write all this down, and might not even have found the time to think it in his earthly life, but it would be a mistake to think now that it is not his 'Hugonian' perspective: all I am doing is teasing out the implicit contours of his perspective from what he tells us explicitly. This long final "day" of history yet culminates in and is recapitulated in Christ's resurrection from the dead, the goal of

history present in its midst multiplying in brightness (III.26.6). The drama of history is, principally, a drama of divine self-revelation and reforming action, as the Triune God works through Jesus Christ's dying, being dead, and rising to perfect God's people in the light of love.

An important implication of this pneumatological-eschatological culmination for the present study of Hugh's theology is that Hugh's view of reformation "in melius" is specified at once trinitarianly by the person of the Spirit and Christologically in the relationship of Christ's resurrection to his dying and being-dead, and also by the perfection of Love and the fullness of Truth. These relationships will be further explored and unfolded in Part Two of my project. In displaying Christ's resurrection corresponding to the Spirit and to the "day" of the Church, Hugh does not spell out as much as we would like, yet what he offers is tantalizing. To echo Rorem, he offers (at least) a hint of eschatology, and bids us work out the implication of his thought in light of it. In subsequent sections of this chapter, and in my treatment of 'in melius' in Part Two chapter 7 (7.3.4), the "hint" of eschatology to which Rorem points will start to look more like a deluge: the paschally shaped practice of theology in history is oriented eschatologically to the fulfillment of history's 'third day'. The individual Christian and the Church are invited, by Hugh's thought, to progress both in Truth and Love unto the full light of the day of the Spirit. This day of kindness is the culmination of the reformation accomplished in history in the paschal mystery. In it, the Spirit renews the people of God on pilgrimage toward an eschatological destination whose goodness exceeds that of Eden. These reflections draw us naturally toward a consideration of the

human person as included within the paschal mystery. Yet, first, I need to deepen these reflections on the paschal mystery in corporeal history by directing attention to the way in which the paschal mystery is the supreme and most normative instance of divine form impressing itself on created matter.

1.2.4 Divine Form Enacted Most Normatively in Creation and History

In the foregoing section, we have seen Hugh put all the pieces in place in order for me to make the further argument of this section, namely, that the paschal mystery is the most normative enactment of divine form in creation and history. This is an axiomatic claim and contribution of the present project. The Triune LORD works the ontochronological enactment of divine form in all of history in a way that culminates in the paschal mystery as the center of history.⁷⁰ Hugh's depiction of Jesus Christ's paschal mystery as the culminating recapitulation of all history (past, present, future) discussed in section 1.2.3 above, and the leitmotif of 'reform' in Hugh's theology engaged in this section, together warrant the claim that the paschal mystery is the most normative instance of divine form enacted in the drama of creation and history.

The importance of 'form' and 'reform' as a leitmotif in Hugh's theology has been explored previously and with systematic scope and rigor. Boyd Taylor Coolman reads the historical-dramatic arc of Hugh's theology as a Christocentric Wisdom theology in which rational humans, formed by Wisdom for beauty from their creation, have yet fallen

⁷⁰ Coolman can elegantly observe, "At the heart of the divine work of restoration, then, is the incarnate, reforming presence of the *Forma sapientiae*, the foundation, source, means, and pattern or exemplar of human re-form" (94).

into a de-formed state until humans are re-formed in Wisdom through God's sacramental works of restoration in the history of Israel and the Church. Coolman emphasizes that Jesus Christ himself is Wisdom incarnate, and is the norm and center of all the sacraments of salvation history.⁷¹ It is in Christ that humans are re-formed in Wisdom, to be made, ultimately, better and more beautiful than they were at their initial formation. Coolman further emphasizes the way in which human re-formation occurs through the sacraments (this term has a wide and flexible applicability for Hugh) and through 'practices' – which Coolman delineates as "memory practices", "meditative practices", and "moral practices", culminating at times in the somewhat uncontrollable foretaste of God experienced in prayer that Hugh calls contemplation.

The present study follows Coolman in directing attention to the central importance of *form* and *reform* for Hugh: Jesus Christ himself is the saving *form* of Wisdom in history.⁷² The present study further contends that, in light of the culminating, history-recapitulating centrality of the 'three days' of the paschal mystery in Hugh's treatise *On the Three Days*, the claim should be made and explored that the 'form' of Christ is seen most clearly and normatively in the paschal mystery. In Hugh's thought, the Trinity saves creation through reforming humankind in the image of God, like a seal imprints its image on wax.⁷³ *On the Three Days* depicts Jesus Christ as both 'form' and catalyst for human 'reform'. We see this first in II.24.3, as Hugh sermonically and

⁷¹ cf. the incarnate Christ as "sacrament" and "example" in III.27.2.

⁷² Coolman, 90.

⁷³ *Inst.*, 7 (*OHSV* 1.40:340-42:378). Quotation in Coolman, 201.

tropologically pleads with his reader, improvising in the voice of God the Father as heard in, e.g., Mt. 17:5:

“Therefore, if you wish to please me, be like Him, ‘Listen to Him’. And if by chance you have departed (*discessistis*) from His likeness by acting badly, return by imitating Him. In Him are given the command and the counsel; the command so that you may remain (*persistatis*) steadfast, the counsel so that you may return (*redeatis*). Would that you had kept the commandment! But because you have transgressed the command, at least listen to the admonition, ‘Listen to Him.’ An angel of great counsel is sent to you, and the one who was given to created things for their glory is the same one who comes to the lost for their healing. ‘Listen to Him.’ He is the creator and He is also the redeemer. As God, He created you with me; He alone came to you as a human being with you. ‘Listen to Him.’ For he is the form (*forma*); He is the medicine; He is the example (*exemplum*); He is the remedy. ‘Listen to Him.’ It would have been a happier situation to have always maintained His likeness, but now it will be no less glorious to return to imitation of Him. ‘Listen to Him.’ (II.24.3)⁷⁴

There is indeed a current of Christian Neoplatonic mysticism here: the one who contemplates the Trinity cannot remain long with the Trinity, and so inevitably “departs”/descends/falls from contemplation, and is bidden both “remain” and “return”. One hears echoes of the Neoplatonic ‘procession’, ‘remaining’, and ‘return’, with their long history of reception and constructive reinterpretation by Christian writers of East and West. Appropriately, therefore, in Hugh’s Neoplatonism the inflection falls on God’s acts in history which are able to enfold the sickly response of fallen humanity: to “remain” and “return” to the Trinity means to overcome sin by “imitating” Jesus Christ by the humility of faith. It is in such imitation – a Spirit-aided imitation ultimately of Jesus Christ as he undergoes his Passover – that one returns and is reformed in the “form”

⁷⁴ The Latin text of *On the Three Days* quoted in this chapter is Hugonis de Sancto Victore, *De Tribus Diebus*, cura et studio Dominici Poirel (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002).

of Christ: in imitation of Christ one receives the “medicine” and “remedy” which Jesus Christ is and enacts in exemplary fashion in the paschal mystery.

Hugh again speaks of Jesus Christ as agent of human reformation in III.26.5. He writes, this time riffing sermonically on Psalm 95:2:

Of these days the psalmist sang: “*Announce from one day to the next His salvation*.” What is “his salvation” if not His Jesus? For that is how “Jesus” is translated, that is, “salvation.” He is spoken of as salvation because through Him humanity is reformed (*reformatur*) for salvation.

In *On the Three Days*, the whole history of God’s works of restoration is caught up in the three days of the paschal mystery. The most natural way to read Hugh’s “through Him” in the above quotation is thus to hear Hugh claiming that humanity is reformed through the paschal mystery and its ecclesial-sacramental and individual appropriation. The paschal mystery is the form of human participation in Christ offered by Hugh in *On the Three Days*. This is the case at once ontologically and historically (and so ‘objectively’) and in relation to human spiritual response to Christ in history (and so ‘subjectively’). In the paschal mystery, we see, to play on words a bit, the *forma reformans non normata* or *non formata*, the form that reforms all else but is not itself normed or reformed by any other form. When Hugh speaks of the form of Christ or of Wisdom as it is manifest in creation, and so of human reformation, the paschal mystery is the master sacrament, the norming form at the heart of all the sacraments which reform humankind. This is undeniably how things stand in *On the Three Days* and, particularly as it is thought to be among Hugh’s earliest works, there is even an added historical propriety to reading his other works in light of it.

To make this claim brings us to the cusp of mysteries and insights on the brink of visibility in Hugh's text, which are yet speculatively unexplored in his prose, namely, concerning the hypostatic union in its orientation to the paschal mystery *as a union of divine form and human creaturely form in mutual act*. Hugh maintains divine impassibility in II.20.1 in relation to divine form:

Neither can mutability of form occur in Him. Whatever changes in regard to form changes either through increase or decrease or alteration. But the divine nature admits none of these, which can easily be seen in regard to each of them.

So, mutability of form does not occur in Jesus Christ's divine nature. But, alas, Jesus Christ's human nature is subject to "alteration", the most relevant category above for exploration of the paschal mystery. Hugh writes:

Change in bodies occurs through rearrangement of parts and alteration of qualities. Change in spirits occurs through knowledge and affect. Spirits change according to affect as at one time they are sad and at another joyful. They change according to knowledge when they know now less, now more.

That Jesus Christ's body is changed in the paschal mystery is self-evident: his body is mutilated in both the etymological and the aesthetic sense. In his torture and death Jesus Christ becomes outwardly an "example" and "sacrament" (in the words of III.27.2) of human de-formation, humankind dead in the 'state' or 'ruin' of sin. As Isaiah's prophecy has it, Jesus Christ "had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him" (Isa 53:2, RSV). His bodily form is as destroyed as the razed Solomonic temple.

And this deformation, for Hugh, gives birth to eschatological beauty. The body of sin, as Rom. 6:6 has it, is then destroyed. The tension in the above reflections are only

heightened by the pervasive aesthetic dimension of Hugh's sapiential focus.⁷⁵ The most normative enactment of divine form in creation and history, at once form of divine Wisdom and divine Beauty, includes the mutilation of Jesus Christ's body and soul, which is the mutilation and death of God the Son's humanity, on the cross. Hugh will elsewhere speak of Jesus Christ as "the most beautiful of all".⁷⁶ This raises aesthetic questions of the most jagged variety. Jesus Christ's form is, for Hugh, the most beautiful. In relation to how he ends *On the Three Days*, this leads us to wonder: in praising Christ's beauty, does Hugh here speak of Christ's divine nature, of his risen human nature, of his whole divine-human act of existence? Allow me to extend Hugh's thought by posing questions. Ought we take Hugh's claim that Jesus Christ is most beautiful, and so surpassingly beautiful, to mean that his beauty, as the eternal beauty of Wisdom enacted in creation, consists most decisively in the loving, saving enactment of the paschal mystery itself, which includes the Passover *through* the terminal de-formation of death (and so through the extremity of unlikeness between the beauty of Christ's divine form and the de-formation of his humanity) *into* the eschatological transfiguration of human form by the beauty of divine form in resurrection (and so to the culmination of divine-human union and mutuality of form which is the goal of the incarnation in the first place)? Ought we theorize that, for Hugh, the beauty of Christ in act renders maximally in creation the unrestrained and categorically 'other' beauty of divine form precisely because, including death, Christ's personal act of historical existence first includes in his

⁷⁵ Coolman's work, both in his monograph and especially in the above-cited article "In Whom I Am Well Pleased", connects the aesthetic and sapiential dimensions of Hugh's thought.

⁷⁶ *Soliloquy* 14, translated by Feiss in Hugh Feiss OSB, ed., *On Love: A Selection of Works of Hugh, Adam, Achard, Richard, and Godfrey of St Victor* (Hyde Park: New City, 2012), 208.

divine person the maximum possible *disparity* between creation's mutilated de-formation and divine form's immutable perfection, and second and subsequently in the resurrection traverses this very maximal disparity through resurrection, shining with the eschatological light of eternity – and does all this to *save, restore, reform* and make surpassingly beautiful creation itself and created persons themselves? Indeed, I think these directions are where we ought to see Hugh's theology pointing. And what historical act could compare in dramatic beauty and Wisdom to this? As Hugh will say elsewhere, "Wisdom reaches forth from end to end, above and below. Above in majesty, below in humility. If you look to the heights, no one is more sublime than Christ. If you reach to the depths, no one is more humble. Humbled even to the lowest, exalted even to the highest."⁷⁷ Notice that it is by a sapiential comprehension in Christ's person and a sapiential transversing in Christ's ontochronological enactment, culminating most normatively and definitively in the paschal mystery, that Wisdom includes all things, as beauty, in herself. For Hugh, Wisdom includes eternally and harmoniously in her pattern, protologically and eschatologically, the most drastic and jagged historical contrasts, utter creaturely de-formation (death) and divine form itself, as not opposed and as Beauty in that Christ recapitulates all these things in the paschal mystery. Ergo, Christ is the double form of forms, *forma formae*, including, recapitulating, saving and reforming all.

Further, in Hugh's depiction, and moving now to the subjective polarity of human response, both humanity's de-formation and death, and humanity's graced and

⁷⁷ *Misc.*, I.71 (*PL* 177.507C), trans. Coolman, quoted in Coolman 83-4.

eschatological new life are recapitulated in Jesus Christ's paschal mystery, contemplated theologically from the middle moment of Christ's luminous burial as this moment is fulfilled by the charity of the Spirit. The paschal mystery as the 're-forming' movement of human reformation, spiritually appropriated subjectively and responsively by humankind otherwise lost in the paradoxically de-formed 'state' (here Hugh would use this word ironically) of sin, thus includes within itself the fullness of de-formation and the dissolution of any proud hardening accrued by humankind in the 'state' of sin. Hard and fallen humanity, co-crucified in Christ's death, terminates in the silent being-dead of Holy Saturday. "For a dead person has been absolved from sin" (Rom. 6:7). Thus the importance of the recurring motif of 'humility' in Hugh's thought: humility renders humans soft like wax rather than hard like pride; humility is the way a ruin of a sinner can mirror Christ in his dying and being-dead.⁷⁸ We can validly extend Hugh's thought here by saying that humility, in his eyes, is a posture of 'destructibility', of subjection to and acceptance of one's death, one's co-crucifixion – in hope (cf. Rom. 4:17-22) – before God. For Hugh, humanity's recreation or re-formation in Christ is a genuinely new creation because it includes, in some sense, destruction, full deformation, the full disintegrating wage of sin tasted by the Son of God. Only then, only in the dark terminus of this trajectory in the contemplative obscurity of Holy Saturday is there born in the subject the mysterious inner dynamism of eschatological resurrection life, which progressively and inwardly reforms the people of God "day by day", to echo St. Paul (2 Cor. 4:16). In Christ's Passover, the Triune God most fully and forcefully impresses

⁷⁸ cf. Coolman 201.

divine form on created matter that, through recapitulating and uniting all history in his Passover, the Triune God might impress divine form on all created matter. In this way, the paschal mystery as the divine form's most normative enactment in history determines the responsive form of the human spiritual life.

With regard to my concern to bring out the eschatological content and consequence of Hugh's work, one final note is in order concerning the curiosity of the paschal mystery as an historical form. This is all the more the case given that it is the most normative historical form, the form unifying and so, as it were, 'receiving' and '(re-)constructing' all others. The paschal mystery is both a definite and distinct historical form of the past, and yet it is a form in which the eschatological 'future' of the creature and the eternal "future" of God are fully present, shining their light 'back' into time and history. The paschal mystery, for Hugh, thus names a form that exceeds both our capacity for sustained contemplative perception *and* fallen corporeality's capacity for representation. Divine ontology and creaturely eschatology alike here exceed human reason and imagination. The resurrection is Light and Image, and corporeality-qua-corporeality, for Hugh, is shadow. Divine form shines in, as, and through corporeal-historical form by means of hypostatic identity and excess. For Hugh, the paschal mystery is historical form by way of excess because it is also divine form-in-act by way of identity.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ This gives a sort of Hugonian rationale for the way in which the resurrection appearances in the Gospels are enigmatic and incongruous. To wit: in their pneumatic and eschatological character, Christ's appearances include but exceed our synchronicity. In Brian Robinette's apt words: "While some may argue that the ambiguity in the New Testament witness renders it suspect – the incongruities within and between the narratives, we are told, lead to serious questions about their reliability – the exact opposite is the case. Precisely in and through the paradoxes, tensions, and

1.2.5 The Holy Spirit

The duplex divine-human form of the paschal mystery is participated by all creation, and formed in all creation – explicitly in all redeemed humans – through the action and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The way in which all work of human re-formation is appropriated to the Holy Spirit remains implicit in *On the Three Days* in that it is only in the ‘third day’ of the revelation of the Holy Spirit that it becomes manifest in creation that the three persons operate in the world in a way that is always united. Yet in Hugh’s short treatise *On the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, he makes the Spirit’s role explicit.⁸⁰ Hugh emphasizes that the Spirit is the source of the whole process of human healing and illumination, and of the growth from fear to love. “First he comes to make you fearful; but he comes in the end to make you loving” (III). Thus the infusion of the Spirit seems violent due to our fallen opposition to the Spirit, yet in such a way as to transform us. The Spirit would seem clearly one if we ourselves were one, but because we are fragmented and many the Spirit’s action appears to us multiplex; hence the Spirit must “build” in us before we are a suitable and unified site for the LORD’s “dwelling” (I; III). *On the Seven Gifts of the Spirit* also provides insight into Hugh’s way of

ambiguities of the resurrection narratives we find their uniquely disclosive power. **They are “eschatological signs” of the eschatological event par excellence.** The narratives share in the eschatological character of Jesus’ resurrection itself” (26, emphasis added). Brian D. Robinette, *Grammars of Resurrection: A Christian Theology of Presence and Absence* (New York: Herder & Herder, 2009).

⁸⁰ Hugh of St Victor, *On the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, Joshua C. Benson, trans., in Christopher P. Evans, ed., *Writings on the Spiritual Life: A Selection of Works of Hugh, Adam, Achard, Richard, Walter, and Godfrey of St Victor* (Hyde Park: New City, 2014), 369-380.

understanding the way in which good comes to us through evils, such as Christ's crucifixion in which we participate. He writes of the Spirit:

He who is your true good accomplishes your good out of what is not your good. A different good will be achieved for you later that comes not only through him but from him. For first he accomplishes your freedom from your pain, later he accomplishes your joy from his own sweetness. Nevertheless He is one and the same in both works. In the first work he is the one who acts; in the other he is both the one who acts and the source from which he acts. (IV)

The Triune LORD, for Hugh, is good, and the source of all and only goodness.

Nevertheless, the LORD acts through that which is not good in order to bring us to the goodness the LORD is. A link from *On the Seven Gifts* to *On the Three Days* here presents itself. In the most personal way, the divine Son has become incarnate and died, passing through all evil in order that, in the Spirit, the LORD might work sinners' purgation and freedom through those same evils, unifying us and uniting us to the one single source of all goodness. As humans, then, participate spiritually in Christ's Passover, a participation enacted from beginning to end by the Holy Spirit, they come at length to suck of that goodness and sweetness which the Spirit is, and of which the Spirit is source.⁸¹

The Holy Spirit is thus operating and operating through all of the Church's sacraments and liturgies to unite creatures to the LORD. The work of the Spirit in creation is thus the passage from the objective to the subjective polarity of this study.

⁸¹ "Suck, little bee, suck and drink the sweetness of thy Sweet that passes telling!" (*On the Nature of Love*, 189). Hugh of Saint-Victor, *Selected Spiritual Writings*, A Religious of C. S. M. V., trans. (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2009).

1.2.5.1 The Paschal Mystery as the Deepest Form Operating Pneumatologically in the Church's Sacraments, and the Central Form of the Liturgy

The biblical and ecclesial sacraments, as they develop through history, are a major focus of attention in Hugh's theology. The sacraments are Christoformic conduits of grace that reform their practitioners in the form of Wisdom.⁸² The implication of the present reading of *On the Three Days* is that the sacraments should be understood, at root, to be Christoforming in the very specific sense of pneumatologically communicating the grace and form of the paschal mystery. This line of argument will be pursued further in Part Two.

With this brief note about the *liturgical* action and self-manifestation of the Trinity through the form of the paschal mystery, we reach the horizon of the 'objective polarity' we have explored in this first chapter. In chapter 4, following the christological and soteriological investigation of the next two chapters, we will begin to explore the 'subjective polarity' of human response to the action of the Triune God. While the implication is not much developed in this project, that subjective polarity is implicitly within, and ever returning to the paschal mystery within, this liturgical horizon.

⁸² "Less commonly noted is the fact that for Hugh the church is... a *re-forming* entity. Its fundamental purpose is to re-form all the faithful through its clergy, liturgy, and sacraments" (Coolman, 104).

1.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have studied Hugh of St. Victor's *On the Three Days*, exploring the objective polarity of the Triune LORD's eternal act as it is manifest, savingly and unifyingly for all creation, in the paschal mystery. The chapter comes to a close studying the christo-forming work of the Holy Spirit in and through the liturgy – itself considered as the point of transition from the objective polarity of divine action to the subjective polarity of responsive human participation. That transition and its deepening continues in Part II of the present work, beginning in chapter 4. In the next two chapters I deepen the account of the objective polarity here sketched. Hugh's theology as read through *On the Three Days* is nothing if not christocentric, and in such a way that everything comes to a head in the three days of the paschal mystery. Accordingly, the next two chapters explore Hugh's objective christology, both 'person' and 'work'.

2.0 THE IDENTITY OF JESUS CHRIST: HUGH'S OBJECTIVE CHRISTOLOGY OF ASSUMPTION AND PASSOVER

Erit autem agnus absque macula... est enim phase (id est transitus) Domini.
-Exodus 12:5, 11

In the previous chapter I sketched the objective polarity of the saving unification the Triune LORD is working in the paschal mystery. While other texts occasionally came into play, the goal of that chapter was to investigate primarily *On the Three Days*. The present chapter and its sequel each go deeper into Hugh's account of the person and work of Christ – the objective polarities of his christology and soteriology. I investigate Hugh's christology in a way that is rooted in the unitive picture at the close of *On the Three Days*, and synthesize into this picture Hugh's most important christological work elsewhere. The major text of this chapter is thus *On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith*. These chapters thus deepen the investigation of the objective polarity in Hugh's theological thought which began in Chapter 1. In doing so they furthermore richly prepare the ground for the chapters in Part Two, which treat the subjective polarity of Hugh's theology in relation to our spiritual and theological participation in Christ's dying, burial, and rising.

This chapter and the next thus deal with an array of topics, sometimes treated in distinction as pertaining to the ‘person’ and ‘work’ of Christ. I attempt to show the way in which, starting from the unification of all things at the end of *On the Three Days*, Christ’s ‘person’ and ‘work’ turn out to be inseparable. The hypostatic union is integral to the Triune God’s unifying and reforming act in the paschal mystery. This union which is announced to the world as peace in light of the birth of Jesus Christ achieves fullness of revelatory act in Christ’s atoning dying, burial, and rising. Hence part of my work in the next chapter will be to show the way in which Hugh’s account of the hypostatic union, as I interpret it, is related to Hugh’s soteriological commitments.

The themes of union, unity, and oneness are a common thread and structuring feature running through Hugh’s christological material as it connects to Trinity and soteriology, and I try to bring that out. To that end, I will first treat Hugh’s reflections on the motives and goals of the incarnation in tandem with the metaphors he uses to express these, and in relation to the divine Trinity and the incarnation’s unitive orientation. I do this primarily through two of Hugh’s tropological treatises or “love songs.” Second, I will move to *On the Sacraments* and, within the frame of Hugh’s structural concern with unity, treat his doctrine of the hypostatic union directly. This is a topic that has occasioned debate in the recent literature. Much that is at issue in this debate can be safely left to the side – e.g., the precise relations of Hugh, Lombard, and Aquinas et al – in the interest of understanding Hugh as precisely as possible.

2.1 WHY THE INCARNATION? ENDS, MOTIVES, METAPHORS

2.1.1 Nuptial Union in the Paschal Mystery

If we read Hugh's works with the question "Why did the Son of God become incarnate?" in mind, we encounter a number of complementary answers and approaches. He describes the Triune LORD's motives and goals for the incarnation variously, in relation to a number of biblical themes and through various metaphors. Orienting ourselves to Hugh's various comments using *On the Three Days* lets us see a natural order and prioritization in his answers, a prioritization warranted at once trinitarianly and christologically. Love, as a divine attribute appropriated to the Holy Spirit and especially as a name of the Spirit, is the fullness and completion of the eternal act of the Trinity. I showed this in Chapter 1. To recognize this fulfilling role of the Holy Spirit in the triune life *in se* is to recognize Love as at once the most definitive attribute of divinity according to oneness – God's "reigning attribute," in John Wesley's terms.⁸³ Further, these claims about love in relation to God's Unity and Trinity are mutually entailing, and correspond to Hugh's vision of the paschal mystery. The eternal act of omnipotent, all-wise Love is mirrored and most fully expressed in history in the paschal mystery, where Jesus Christ's resurrection is associated at once with the Holy Spirit and with Love. The culminations

⁸³ John Wesley's note on John 4:8 runs: "God is love - This little sentence brought St. John more sweetness, even in the time he was writing it, than the whole world can bring. God is often styled holy, righteous, wise; but not holiness, righteousness, or wisdom in the abstract, as he is said to be love; intimating that this is his darling, his reigning attribute, the attribute that sheds an amiable glory on all his other perfections." John Wesley, *John Wesley's Notes on the Bible* (<http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/john-wesleys-notes-on-the-bible/>).

of the microcosmic and macrocosmic creaturely acts of wise love will coincide eschatologically with – and within – the Spirit’s full manifestation of the Trinity, when Creator and creature have become one in love through the paschal mystery, such that God is “all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28), to use one of Origen of Alexandria’s favorite verses. All of this has been discussed, to some degree, in Chapter 1.

Following *On the Three Days*, then, we think that the ultimate *motive* for the hypostatic union is Love, while the *goal* of this love is union: a mystical union between Creator and creation characterized by Love. Hugh is sometimes explicit in describing the motive and goals of the incarnation in terms of ‘love’ and ‘union’ themes, and so the coherence of Hugh’s thought is best brought out when we give these themes priority. Ergo, all of the other biblical themes and metaphors Hugh employs to yield insight into the motive for and goals of the incarnation are best understood within, and as subservient to, the Trinity’s love-motivated goal of establishing a union of love with God’s creatures.⁸⁴

Hugh gives eloquent voice to the incarnation as motivated by love and for union particularly in his tropological “love songs” the *Soliloquy* and *On the Praise of Charity*.⁸⁵ These treatises explicitly describe the incarnation as motivated by love and oriented toward mystical union, the *Soliloquy* doing so in terms explicitly amorous and nuptial. I now explore them briefly.

⁸⁴ Note that a further theological elucidation of the primacy of love in Hugh’s theological speech will be offered in section 3.2.2.

⁸⁵ Both of these works by Hugh are found in Hugh Feiss OSB, ed., *On Love* (Hyde Park: New City, 2012).

In *On the Praise of Charity* Hugh describes the motive of the incarnation as charity, elaborating on charity as the way of God to humankind and of humankind to God. Charity, as motive and goal, thus both unites and mediates. Hugh writes:

O happy road, which alone knows the traffic of our salvation! You lead God down to the human, [and] you direct (*dirigis*) the human to God. God descends when He comes to us; we ascend when we go to God. Yet neither God nor we are able to pass over to the other except through you (*Nec ille tamen nec nos nisi per te ad alterutrum transire possumus*). You are the mediator, uniting opposites, associating the disconnected, and leveling in a certain way dissimilar things. You bring God low and lift us high. You draw God down to the lowest things and lift us up to the highest. And yet you do so in such a way that his descent is not abject (*abiecta*) but rather holy (*pia*), and our elevation is not proud but rather glorious. Therefore, you have great power, O charity, for you alone were able to draw God down from heaven to earth. O how powerful is your bond, whereby both God could be bound and the human, having been bound, broke the bonds of iniquity! I do not know if I am able to say anything greater in your praise than that you draw God down from heaven and elevate the human from earth to heaven.... (10, translation amended, *PL* 176:974B)

Hugh emphasizes the way charity unites “opposites” and associates two “disconnected”. Charity brings two who are far apart together into union. Moreover, and stunningly in relation to the Creator-creature distinction, Hugh suggests that charity brings the two into a kind of equality, “leveling in a certain way dissimilar things.” There is a hint, or at least the possibility, of nuptiality here, or of familial relationship, which will be expanded upon below. Moreover, Hugh’s phrase highlights the way in which eternal Charity is the equality or oneness unifying all ontological and relational polarities (God/man, high/low, heaven/earth). This is so quite apart from the rupture of sin – which Charity also mends! And, intriguingly, Hugh lexically specifies the way in which Charity unifies all these opposites in the incarnation: through Charity alone, God and man are able to ‘pass over’ (*transire*) to each other. This is theologically suggestive with regard not only to the

motive and goal of the incarnation, but with regard to the incarnation itself: there is a sense in which incarnation, in Hugh's thought, is 'pass over'. Rendered systematically, the LORD's 'passover' enables humankind's 'passover' – and Charity is the *sine qua non* for both.

And Hugh's rhetoric flows on. In describing charity as a kind of "bond" that brings God low and humans high, establishing this "leveling", Hugh not only leaves open the connotation that charity might have power *over* God, power to move God in some sense. Hugh explores and exploits this provocative connotation. But first, Hugh marvels at the humility of the incarnation and of the passion. In this passage he explicitly names charity as the reason (*causam*) for the incarnation in its trajectory to the passion. He beckons us:

Contemplate God having been born of a woman, as an infant, swaddled with cloths, crying in a cradle, sucking the breasts. I see him later seized, bound, wounded with scourges, crowned with thorns, spattered with spittle, pierced, fixed with nails, and given gall and vinegar to drink. First he suffered indignities, then dreadful things. And yet, if we look for the reason (*causam*) why He deigned to undergo those [indignities] and to suffer those [dreadful things], we find none but charity alone (*solam charitatem*). (11, *PL* 176:974C)

Charity "alone", Hugh argues, is the reason or cause for the incarnation as it culminates in the paschal mystery. This "alone" entails not that other scriptural and theological reasons cannot be given – indeed, Hugh will approach the mystery from many angles – but that all of the others should be considered as within and subservient to charity. Charity brings into union the triune Creator and the creature through mutual 'passover' – in the mystery of Christ's passion and resurrection.

Marveling at the way God is moved by charity and contrasting it with the way many humans, to their shame, are not, Hugh provocatively muses,

But perhaps you [Charity] conquer God more easily than the human. You are able to prevail over God more readily than over the human because the more blessed He is, the more obliged God is to be overcome by you. You knew this very well, which is why you first overcame God whom you could conquer more easily. Even after you compelled Him out of obedience to you to descend from the throne of His Father's majesty all the way down to take upon Himself the weaknesses of our own mortal state, you still had to contend with us rebels.... (11)

Here Hugh's sermonic elicitation of our wonder seems to evoke, playfully and perhaps faintly, a Trinitarian shape. He will later make this hint more explicit.⁸⁶ When Hugh says that Charity compels the Son to descend from "His Father's majesty", his reader is led to wonder: is Hugh using Charity here as a name of the Holy Spirit? The image of charity being somehow outside of or over God is not a rigorous theological locution, and Hugh knows this full well. Rather, it is a startling construction, which invites his reader into the pull of divine love that so pulls God since it is the very kindness (*benignitas*) of God and, in so far as it is a name in the divine relationality, is a name of the Spirit.⁸⁷ A further Hugonian speculation arises: is the Holy Spirit, as the fulfillment or "*telos*" of the eternal Triune Act, in some sense an object of the Son's obedience (conceived perhaps non-hierarchically as 'hearing') in the inner triune life? I do not suggest a movement from potency to act in God – to use terms which would be anachronistic for Hugh

⁸⁶ "Charity alone has the distinct privilege that God is called it and is it. For "God is humility" or "God is patience" is not said in the same way that "God is charity" is said. This is so because, although every virtue is the gift of God, only charity can be called not only the gift of God, but also God. Charity is the gift of God because the Holy Spirit is given by God to the faithful. On the other hand, charity is also God because the same Spirit is consubstantial and coeternal in the same divine nature with Him by whom He is given" (*On the Praise of Charity* 13, p. 165).

⁸⁷ Kindness, charity, and the Holy Spirit are all associated since they inhabit the third place in their respective triads in *On the Three Days*.

anyway – but a map of the tri-personal and logical structure of the LORD’s infinite act, in which the divine Trinity is eternally actualized in its plenitude with the procession of the Spirit.

In any case, the divine Charity that pulls the LORD *in se* and *ad extra* beckons for response. Hugh here teaches that, as Charity is the motive of the incarnation and paschal mystery, responsive human charity through participation in the paschal mystery is that mystery’s chief goal. He writes,

You [Charity] compelled Him [Christ], bound by your chains and wounded by your arrows, so that the human would be more ashamed to resist you when he saw how you had triumphed even over God. You wounded the Impassible One, you bound the Invincible One, you drew the Immutable One, you made the Eternal One mortal. You did all these things in order to soften our hard hearts and prick our insensitive affections so that they might shake off their own sluggishness and your arrows might more readily penetrate them. (11)

The motive of the incarnation is charity, and its goal a union via responsive charity.

Charity gives the responsive human a humble, affection-pricked, love-stricken form like unto, and participant in, Christ’s form in the paschal mystery. We may discern here in Hugh perhaps some Abelardian notes, which fit well into his overarching soteriology of re-formation through the paschal mystery. After describing the actuality of Charity’s victory, Hugh’s praise of Charity reaches its peak: “O charity, how great is your victory! First you wounded the One, and through Him subsequently you have overcome all.... I do not know whether it is a greater thing to say that you are God or that you have overcome God” (12, 13).

In the *Soliloquy on the Betrothal-Gift of the Soul*, Hugh heightens the unitive aspect of his study of Love by bringing it into a nuptial key: the LORD is the Spouse of

the soul, and Hugh wishes for his readers to “learn where you should seek true love (*amorem*) and how you should stir your hearts toward heavenly joys by devoting yourselves to spiritual meditations” (*Soliloquy*, 2). Not only God’s act of redemption, but all of God’s acts *ad extra* including the act of creation, are here explored, to the extent that they are explored, in the key of love. This is a significant textual deliverance for understanding the coherence of Hugh’s thought. The kinds of things Hugh says in *Soliloquy* and *On the Praise of Charity* should not be bracketed from consideration in relation to his ‘normative’ theological positions and consigned to the realms of tropological and affective exhortation. They certainly are tropological, and certainly are aimed at stirring their readers to love. Yet, I will argue later in this project that it follows from Hugh’s trinitarian theology that such statements as these, corresponding to the Holy Spirit as the fulfillment of the triune life *in se*, are actually the most normative and proper grammar of Hugh’s theology.⁸⁸ Hugh writes, “Formerly, when you were not, he loved you and so he made you. Afterwards, when you were sordid, he loved you and so made you beautiful” (44). Love, for Hugh, is the motive of creation, as well as for the creation’s re-forming and correlatively beautifying restoration through the paschal mystery. Hugh emphasizes this to help his reader become “more humble” (43) in a way that coincides with the loving, saving act of the Triune LORD:

that Spouse of yours, who showed himself so lofty when he created you, deigned to humble himself when he restored you. There he was so sublime, and here so humble but no less lovable here than there, because no less wonderful here than there. (43)

⁸⁸ cf. section 3.2.2 below.

It is God's love, Hugh suggests, that is the common thread between God's *in se* sublimity and *ad extra* incarnate humility. Hugh even suggests that the Triune God is "no less wonderful" in his saving historical act than in eternity – a high claim for the divine self-manifestation and saving enactment in Jesus Christ's passover. Hugh's claim that God is equally wonderful *in se* and in history bears ruminating upon in light of his doctrine of the hypostatic union, discussed below in section 2.2 of this chapter. Hugh continues:

There [in sublimity], he mightily established great things for you; here, he mercifully sustained harsh things for you. In order to raise you from where you had fallen, he deigned to come down here where you were lying. To return justly to you what you had lost, he deigned to suffer lovingly what you endured. He came down, he assumed, he suffered, he conquered, and he restored: he came down to mortals, he assumed mortality, he suffered the passion, he conquered death, and he restored humankind. (43)

Here, the logic of the incarnation is that the LORD, out of love, humbly suffers the sin-consequent mortal state, drinking it to the dregs of actually dying, in order to conquer death by resurrection and so raise and restore humankind to the sublimity of God. Notice that both the 'descent' and the 'ascent' of the Word receive attention, and in relation to human restoration. This is a logic of suffering love unto the restoration of nuptial union. Within this logic, Hugh will riff on the Augustinian *O felix culpa* with which he is intimately familiar from the Easter Proclamation, the *Exultet*, lifted to the LORD from the lips of a deacon at the Easter Vigil. Hugh writes, "O happy fault of mine, since he is drawn by love to wash it away" (45). As in *On the Praise of Charity*, Hugh teaches in the *Soliloquy* that the motive of the incarnation which is fulfilled in the paschal mystery is "love": as the Spirit's fulfillment of the triune life in Love is the basis on which God powerfully and wisely creates, so Love is the reason the incarnate Son of God will spill

his blood on the cross, in a sacrifice of love which washes away sins and so nuptially unites the LORD and humankind. Riffing allegorically on the story of King Ahasuerus and Queen Vashti from the book of *Esther*, Hugh writes, “The King, the Son of the supreme King, came into this world, which he had created, to espouse to himself a chosen wife, a unique wife, a wife worthy of the royal nuptials.” (*Soliloquy*, 54). Evoking accents at once royal, familial, and aesthetic, Hugh elucidates the contours of the Son of God’s unitive historical act. The paschal mystery is the Triune God’s act of marriage to humankind.

A fuller canvassing of Hugh’s various and sundry works than is possible in this chapter could show the way in which the other motives, ends, and metaphors Hugh discusses in relation to the incarnation accord within and flow from his primary ‘love unto union’ framework. Prominent among these themes is Wisdom in its connections with integrity and unity/union, which an examination of the *Ark* treatises and especially Boyd Taylor Coolman’s chapter on Christ would bring out.⁸⁹ Indeed, *On the Three Days* suggests that Hugh’s Wisdom christology, his structural Wisdom-centricity, finds its fulfillment and full expression in his Love christology and pneumatology. Wisdom internally structures and patterns all of God’s providential dispensations, including permitting evil in order to bring about a greater good in its overcoming through the incarnation, in such a way that Wisdom’s divine fullness is always Love.

⁸⁹ To see the structuring role of Wisdom in relation to Hugh’s christology, and, indeed, his thought generally, see Boyd Taylor Coolman, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor: An Interpretation* (New York: Cambridge, 2010), 83-102. On Hugh’s christological sapiential theodicy, see *ibid.*, 92.

We now transition to Hugh's most important christological text: *On the Sacraments*. Hugh's christological study in this work – which is not only his longest single study of christology but the longest section of *On the Sacraments* as a whole – accords with what I have shown above, though without emphasizing charity as explicitly. Hugh's concerns with pneumatology and union, however, are pervasively present: they shape not only the christological material but Part Two of *On the Sacraments* as a whole.

2.2 THE HYPOSTATIC UNION

2.2.1 Union: The Structuring Concern of Hugh's Christology in *On the Sacraments*

The themes of divine union, unity, and oneness are prevalent in Hugh's mature christological reflections in *On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith*. Paul Rorem notices the prominence Hugh attaches to unity in Hugh's short section on the mediation of Christ, section 2.1.12. Rorem focuses his own brief treatment of the christology of *On the Sacraments* on this section, in which he sees Hugh's "culminating concern for restoration, specifically, in the union of all humanity to the divine Word" (91). Rorem directs attention to the importantly clear section title, "That through man united (*unitum*) with the Word all who are His members are united (*uniuntur*) with God" (2.1.12, Berndt p. 331, Deferrari p. 249), glossing this as "Hugh's Latin take on the theosis theme" (91). And note the close connection Hugh's title highlights between the hypostatic union itself and the union of other human persons, in Christ, to the LORD. There is a strong parallel

for Hugh in the hypostatic union's uniting of man to God and the uniting of all other humans to God, and the exact nature and relation of these 'unitings' is thereby raised, even if not easily answered. Yet Hugh's whole treatment of the hypostatic union moves to his claims in 2.1.12, to which I will eventually return below. Moreover, Hugh's christological emphasis on the unity or divine union accomplished in Christ's historical person and work is the thematic bridge to Part Two of Book Two of *On the Sacraments*, which unfolds this theme in relation to pneumatological and ecclesiastical themes, and in relation to the developing sacraments in ecclesiastical history. The pervasive audibility of Hugh's concern for unity resounds even in the Prologue to Book Two of *On the Sacraments*, where he is clear in his concern to unfold the "one rule of truth" for allegorical interpretation of Scripture in such a way that the "beautiful variety" of Scripture's expressions not further "schism and diversity". Hugh drives home his argument about the hierarchically noncompetitive unity of inferior and superior truths in Scripture and the sacramental life with a christological point: "For God himself deigned to be humbled, descending to human things, that afterwards He might raise man up to the divine" – Hugh's riff on a familiar patristic trope. Hugh thus makes the point that the diversity of divine and human, great and small in Scripture is a function of the deifying project of the incarnation to unite humankind to the triune LORD. Such 'diversities' and 'oppositions' serve union not schism, at whatever level of being. Hugh's driving concern in Book Two of *On the Sacraments*, as he treats first the person and work of the Son and then of the Spirit and the ecclesial sacraments, is his outworking of this trinitarian 'divine union project'.

In this section, I argue that the paschal mystery, the passover of the person Jesus Christ, unites the people of God, in the Holy Spirit as Goodness and Love, to the unbegotten Father, the source of all. Humankind, beloved, is adopted (*On the Sacraments*) and married (*Soliloquy*) into the Love that is the fulfillment – and so manifested mysterious source – of the Triune life. Through the hypostatic union in Christ, in the excessive space of justice and mercy created by Jesus Christ's self-offering, humanity is ineffably given union with the unbegotten Father. Thus, reading *On the Sacraments* and *On the Three Days* each in light of the other, Jesus Christ's death on Good Friday is appropriated to the Father not only because the first phase of history (from creation and fall until the birth of Christ) is the time of the fear of God as Judge of sin or even because of the association of divine power with the works of creation. Most properly, Jesus Christ's death is associated with the revelation of the Father because Jesus' humble suffering and death serves to unite debased humanity to the majestic Father. This state of human union with the Father in the Triune life is often thematized by Hugh in the familial terms of St. Paul, as when Hugh writes that "The Son was sent that He might show His assent in the adoption of the Father" (*On the Sacraments*, 1.8.6). The historical act of the Son, when worked in us by the Spirit, results in our adoption into the divine unity. Hence, and within this Triune act in history, the suffering and death of the Son of God brings suffering, sinning humanity into the unity of the Triune life. As trinitarian and pneumatological, the character of this unity is goodness and love.

In order to show these claims we now investigate directly Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union as it is motivated by and builds toward his soteriological unitive concerns in 2.1.12.

2.2.2 The Hierarchical Identity of Jesus Christ – That Christ's Human Nature Has Ineffably Passed Over into the Hypostatic Unity of the Word

*The third synod, the first at Ephesus...
[w]ith a just anathema... condemned Nestorius,
who asserted that there are two persons in Christ,
and made clear
that in the one person
of our Lord Jesus Christ
there are two natures.
-Hugh, Didascalicon 4.12*

In recent years a number of scholars have published accounts of Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union, including Lauge Olaf Nielsen (1982)⁹⁰, Franklin T. Harkins (2008)⁹¹, and Richard Cross (2014)⁹². To a significant degree these publications do the work of correcting the mischaracterizations of Hugh's christology promulgated by, say, the great Walter Principe (1963).⁹³ Moreover – speaking especially now of Harkins and Cross –these publications open the door to the possibility of a contemporary retrieval of

⁹⁰ Lauge Olaf Nielsen, *Theology and Philosophy in the Twelfth Century: A Study of Gilbert Porreta's Thinking and the Theological Expositions of the Doctrine of the Incarnation during the Period 1130-1180* (Leiden: Brill, 1982), 193-213. Nielsen's study is excellent and deserves more attention than I here give it.

⁹¹ Franklin T. Harkins, "Homo Assumptus at St. Victor: Reconsidering the Relationship Between Victorine Christology and Peter Lombard's First Opinion", *The Thomist* 72 (2008): 595-624.

⁹² Richard Cross, "Homo Assumptus in the Christology of Hugh of St Victor: Some Historical and Theological Revisions", *The Journal of Theological Studies* vol. 65-1 (April 2014): 62-77.

⁹³ "Hugh... explicitly *does not* teach what Walter Principe identifies as the crux of the *homo assumptus* theory, namely, that the Word assumed an individual human substance that was fully constituted as a man from soul and flesh" (Harkins, 603-4). Walter Henry Principe, *William of Auxerre's Theology of the Hypostatic Union* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1963), 65.

Hugh's christology, since, in one way or another, they get Hugh out of the way of Thomas Aquinas' judgment that the Lombard's first christological opinion, often associated with Hugh, is heretical, and Aquinas' closely related disagreement with Hugh in matters of theological anthropology. (See, initially, *ST* IIIa q 2 a 6 and q 50 a 4.) The implication of Aquinas' claim is that Hugh's christology is Nestorian, yet both Harkins and Cross concur that this could not be further from the case.⁹⁴ For Hugh, the person of the Word assumes not a previously or otherwise constituted human person, but human nature. In Hugh's phrasing, the Word "assumed man *into* person" (2.1.9, emphasis added).

Harkins and Cross are each concerned to render a judgment about (1) the relation of Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union to the Lombard's first and second opinions, (2) the relation of Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union to Thomas Aquinas' engagements with the Lombard and Hugh, and (3), in the case of Cross, with later medieval christological arguments through Scotus. In this section I do not directly concern myself with any of these matters, nor do I offer much in the way of adjudication for their occasional significant disagreements.⁹⁵ The scholarly contribution of the present chapter and its sequel lies elsewhere. So far as I am aware, this is the first treatment of Hugh's christology to engage the relation of the hypostatic union to the paschal mystery

⁹⁴ "I think it is hard not to be struck by the vigorous *anti*-Nestorianism of Hugh's position" (Cross, 69). Contrast this assessment, in which assessment Cross agrees with Harkins, with that of Poppenberg: "in spite of all the explicit counter-insurances, the *homo assumptus* is basically an independent personality, with which not only the uniqueness of the person of Christ but also the hypostatic union itself has been abandoned." P. Everhard Poppenberg, *Die Christologie des Hugo von St. Viktor*. (Westphalia: Herz Jesu-missionhaus Hilstrup, 1937), 86.

⁹⁵ In addition to the accounts by Nielsen, Harkins, and Cross, an unpublished paper by Ty Monroe has significantly shaped my perspective on Hugh's christology, as have our conversations.

in the way in which I below attempt, a way which synthetically displays the coherence of Hugh's theology of the atonement within his overall trinitarian and soteriological concern with divine union and love. Moreover, though Hugh does not draw out the connections as one might wish, the present treatments of hypostatic union and paschal mystery connect to Hugh's mystical and eschatological doctrines, discussed below in Chapter 7, "Rising."

The core theological insight and lexical principle Hugh employs in his doctrine of the hypostatic union comes from Gennadius of Massilia: "God assumed man; man passed over into God" (2.1.4). Hugh probably takes this text to be from Augustine, and indeed, the words immediately preceding these come from Augustine's *Enchiridion*.⁹⁶ In the Latin the quotation runs: "*deus hominem assumpsit; Homo in deum transiuit.*"⁹⁷ This is Hugh's signature way of elucidating the mystery of the incarnation, the mystery of the Word's becoming flesh and dwelling among us as theophanic exegesis or narration of the *in se* triune glory (Jn. 1:14, 18). To significant degree, correctly understanding Hugh's

⁹⁶ A portion of the Augustinian-Gennadian text on the hypostatic union Hugh excerpts in 2.1.4 deserves to be quoted at length. It seems to me that Hugh is meditating upon this text and extending it as he develops his doctrine of the hypostatic union in subsequent chapters of *On the Sacraments* 2.1. Hence we can here glimpse and think what it might mean for Hugh to let a set of patristic texts function as a 'second foundation' – to allude to Hugh's *Didascalicon* – as he meditates and expounds his own views.

Likewise the same: Christ Jesus is the Son of God and is God and is man; God, because He is the Word of God; man, because in the unity of person (*unitate persone*) there is added (*accessit*) to the Word of God rational soul and flesh. And He who is the only Son of God is also the Son of man, Himself the same, both from both, one Christ, one Son of God, at the same time Son of man; not two sons, God and man, but one Son. **Likewise the same: God assumed man; man passed over into God**, not by the mutability of nature but by the dignity of God, so that neither was God changed into human substance by assuming man (*humana substantia assumendo*) nor was man glorified into divine substance unto God, since change or mutability of nature makes either diminution or abolition. The Trinity is believed by us to have been joined (*coniuncta*) without confusion, distinguished without separation. (2.1.4, Deferrari p. 216, emphasis added). The Latin is from Hugonis de Sancto Victore, *De sacramentis Christiane fidei*, Rainer Berndt SJ, ed. (Corpus Victorinum, Textus Historici, I; Aschendorff: Monasterii Wesfalorum, 2008), 294. cf. PL 176:381A.

⁹⁷ Berndt, 294.

doctrine of the hypostatic union means understanding the theological and lexical relationship here established, and giving its biblical and orthodox outworking in relation to the various questions, concerns, and points of contention which present themselves. Hugh's concern in taking this 'foundational' passage, along with others, from the writings of the fathers is ultimately unitive and soteriological: Jesus Christ is fully human and is the second person of the Trinity, in such a way that all those human persons participant in his paschal mystery might themselves pass over into union with the Triune LORD in the Word.

Let us attend to the lexicon and syntax directly. God's assumption of humanity and humanity's passing over into God are each descriptions of the one mystery of the incarnation. Each describes the other: 'God assumed man' names the mystery of the incarnation from the perspective of divinity and the divine agency, and 'man passed over into God' names the same mystery from the human side. This is an asymmetrical mystery, and drastically so. It makes no sense to speak of a responsive human agency in the divine act of the incarnation itself, for there is, prior to the incarnation, no person of a human nature to responsively engage. Prior to the Word's assumption of human nature, there is no humanity-bearing person who could so act: "He did not assume person because that flesh and that soul, before they were united to the Word into person, had not been united into person" (2.1.9, p. 230). Rather, the Word's assumption of human nature and the human nature's constitution as person are simultaneous, and both take place through the divine act of assumption alone. For Hugh, Jesus Christ is conceived, in Mary's womb, as that human who has already passed over into the Trinity through the Word's act of

assumption. Only the Word's act of assumption constitutes Jesus Christ as a human-natured person.

Moreover, Hugh's claim is that Christ's human nature is assumed *into* person – a claim also enfolded in his Gennadian excerpt reproduced above – in such a way that there is identity between the person of the Word and the nature assumed.⁹⁸ What Hugh means by saying that Christ's human nature is assumed into person can be made clear in his own words:

He assumed flesh and soul, that is man (*hominem*), nature not person (*naturam non personam*). For He did not assume man the person but He assumed man into person (*Neque enim assumpsit hominem personam; sed assumpsit hominem in personam*). Therefore, then, He assumed man because He assumed human flesh and human soul.... There was one union and the union was unto one, of Word and of flesh and of soul... at the same time Word and soul and flesh. But Word indeed before this union was person, because it was the Son who was person, just as the Father was person and the Holy Spirit was person. (2.1.9, p. 230)⁹⁹

The Word's act of assumption results in a human nature having passed over into God in its having passed over, or been assumed, *into* the person of the Word. Hugh's claim is trinitarianly framed, and he will go on to emphasize this in a trinitarian key. He writes that the Word received

man, not person but nature, that He who received and what He received might be one person in the Trinity. For when man was assumed, a quaternion was not made but the Trinity remained, because ever since assumed man began to be God He began to be no other person than the one who received Him. He, therefore, who denies that assumed man is a person denies that man was assumed into person. (2.1.9, p. 231)

⁹⁸ Cross, 67.

⁹⁹ Harkins: "Here again we see that *homo* does not mean, for Hugh, a human person somehow constituted of body and soul prior to or at the very moment of conception... the "assumed man" (*homo assumptus*) was assumed *into* the second Trinitarian person" (603).

Here we observe a lexical addition Hugh makes: the Word's act of assumption is also an act of reception. The Word who incarnates *receives* into itself the man who is composed as having passed over into God. But Hugh's use of 'receives' mysteriously exceeds normal use of it, since Hugh claims an identity between that which is received and the one who receives. He unabashedly owns the result of the way he speaks: "assumed man is a person and no other than that very person by whom He was assumed, because both the assumer and the assumed are one person" (2.1.9, p. 231). Later scholastics would take issue with the coherence of this claim, but Hugh would have reason to disagree.¹⁰⁰

In the Word's act of assumption it is not only the Word who receives, however. Man, for Hugh, also receives, and receives divinity. Hugh writes:

God is man but He is on account of His humanity. Man is God but He is on account of His divinity. God took on humanity, man received divinity... not of two is this said but of one, because God and man are not two but one, Jesus Christ. (2.1.9, p. 231)¹⁰¹

This has important unitive and soteriological significance for Hugh, and this significance is indexed to the way in which Hugh makes a strong claim of *identity* between the Word and the nature assumed into person. He is as aware of the ineffably mysterious nature of his claims as he is strong on the identity claim. He answers an imagined objector:

you say: How one? Tell me of what nature the union is and I shall tell you how one. If the union of God and man is truly ineffable, they are not ineffably two but one, God and man. Yet they are by no means two, God and man, but one Jesus Christ. He who is God is Himself man, and He who is man is Himself God, not one and

¹⁰⁰ cf. Cross pp. 72-7.

¹⁰¹ *Deus, homo est. Verum est propter humanitatem suam. Homo, Deus est. Verum est propter divinitatem suam. Deus humanitatem suscepit; homo divinitatem accepit... non de duobus dicitur, sed de uno; quia Deus et homo non duo sed unus est Jesus Christus.* (PL 176:394C, cf. Berndt p. 310)

the other, but Himself one and the same.... Because humanity was united to divinity through person.... Diverse nature, one person. (2.1.9, p. 231)¹⁰²

The “one person” is the eternal and divine person of the Word, yet, for Hugh, the composite humanity assumed by the Word through person has such genuine identity with the Word that Jesus Christ can also, for Hugh, be said to be a person of a human nature.

For Hugh, Jesus Christ is a divine person and a human-natured person and this is one person, with no distinction.¹⁰³ Hugh writes:

When I say “man,” I mean human nature, that is soul and flesh. When I say “God,” I mean divine nature, that is, the divinity of the Word. Likewise when I say “man,” I mean person according to soul and flesh. Likewise when I say “God,” I mean person in divinity. Man denotes no more in nature than soul and flesh nor in person than according to soul and flesh. Nor does God denote in nature more than divinity nor in person more than in divinity, and yet in Christ person according to soul and flesh, and person in divinity are not two persons but are one person. (2.1.9, p. 234-35)¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² *dicis: Quomodo unus? Dic mihi qualis unio; et ego tibi dicam qualiter unus. Si vere ineffabilis est unio Dei et hominis; ineffabiliter non duo sunt, sed unus Deus et homo. Tamen non omnino duo sunt: Deus et homo, sed unus Jesus Christus. Qui est Deus, ipse est homo; et qui est homo, ipse est Deus: non alter et alter sed ipse unus et idem... Quia humanitas divinitati personaliter unita est... Natura diversa, persona una.* (PL 176:394C-395A, cf. Berndt pp. 310-11)

¹⁰³ Cross goes so far as to claim, “Hugh’s preferred way of speaking is to talk of the Word assuming a man identical with himself – the Word’s making himself to be a human person” (69). Cross is right about Hugh’s identity claim – the person according to soul and flesh is the one person of the Word – but it is doubtful that Hugh means that Jesus Christ is a ‘human person’ (as well as identically a ‘divine person’) rather than a human-natured divine person.

¹⁰⁴ *Quando dico homo, naturam significo humanam, id est animam et carnem. Quando dico Deus, naturam significo divinam, id est Verbi divinitatem. Item quando dico homo, personam significo ex anima et carne. Item quando dico Deus, personam significo in divinitate. Non amplius notat homo in natura, quam animam et carnem, neque in persona, quam ex anima et carne. Neque amplius Deus notat in natura quam divinitatem, neque in persona quam in divinitate; et tamen in Christo persona ex anima et carne, et persona in divinitate non duae sunt personae, sed una persona est.* (PL 176:398A-B, cf. Berndt pp. 314-15.) Notice how Cross’ insistence that, for Hugh, Jesus should be called a human person rather than (to him merely) a human-natured divine person does not necessarily follow, even as it is an admissible reading of this passage. Hugh’s “*quando dico homo, personam significo ex anima et carne*” may more easily be read in light of Hugh’s insistence that the Word (who for Hugh is of course already person) assumes human nature but not human person, so to mean: “When I say ‘man’, I signify the one divine person from soul and flesh, i.e., signifying the one (divine) person from human nature.” That is, Hugh’s clarity on *natura diversa, persona una* naturally inclines one to the view that the divine person, the Word, assumes human nature into unity of person, such that the divine person is the ultimate referent and, conversely, agent of the human nature, i.e. the soul and flesh. And this seems to render an acceptable sense of *tamen in Christo persona ex anima et carne, et persona in*

As one should expect of any account of the hypostatic union, Hugh's formulation raises questions. Specifically, Hugh's strong claim of the identity of the Word with the assumed human nature which has passed over into person results in some interconnected perplexities. They can be divided as: (1) perplexities about time, (2) perplexities about how the person assuming and the assumed can be identical, and, most acutely, (3) perplexities about how the ontologically simple person of the Word can *be* the ontologically composite assumed human nature. Hugh has strategies for dealing with all of these, yet, for present purposes, I set aside the first two perplexities in order to advance by way of the third.

2.2.3 Hugh's Model of the Hypostatic Union: Hierarchical Identity à la Theological Anthropology

In claiming that the Word and the assumed human nature are personally identical, Hugh is well aware that, "Divine nature is simple; human nature is twofold" (2.1.11, p. 240). What sense does it make to claim that the simple divine person is *identically* the

divinitate non duae sunt personae, sed una persona est. This way of reading seems solidified in Hugh's own words here: "What is man? If you seek His nature, body and soul.... If you seek His person, He is God. (*Quid est homo? Si naturam quaeris: corpus et anima.... Si personam quaeris Deus est.*)" (2.1.9, Deferrari p. 231, PL 176:394D, cf. Berndt p. 311). References to Jesus Christ as a human-natured person refer to the divine person – *Deus* – there is seemingly no human person. Moreover, Cross' insistence that Jesus should be called a human person does not easily cohere with Hugh's analysis of the hypostatic union as a hierarchical identity by participation on analogy with theological anthropology (as I discuss in 2.2.1), and so a reading like I here give, which does so cohere, may be on the whole preferable.

person of a composite human nature?¹⁰⁵ The way in which Jesus Christ is hierarchical comes to bear here. ‘Hierarchical’ is my term, not Hugh’s, and I use it here to try to capture Hugh’s view that something that is ontologically transcendent of something else may, at least in theory, be identical with it: they do not compete for the same ontological ‘space’ on the hierarchy, and so they can be united with an intimacy with which things at the same ontological level may not be.¹⁰⁶ In the case of the hypostatic union, Hugh will claim that Christ’s human nature has been assumed into a strict identity with the divine person. Hugh turns to a certain Neoplatonically-inflected theological anthropology for the nearest analogy by which he can elucidate this ineffable mystery. His language of

¹⁰⁵ Cross forcefully emphasizes against Harkins *that* Hugh teaches an identity of the Word and the human nature assumed into person. Cross writes,

It is no surprise... that Hugh affirms the identity of the Word and the man: it seems to be a straightforward inference from what he says.... So the following reading [i.e. Harkins’] is far too weak as an account of Hugh on christological identity: ‘The constituent parts of the human nature came to *belong* to the person of the assuming Word.’ On the contrary: according to Hugh, the constituent parts of human nature – body and soul – together came to *be* the person of the assuming Word. This may seem like an outlandish claim – though it should not, given Chalcedon – but in any case it seems to be what Hugh says. (67)

Yet Cross, in his own treatment of the identity of the Word and the assumed human nature, does not attend to the approach by which Hugh himself explicitly understands this identity: by analogy with theological anthropology. Once we employ Hugh’s own analogy to illuminate what Hugh means, it is hard to see how Hugh’s understanding renders Harkins’ construal overly weak. It appears as if, on this particular point of their disagreement, Cross over-interprets Hugh against Harkins by under-interpreting Hugh’s (admittedly quite long) christological section. For studies which note the importance of theological anthropology in Hugh’s christology, see Nielsen (1982) and Poppenberg (1937). Nielsen’s study, with which Cross disagrees, he nevertheless rightly praises.

¹⁰⁶ I am somewhat wary of my own introduction of the term ‘hierarchical’, and for several reasons. First, the word is Dionysian, and the way in which Hugh is – or more likely (as Rorem argues) is not – meaningfully Dionysian is at issue in the scholarship. Second, the use of ‘hierarchical’ is also picked up pointedly in the early Franciscan intellectual tradition (and, indeed, in the later Victorine Thomas Gallus). Bonaventure in particular, who is certainly inspired by Hugh’s theological program, and also carries out his own sophisticated Dionysian reception, makes much of the *vir hierarchicus*. Thus, using ‘hierarchical’ to describe an aspect of Hugh’s thought risks anachronistically drawing Hugh into later conversations in ways I might not intend. Third, and relatedly, Harkins has rightly pointed out that interpretations of Hugh’s christology have long been “muddled... by several layers of anachronism” (598). Indeed, this is arguably a problem beginning in Aquinas’ own interpretation of Hugh. Nevertheless, despite all of these worries, I use the term ‘hierarchical identity’ since it is perhaps the least-inelegant way of giving a shorthand for the union and indeed identity which may exist between things at different ontological levels.

‘passing over’ will return here in a way that gives some insight into the hypostatic union.¹⁰⁷

Human nature, for Hugh, is soul and body, yet the weight of personhood, conferred to the body, is borne by the soul.¹⁰⁸ If body and soul are ruptured in death, the

¹⁰⁷ Throughout the sections in which Hugh argues about the hypostatic union he is engaged in sophisticated argumentation with rival positions in ways I do not bring out below.

¹⁰⁸ Cross writes, “Hugh holds that what explains a human person’s being a human person is the union of soul and body” (64), and adduces in support Hugh’s remark *Hoc esse hominis est, quia hoc esse hominem facit* from 2.1.9 (Deferrari p. 235). Yet Hugh does not explicitly speak of ‘person’ here, and Cross’ interpretation kicks against the goads of Hugh’s much more explicit statement in 2.1.11, “The soul indeed, in so far as it is rational spirit, of itself and through itself has to be person and when the body is associated with it, it is... added into person so that, in that through union in a manner it is one with it, and begins to be the same person which it is itself” (Deferrari p. 246, *PL* 176:409B).

As far as I can see, the strongest textual support in *On the Sacraments* 2.1. for Cross’ claim that what explains a human person’s being such in the union of soul and body comes near the middle of 2.1.11 (Deferrari p. 242), significantly before the passage I just quoted. Hugh here makes a claim, or at any rate seems to make a claim (there are complexities even in claiming this), which in any case Hugh will later (in and around the section I above quoted) clearly and forcefully retract. Yet on Deferrari p. 242 Hugh writes: “I say rightly: Soul and flesh are man, and again I say rightly: Man is person. And again I say rightly: Soul and flesh are one person. Now I cannot say similarly: The soul alone is man or flesh alone is man. And, therefore, I cannot say: The soul alone is person or flesh alone is person (*sola anima est persona aut sola caro est persona*)” (Deferrari p. 242, Berndt p. 323). Yet taking these locutions as views that Hugh fully and unambiguously endorses is problematic, since this quotation comes in the course of a stream of claims and deductions focused on proper predication which itself cascades into a perplexity whose culmination is Hugh’s ridiculing those who obsess over proper predication more than the spirit (à la letter v. spirit). It is hence unclear whether Hugh mistakenly endorses on Deferrari p. 242 a view he will later forcefully disown, or whether he is all along taking up the style or speech of the predication-obsessed, in order the better to cast them down: performing, that is, some kind of *reductio ad absurdum*. Despite this ambiguity, Hugh’s theological anthropological position, as I present it in this chapter and its sequel, comes through with increasing clarity and, finally, without ambiguity, across the course pages from Deferrari p. 242 through the end of 2.1.11 on Deferrari p. 249 (Berndt pp. 324-331). The thread of Hugh’s argument is admittedly very convoluted and at times difficult to follow, yet the conclusion is clear. (It is perhaps best to interpret Hugh here as one interprets St. Paul in Rom. 9-11, i.e., keeping the end in mind.) The stream of Hugh’s discussion beginning on p. 242 may be tersely summarized as follows: Hugh is drawing claims out predicatively and leads the discussion into absurd perplexities of predication, and says as much, starting to ridicule his predication-obsessed interlocutors; then he accepts, at length and with initial ambiguity, the Boethian definition of personhood; then he inveighs against a compositional theological anthropology (i.e. human person results from neither body nor soul but body-soul composite) which is apparently upheld by some interlocutors on the basis of “ordinary speech” concerns, and which Hugh refutes scripturally, in part, by highlighting the absurdity of Paul saying he longs to go be with Christ if, in fact, he would be less of a person with Christ than in the world; next Hugh draws a contrast between unities of composition which merely imitate unity and ‘hierarchical’ unities (as I style them) which Hugh clearly and unambiguously endorses as the way both to think about theological anthropology and about the hypostatic union;

person is not destroyed, since the soul endures through death, but the body, dying, lives no longer. Hugh accepts, in this conversation, the Boethian definition of person as “the individual element of rational substance” (2.1.9, p. 243). Rational substance he next defines as “rational spirit”:

For rational substance is properly this – spiritual substance which is alone capable of reason because only in it can reason exist. For if man is said to be rational substance, he is so called not on account of the whole but on account of the soul alone which is properly called rational substance.... of a simple nature. Thus the rational spirit here is properly called “person,” both distinguished in number and distinguished by reason. (2.1.9, p. 243)

The soul or spirit, for Hugh, is hierarchically transcendent of the body and yet the body is united to it. The body, which is composite and material relative to the relatively simple soul, is considered ‘person’ inasmuch as it is united into the soul. The precise nature of unity thus comes into play, in a way that will matter both for theological anthropology and for the hypostatic union. After all, if one gathers several kinds of fruit into a basket one unifies them in a certain way, and if one uses a higher degree of precision and unifies the diverse parts of the computer on which I type these words one does indeed unify them in a certain way. But, Hugh suggests, both of these kinds of unification are different and inferior not merely in degree but in kind from the kind of unity a human soul and body enjoy. Unities of composition, for Hugh, “although sometimes they are united, yet truly they cannot be one” (2.1.9, p. 246). Rather, “in so far as they can, they imitate unity” (ibid.). Hugh draws a crucial distinction between the imitation of unity possible for

next Hugh offers the diagnosis that it is a problem when “ordinary speech” holds all the cards since the “infirmity” (i.e. fallacies) of our perceptions results in confusion of speech, before restating his own positions clearly and accepting ordinary speech concerns when they don’t call the shots vis-à-vis the revealed trinitarian faith. In short, whatever we make of Hugh’s remark on Deferrari p. 242 – momentary misstep or parody *ad absurdum* – his own position in *On the Sacraments* 2.1 should not be textually in dispute. For Nielsen’s treatment of Hugh’s relevant words see p. 199 and surrounding.

things of the same ontological level that are gathered or composed together and the truer unity that can sometimes exist between things at different ontological levels like, say, the human soul and body. He contrasts the two types of unity like this:

we must know that in one way those things are united which come together equally to make a union, so that from the time that they begin to be together they begin in a manner to be one, but in another way those things are united where unity preceded before unity, and what was added from the remainder advanced to unity through union. It is one thing indeed for some things to be placed together through union unto unity and another for some things to be added to unity through union (*Aliud quippe est aliqua simul per unionem ad unitatem componi. atque aliud aliqua per unionem unitati apponi*). For when some things are placed together unto union through union, the parts cannot share (*communicare*) the name of the whole, since apart singly they have not a union in themselves which they make together of themselves. But when some things are added (*apponuntur*) through union to something that has its own unity, they pass over (*transeunt*) into participation (*participationem*) with that to which they are added, so that they also begin to participate in the name with that, just as they begin to participate through its union in unity with that. (2.1.9, Deferrari p. 246, Berndt p. 328)

Note the return here of the Augustinian-Gannadian language of ‘addition’, and especially of ‘pass over’: Hugh continues to constructively meditate on the basis of the patristic texts which are his decisive ‘second foundation’. His key claim here is that there sometimes exists a participated identity between things. One thing passes over or is added into unity with something else which is ontologically transcendent, whole, and simple vis-à-vis that which is added into it, and these achieve a kind of union which is not possible between things that exist at the same ontological level. There is thus, for Hugh, such a thing as an hierarchical identity.

The sort of hierarchical and participated identity Hugh describes has some precedent in the Neoplatonist theological tradition. It is similar, for example, to Proclean

“identity by derivation”, by which it is possible to claim that “X is Y in a secondary way”. In *Elements of Theology*, prop. 18, Proclus writes:

Thus the character as it pre-exists in the original giver has a higher reality than the character bestowed: it is what the bestowed character is, but is not identical with it, since it exists primitively and the other only by derivation [ἀλλ’ οὐ τὰυτόν ἐκεῖνῳ· πρώτως γὰρ ἔστι, τὸ δὲ δευτέρως]. For it must be that either the two are identical and have a common definition [ἓνα λόγον ἀμφοτέρων]; or there is nothing common or identical in both; or the one exists primitively and the other by derivation.... It remains, then, that where one thing receives bestowal from another in virtue of that other’s mere existence, the giver possesses primitively the character which it gives, while the recipient is by derivation what the giver is [τὸ μὲν εἶναι πρώτως ὃ δίδωσι, τὸ δὲ δευτέρως ὃ τὸ διδόν ἔστιν] (Dodds, pp. 20-1).¹⁰⁹

Proclean ‘identity by derivation’ gives some insight into what Hugh is saying. Hugh would allow the claim that while the human soul is the human person in a primary way, the human body is person in a derived and secondary way. The body receives by derivation the human personhood conferred by its union with the soul, or as Hugh might say, by having passed over into the unity of the soul.

Just so, Hugh’s own examples illustrate the contrast between the two types of unity (i.e., participated v. composite) by using favorably the hierarchical unity of a human person over against the composite unity of a house. He writes:

For example, a wall, a roof, and a foundation are three definite things and no one of these is by itself a house. Therefore, when they come together so that they begin to be this, the three are placed together at once, no two are added to the third. Now the body and the soul have not been so united. The soul indeed, in so far as it is rational spirit, of itself and through itself has to be person and when the body is associated with it, it is not so much placed with it unto person as it is added into person so that, in that through union in a manner it is one with it, it begins to be with it the same person which it is itself. In so far, then, as body is united with

¹⁰⁹ Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, E.R. Dodds, trans. (New York: Clarendon, 1992). Thanks to Jordan Daniel Wood for directing my attention to Proclean identity of derivation and to this passage in particular.

soul, it is one person with soul, but yet the soul has to be the person of itself, in so far as it is rational spirit. (2.1.11, Deferrari p. 246, *PL* 176:409B)

In short, a house can never be unified in the way a human person is, since a house imitates true unity through composition of like things, while a transcendent human soul adds the lower body into its hierarchical unity of person. Hugh will even speak of a kind of ‘assumption’ of the body in relation to the soul: “in man only his body is found to be body and to have been assumed from earth (*ab humo sumptum esse*) and to have been endowed with sense by conjunction with the soul” (2.1.11, Deferrari p. 247, *PL* 176:409C).

Thus, for Hugh, theological anthropology offers a favored and suggestively illuminating vantage from which to meditate on the mystery of the hypostatic union. Hugh holds that just as the soul is transcendent of the body, yet is identified with and active through the body when the body is added into union with it, so (in an infinitely greater way) the person of the Word in utter simplicity transcends the unified human nature of body and soul, yet assumes this and joins this human nature *into* the transcendent divine person in such a way that the divine person *is* the “one man, Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:15). The mystery of the hypostatic union is not thereby unraveled, for Hugh, nor does he assert the analogy to be perfect: “between assumed man and the Word there was an even greater and more excellent union than between soul and body” (2.1.11, p. 249). The hypostatic union, for Hugh, remains *vere ineffabilis*, “truly ineffable” (2.1.9, p. 231). The analogy provides Hugh a way into the mystery, without his asserting its plenary illuminating capacity. It doesn’t ultimately show how (*quomodo*) God and man

are one.¹¹⁰ Yet this analogy does offer Hugh a way to partially illuminate the surpassing mystery of the hypostatic union by asserting *identity* between the Word and the man assumed into person: “For man, that is, body and soul joined together, has to be person, yet not different from Word, since man and Word are one person. Certainly the union makes them one” (2.1.11, p. 249).

2.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have investigated Hugh’s doctrine of the incarnation: first, the motive and goal of the incarnation; second, Hugh’s understanding of the hypostatic union. Reading across Hugh’s works in light especially of *On the Three Days*, I have argued that the primary motive of the incarnation is love, and the goal union. Indeed, turning to *On the Sacraments*, I emphasized the way in which Hugh’s concern for union structures his christological material and, indeed, much of his project in the second book of *On the Sacraments*. Further, I suggested that the ‘Gennadian axiom’ provides the lexical and logical order for much of what Hugh argues in his christology: God assumed man, man passed over into God. Hugh elucidates his utterly orthodox and Chalcedonian doctrine of the *homo assumptus* on analogy with theological anthropology. Owning that the hypostatic union is *vere ineffabilis*, yet Hugh suggests that we can understand it as something like the way in which a human body passes over into identity with an ontologically transcendent soul. The divine person of the Word assumes the human

¹¹⁰ *Sed dicis: Quomodo unus? Dic mihi qualis unio; et ego tibi dicam qualiter unus.* (PL 176:394C)

nature of body and soul into person. Since the Word is radically simple and ontologically transcends Christ's human nature (along with everything else), the Word may assume that human nature into an ineffable and strict identity. The hypostatic union, for Hugh, results in an identity infinitely more radical than, even while analogous to, the way in which a human body is identically a human person, even as the weight of personhood is borne by the human soul. Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union does not answer all the queries or objections that might be brought to bear on it. Yet Hugh's distinctive christology of assumption and passover is noteworthy both in its "thoroughgoing orthodoxy"¹¹¹ and in its systematic orientation to soteriology – that is, to Christ's work of re-forming humankind for passover into union with the Trinity. The objective work of Christ is the topic of my next chapter.

¹¹¹ Harkins, 607.

3.0 DYING, BURIED, RISING: THE THREE DAYS OF HUGH'S OBJECTIVE SOTERIOLOGY AND THE DEGREES OF THEOLOGICAL LANGUAGE

Erit autem agnus absque macula... est enim phase (id est transitus) Domini.
-Exodus 12:5, 11

In the previous chapter I examined the motive and goal of the incarnation in Hugh's theology, and then turned to Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union. In this chapter the emphasis moves from the 'person' to the 'work' of Christ, yet in such a way that the integrity of these in Hugh's theology is brought out – one of the significant christological contributions of the present project. Indeed, Hugh's doctrine of Jesus Christ's 'hierarchical identity' (as I have styled it) – his doctrine of the way in which the human nature is assumed by, and has passed over into, union with and identity as the person of the Word – is maintained tenaciously by Hugh precisely in light of his soteriological concerns. His christological argumentation against rival positions in *On the Sacraments* strongly suggests that he thinks the integrity of the biblical and creedal narrative is at stake. The first section of this chapter thus gives me occasion to bring out, in relation to the work of Khaled Anatolios, harmonies between Hugh's approach and Cyril's. Indeed, we can see the way in which Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union, as I have in the previous chapter interpreted it, grounds theologically the sorts of 'Cyrillian'

paradoxical locutions Hugh will pour onto Christ and into the ears and hearts of his readers. When Hugh gushes in *On the Praise of the Bridegroom*, “You [Charity] wounded the Impassible One, you bound the Invincible One, you drew the Immutable One, you made the Eternal One mortal” (11), his wonder-inspiring locution is coherent with his christology rather than hyperbolic. Following this first section, I argue, in an excursus, that the paschal mystery, and the resurrection especially, is, in a ‘Hugonian’ framework, the most intense historical elucidation of the mystery of the hypostatic union. The various subsections in my second section in this chapter discuss the work of Christ in the paschal mystery. The first of these explores the way in the work of Christ, for Hugh, is to establish union with the Trinity through the paschal mystery. Second, in relation to *On the Three Days* and Hugh’s reception of some Anselmian theological emphases, I discuss the way in which these should be heard in light of the progressive degrees, gradations, intensities, or ‘days’ of perfection of theological language. Reading Hugh systematically through *On the Three Days* discloses, here as ever, the marvelous synthetic power and instinct guiding Hugh: some aspects of Anselmian atonement theology primarily fit, for Hugh, in the first, and least linguistically perfect, ‘day’ of the paschal mystery. Yet it there has a place, perhaps indispensable, in the overall process (or ‘passover’) of human re-formation brought about by the missions of Son and Spirit. Hugh’s Anselmian reception may thus be integrated alongside Abelardian and other notes in the greater and all-encompassing reforming work of the paschal mystery. This, in certain ways ‘linguistic’, subsection is the beginning of my diagnosis, in the trio of chapters which form the heart of Part II of this project, of discrete ‘lexical fields’ in

Hugh's theology, fields pertaining to the three days of the paschal mystery and running through his theology. Following this linguistic subsection I discuss, with greater synthetic specificity, the objective polarity of the work of Christ in the three days of his dying, burial, and rising. Most of all I am concerned to argue that Hugh's soteriology, to be read well, should be read along these lines. The emphasis of the present chapter falls on the reformation of the cosmos in Christ's restoring work rather than individuals' subjective participation in it. We thus, in the last installment of Part I, prepare the way for the deeper investigation of each of the three days offered in Part II and subjectively.

3.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HYPOSTATIC UNION FOR HUGH'S SOTERIOLOGY

3.1.1 Hierarchical Identity and the Cross: The Coherence of the Son's Impossible Suffering, and so of the Biblical and Creedal Narrative

In Chapter 2's exploration of Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union, I showed that Hugh holds that the divine Word constitutes Christ's human nature as that human nature that has already passed over into the unity of the divine person of the Word. I styled this view of the hypostatic union 'hierarchical identity.' Maintaining this view of the hypostatic union does not resolve all of the difficulties that could be raised regarding it, yet what Hugh gains by this claim is significant. His chief concerns, as has been shown, are unitive and soteriological. Specifically, Hugh's particular doctrine of the

hypostatic union gets Hugh the ability to affirm a strong divine-human unity and identity of operation in Jesus Christ.¹¹² When Jesus Christ acts, the LORD acts, and man acts. More: when Jesus Christ acts the LORD acts as God and acts as man, and man acts as God and acts as man. While Hugh would follow this claim through with respect to any part of Jesus Christ's life, it comes to a head in the paschal mystery because of the rupture of Jesus Christ's human soul and flesh. What Hugh's view gives him is the ability to claim that, on the cross, God died, and God was buried in the tomb, and God descended into hell, and God rose on the third day. This kind of claim is, for Hugh, what the Creed and Catholic orthodoxy jointly demand of Christian theologians. Hugh is unsparing of Christian theologians of present and past – including St. Ambrose – who hedge on this.

Before discussing the difficult and all important cases of Jesus Christ's dying, burial, and rising, it is helpful to offer a couple of mundane examples in connection with what Hugh teaches on this score. Suppose a woman named Evangeline is sitting typing on her laptop in a pleasant coffee shop on a Saturday night. *She* is typing, yet it is her fingers that are dancing across the keyboard and clattering away with minimal effort. This example brings out what Hugh has claimed in his theological anthropology and doctrine of the hypostatic union about the relation of wholes and parts. When I say that *Evangeline* is typing I imply that the whole of her is engaged in the act of typing, even as

¹¹² There is perhaps a subtle affinity between Hugh's model of the hypostatic union, in the way it gets Hugh a unified and identically divine-human operation, and the way in which, in the Gospel of Luke, the action of Jesus Christ is, wonderfully and dramatically, the saving action of the LORD of Israel. This is manifest in Luke when Jesus' acts are seen against the narrative and associational backdrop of the acts of the LORD in Israel's scriptures. cf. Richard B. Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness* (Waco: Baylor, 2014), 57-9.

some particular parts of her – and not others – are engaged in the act of typing. The whole Evangeline is typing, and Evangeline’s fingers are typing, but Evangeline’s toes are not typing. How then does it make sense to claim that the whole Evangeline is typing when Evangeline’s toes are not typing? For Hugh, the coherence of this kind of speech has to do with the way in which our souls bear the burden of our personhood, while our bodies participate in our personal identity secondarily, derivatively, and from their lower station in the ontological hierarchy. Our souls transcend our bodies ontologically, and just for that reason are able to be omnipresent within our bodies, and fully active in and through the various parts of our bodies. Evangeline’s whole self, because Evangeline’s whole soul, acts in and through Evangeline’s fingers as she types, while Evangeline’s whole self, because whole soul, is also present in Evangeline’s toes as she types though Evangeline is not typing with her toes.

A further example is desirable in light of this chapter’s vector through the paschal mystery. Suppose Anthony cuts John off in traffic, and John, in response, makes a disrespectful gesture while they sit at the next stoplight. Anthony then gets out of his car, John follows suit, words are said, and a short fistfight develops in which, by all accounts, Anthony emerges roundly victorious. Let us, then, make some mereological and theological anthropological observations. John gestured disrespectfully at Anthony with his right hand – a part of him – yet the whole John disrespected Anthony. The whole self, the transcendent soul and person, acted immanently through the part, the right hand. When Anthony got out of the car and approached John while shouting obscenities in reply, the protest that “I didn’t gesture disrespectfully, that was just my right hand, a mere

finger – a mere part of me” was not open to John. Alas, John’s soul transcends his body but is wholly present in it and acts through it, and so it was, in fact, the whole John who gestured disrespectfully at Anthony. And, when Anthony punches John on the mouth and in the stomach and the police level an assault charge against Anthony, Anthony is not able to protest, “Your charge is rather excessive: I didn’t hit *John*, I punched his mouth and his stomach, just *parts* of him, not *him*.” Alas, in assaulting John’s mouth and stomach with his fist, Anthony has in fact assaulted John, the whole John, and that is a chargeable offense.¹¹³

With these examples in mind let us return to Hugh’s doctrine of the hypostatic union. The kind of claim Hugh is able to make because of his doctrine of the identity of the Word and the human nature assumed into person is that the Word both transcends Christ’s assumed human nature while being able to act through it and as it in its full identity with Himself. The Word is eternal and, by the assumption of Christ’s humanity, is identical with a humanly acting agent in history. Just as Evangeline acts in and through her fingers to type, so the whole Word is acting in each of Jesus Christ’s human acts. The Word is acting as Himself in each of Jesus Christ’s fully human acts, and, moreover, the Word is assuming unto experience (2.1.6, p. 221) each of Jesus Christ’s fully human experiences, thoughts, sufferings. Just as Anthony’s punches to John’s mouth and stomach hit John, and not just parts of John, so each of Jesus Christ’s experiences and sufferings are assumed unto experience by the eternal, infinite, impassible Word.

¹¹³ cf. *On the Three Days* II.19.8.

It should now be clear where Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union takes him: God is rejected in his people's leaders' rejection of Jesus Christ, God is beaten and tortured by the Roman guards, God is condemned to death by Pontius Pilate, God is crucified. It is the LORD who acts in and as Jesus Christ, and the LORD who is the direct and ultimate referent of Jesus Christ's sufferings. Good Friday is a real drama in which God acts and in acting is also acted upon. Hugh writes:

Therefore, what God does man does, and what man does God does, since they are not two but one, God and man. "No man hath ascended to heaven, but he that descended from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven," (John 3, 13). He spoke on earth and testified that He was in heaven. For He was in both, on earth through humanity, in heaven through divinity. He who was in heaven was the same on earth, through humanity on earth and only on earth, through divinity in heaven and on earth. "If they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory," (1 Cor. 2, 8). It is a wonder. Man was Lord in heaven and God died on the cross. If man was able, having been placed on earth through humanity, to be in heaven through divinity, God also was able while reigning in heaven through divinity to die on earth through humanity. (2.1.9, p. 231-32)

Hugh's citations of St.s John and Paul attest his conviction that his view accords with the biblical witness to Jesus Christ. Hugh thinks that all that is done by and all that is done to Jesus Christ in his humanity is referred ultimately to the divine Son as subject. There are those both in Hugh's own day and in the succeeding century who back away from the claim that God died on the cross, and Hugh would press them hard:

But you say: How was God able to die?... This I knew, that there were those who said this.... Why then do you deny that God died? Because, they say, divinity cannot die. If, therefore, God did not die, because according to divinity He did not die, then God was not born from the virgin, because according to divinity He was not born from the virgin, nor did God dwell among men, because according to divinity He did not dwell among men and all the other things which the Saviour operated in the flesh. If then God did not do these things, who was he who did these things?.... Christ, they say, did all these things. Then Christ did these things and God did not do them; then Christ was not God. (2.1.9, p. 232).

It is not a stretch to say that Hugh's logic is Cyrillian, Leonine, and Chalcedonian.¹¹⁴ As Khaled Anatolios has shown, what is at stake across a series of christological Councils is not only a grammar for speaking of Christ's person but – and consequently – a grammar that makes possible the elucidation, through Scripture's various themes and metaphors, for how human salvation – i.e. union with God – is achieved by and in Christ.¹¹⁵

According to the Conciliar tradition, human unification with God is accomplished by an asymmetrical divine and human act in Jesus Christ. In Anatolios' terms this act is at once God's "active transformation and deification of the human" and the human's "active reception of this transformation and deification". In Hugh's elegantly concise Gennadian axiom, "God assumed man; man passed over into God." Anatolios:

Both divine impassibility and the attribution of human predications to the divine Word are equally indispensable to this framework. If divine impassibility is compromised, then the divine resources that enable human deification are rendered ineffective; if the human condition is not directly predicated of God, then they are not transformed unto deification.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ This is all the more striking since Hugh did not seemingly have access to the conciliar documents in the way in which Aquinas would in the following century. Harkins adduces the Cyrillian, Leonine, and utterly orthodox quality of Hugh's christology as evidence that Hugh (among other 12th century theologians) "had a basic knowledge of its [Chalcedon's] Christological definition" (608), even without direct textual access.

¹¹⁵ "In surveying the tetraptych of Christological councils stretching from Ephesus to Constantinople III, we find ample grounds for questioning the common modern assumption that soteriology lies outside the parameters of defined dogma. Rather, this overview enables us to identify a set of soteriological principles that should be considered as possessing the same level of normativity as the Christological formulations to which they correspond. Essentially, as we have seen, the content of human salvation is understood to be the deifying appropriation of the human condition, including its postlapsarian negativities, by the subject of the divine Word and Son of the Father. This work of salvation is both a divine and human work, and it consists not in the mere juxtaposition of divinity and humanity but in the active transformation and deification of the human by the divine and the active reception of this transformation and deification by the human." Khaled Anatolios, "The Soteriological Grammar of Conciliar Christology", *The Thomist* 78 (2014): 165-88. I am indebted to Ty Monroe for the suggestion that Anatolios' article evinces a shared trajectory of soteriological concern and christological formulation between Cyril and Hugh.

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*

Anatolios' last sentence is all-important, and can be restated in a way that inclines us toward Hugh's own christology. Unless the *subject* of whom predications about Jesus Christ's acts and sufferings in the paschal mystery are made *is the LORD*, then Jesus Christ's human nature has not truly passed over into God, nor will our own. Jesus Christ's dying and rising is of no avail if the Word did not endure death both impassably (because a divine person) and passibly (because identically human). What is at stake for Hugh – as for Cyril and the Conciliar tradition – is God's really having done and endured all of the things Scripture and Creed attest “for us and for our salvation.” Those who will not follow the biblical and creedal claim that God is the ultimate referent of Jesus Christ's doings and sufferings – including his dying – seem to him to show themselves squeamish, first of all, of the doing and the suffering of the paschal mystery in which our salvation consists. But Hugh follows the thread of their squeamishness back from the paschal mystery to the claim that Mary is *theotokos* and not, as Theodore of Mopsuestia's student Nestorius had it, more merely and accurately *christotokos*. And just so: does Christ's death on Good Friday really raise difficulties that are not present *in nuce* in the claim that Mary is Mother of God, and so in the claim of the incarnation itself? Hugh pushes his interlocutors to consider whether their reticence to straightforwardly admit the statement ‘God died on the cross’ is not an abdication of the biblical narrative at its very heart which manifests, as a correlative symptom, an inadequate doctrine of the hypostatic union which allows some of Jesus Christ's doings and sufferings to be predicated of the human nature only.¹¹⁷ To transpose Hugh's argument back into the analogous human

¹¹⁷ See Aquinas, *ST* III q 46 a 12. Aquinas' objections and replies reveal that, like Hugh, he is

examples I have given, Hugh's opponents argue as though, ultimately, Evangeline's fingers are typing but she is not, or as though Anthony, in punching John in the solar plexus so that John doubles over in pain, has not in any direct sense punched John. His fist has merely punched a part of John. One *surely* cannot claim that the Lord of glory has died when his human body is crucified and dies, Hugh's opponents are found to hold.

Hugh interprets the Cry of Dereliction (Mt. 27:46 and parallels) not as a reference to the withdrawal of divinity from union with Christ's humanity – which Ambrose seems to do, and which is in any case incoherent in view of Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union – but as a withdrawal of divine protection (2.1.10, pp. 236-38). Hugh's biblical exegesis seems basically sound. Jesus cries out in pain and bewilderment at his abandonment to suffering and death. There is no suggestion in the biblical texts that he is crying out because he has some sense that he used to be divine but is divine no longer.¹¹⁸

With regard to Christ's death itself and subsequent interment, Hugh holds that Christ's human body ruptures from his soul at death, and that in this death the whole Christ – the hierarchically transcendent and so identically operative whole who is the Word – tastes death:

The soul receded and the flesh died. Christ died because the flesh of Christ died. Just as God died because the humanity of God died, so man died because the flesh of man died. Flesh alone died and in the flesh man died, to whom the flesh

interested in articulating a christology adequate to the conciliar tradition and the biblical narrative.
¹¹⁸ Even so, Hugh's example to explain withdrawal of divine protection is unfortunate, since in it the divine and human natures are personified separately (cf. Deferrari p. 237). Hugh's example might not feel so Nestorian were he more specific. The example can be rescued if we understand one of the friends – the one withdrawing protection and standing by – as the divine person of the Father, and the other person to be the fully humanly experiencing Son whose experiences are assumed to, and expressed by, the person of the Word, such that the Word's Cry of Dereliction both represents that which is assumed from human experience and simultaneously expresses a divine solidarity with humankind which is itself part of the mystery of our salvation.

belonged; God also died because God was man. The separation of the soul was death of the flesh. (2.1.11, p. 238)

Of course, just as any human soul tastes and suffers death when her flesh dies and yet the soul still lives, so the divine Word tastes and suffers death when Jesus Christ dies while still living on impassibly. Hugh is thus implicated by his positions in such Cyrillian sounding statements as that the Word “suffered impassibly”.¹¹⁹ Indeed, we have already heard a string of Hugonian Cyrillianisms in *On the Praise of Charity*: “You [Charity] wounded the Impassible One, you bound the Invincible One, you drew the Immutable One, you made the Eternal One mortal” (11). To chalk these up as merely the fitting excesses of impassioned admiration is to miss the fact that Hugh’s doctrine of the hypostatic union is emphatically a defense of them. To accept the core soteriological narrative of biblical trinitarian faith is, for Hugh, to embrace the imperative of delighting in language in exactly these ways.

Having treated Good Friday and the death of Christ, Hugh moves to the mystery of Holy Saturday, to Christ’s burial and descent to hell. Hugh writes:

The soul descended into hell; the flesh lay in the sepulchre; divinity remained with both. For flesh and soul, when separated, were not able to destroy person which they, even when joined, had not made. The Word was an eternal person. He did not begin to be person when he received soul and flesh into person. He received soul and flesh, that they might be person in Him, not that they might make Him person. Since, therefore, soul and flesh received being person in Him, because they began to be united by the Word of person, always indeed did they remain one and the same person with the Word.... So Christ the person descended into hell, but according to the soul alone, because the soul alone descended into hell, and Christ the person lay in the sepulchre according to the flesh alone, but flesh alone lay in

¹¹⁹ For a concise statement of Cyril’s position along with his helpful analogy of an iron in fire, see St. Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Unity of Christ*, John Anthony McGuckin trans. (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary, 1995), 130-33. McGuckin gives a concise treatment of *apathos epathen* on p. 44 in his introduction to the same volume.

the sepulchre, and Christ the person was everywhere according to divinity alone, because divinity alone was everywhere. (2.1.11, p. 238-39)

For Hugh, Christ's human flesh is ruptured from his human soul at death, but neither of these is ruptured from the person of the Word who has assumed them both into person irrevocably. Since the burden of the whole Christ is born by the simple and transcendent person of the Word, relative to whose absolute simplicity and perfect transcendence both the human soul and the human body are as parts, the whole Christ is truly narrated by the Apostles' Creed to die, be buried (according to body), and descend to hell (according to soul). The whole Christ does each of these things since the whole acts and suffers in each of the constituent parts of his human nature, even when these are separated from each other.

Again, for Hugh, this is not a matter of mere words but of orthodoxy and the integrity of the biblical witness, as these found the reciprocal integrity of responsive piety and doxology. "Something of scrupulosity comes upon us", he says, "For these matters have been taken up by Catholic truth, and it does not accept that it is said that Christ did not truly lie in the sepulchre and that He did not truly descend to hell" (2.1.11, p. 239). For Hugh, the crucial distinction between himself and his opponents is whether, in these creedal affirmations, the whole (Christ) is *stated for* the part (body or soul), *or* whether the whole (Christ) truly *operates in* the part (body or soul). If the Creed says Christ dies and merely states the whole (Christ) for the part (body), then Christ does not truly die. On the other hand, if, as Hugh thinks Catholics should hold, the Creed says Christ dies in such a way that the whole (Christ) operates in the part (body), then the Creed does not equivocate: Christ truly dies. "For when the whole operates in a part", Hugh tells us,

“then truly the whole operates, since both the whole is with the part and the part is in the whole, when both the whole and the part operate” (2.1.11, p. 239). “He truly died and was truly buried. He truly descended into hell and truly ascended into heaven” (2.1.11, p. 240). Throughout, Hugh’s efforts are to vindicate the integrity of Christian speech about the paschal mystery in their objective relation to human salvation and their subjective bearing on human piety. Creedal orthodoxy and *pia desideria*: that which God has joined together let no man put asunder.

Hugh’s discussion of Easter Sunday is brief, in part because it does not occasion for him the same quandaries as Good Friday and Holy Saturday. Hugh goes over the creedal points that Jesus Christ is risen, ascended, and seated at the right hand of the Father, one day to return as judge of the living and the dead. Jesus Christ’s human nature is now in heaven, and according to his divinity he is omnipresent, wholly present everywhere. All of this is treated in 2.1.13, and Hugh emphasizes Jesus Christ’s role as mediator and the consequent special graced indwelling by which the Triune LORD dwells in those humans who are his temple. This set of themes prepares the way for Book Two Part Two, which follows immediately on its heels, and moves to discuss the work of the Spirit in Christ’s members who are the Church. The emphasis on Jesus Christ as mediator in 2.1.13 continues the same theme in 2.1.12 which, as noted at the start of my discussion of *On the Sacraments* in connection with Paul Rorem, emphasizes the union with God accomplished by Christ’s work. I will return to 2.1.12 and deepen my account of the saving work of Christ in Hugh’s *On the Sacraments* following a brief

excursus. This excursus bears on how we ought to think about the relation between the hypostatic union and the paschal mystery in Hugh's theology.

But first, a final note by way of connecting Hugh's mereological and linguistic concerns about the hypostatic union and the paschal mystery to the unitive love that he has claimed is the motive and goal of the incarnation. Hugh holds that the infinite *in se* act of the Triune LORD is eternally fulfilled and completed in the Love who is the Holy Spirit. Hugh thus reads the Creed as an essential summary of the *ad extra* acts of the Triune LORD in history "for us and for our salvation," acts which, because they are the *ad extra* acts of the LORD who is eternally pleromatic Love, are all ultimately loving acts. But the Creed, for Hugh, claims more. The Creed claims Love did and suffered specific things in history, in actuality died and rose to save us. What Hugh sees as at stake in his wrangling about the hypostatic union is whether or not this is, in fact, the case.

Excursus: That the Paschal Mystery is Itself the Most Intense Historical Elucidation of the Hypostatic Union

Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

-John 20:28

As he expositis Mary's Canticle, Hugh describes the hypostatic union as both "ineffable sacrament" and "unparalleled wonder" – in Nielsen's apt phrasing, the

incarnation of the Word of God is “a mystery which in its unsurpassed wonder transcends all mysteries.”¹²⁰ In the previous chapter I explored the way in which Hugh thinks through the hypostatic union on the basis of the Gennadian axiom: “God assumed man; man passed over into God” (2.1.4). In his argumentation, Hugh draws at length on the analogy of the relations between soul and body, wholes and parts, in theological anthropology and mereology to yield an account of the hypostatic union adequate to account for the truth of the creedal and biblical narrative about Jesus Christ. In short, and Athanasius-like, he attunes his doctrine of the hypostatic union to the work it needs to do in rendering coherent the efficacy of the paschal mystery for human salvation. In this short section I would like to make an additional claim which Hugh does not make directly, but which, in light of the work of my previous chapters, is an ‘Hugonian’ implication of his theology. Namely, that the relationship between the hypostatic union and the paschal mystery works in both directions: if it is the case that Hugh’s doctrine of the hypostatic union must render coherent the unitive soteriological work of the paschal mystery, so too is it the case that the paschal mystery is itself the most intense and bright historical disclosure of the surpassing mystery of the hypostatic union.

Historically this is obvious. It seems it is the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the apostles’ direct experience of same, and the young Church’s continuing experience of same in the Spirit, that is most important in precipitating the Gospels’ various approaches to claiming Jesus’ divinity. No resurrection, no “*Verbum caro factum est*” coming from the rich Johannine Greek into the elegant Johannine Latin. The hypostatic union is

¹²⁰ Nielsen, 193. cf. Hugh of St. Victor, “Exposition on the Canticle of Mary”, in *Writings on the Spiritual Life*, Christopher P. Evans, trans. (Hyde Park: New City, 2014), 428-9.

historically hidden and the paschal mystery is what made it manifest. At the same time, it is also the case that the intimate link between paschal mystery and hypostatic union is easily lost sight of. Scholastic explorations of the incarnation, for example, crowd more frequently around John 1:1 and 1:14 than around John 20:28. Moreover, Hugh's doctrines of hypostatic union and paschal mystery bear an elegant fit with each other. Together, they elucidate the paschal mystery's disclosure of the hypostatic union in a distinctively textured way.

Recall the way in which I showed, in Chapter 1 of the present work, the coincidence of the triads in Hugh's thought. In terms of agency and ontology, the ultimate referent of the triads is the Triune LORD. In the historical economy, however, all of creation and the three ages or 'days' of history are included and unified in the triads, the most intensely God-manifesting form of which is the triad of the paschal mystery: Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday draw together, unify, and reform all else. The paschal mystery is the most intense display of divine form here below, the *forma formans sed non formatta*. Moreover, each of the triads in Hugh's thought displays a kind of movement toward the third member of the triad, which completes and fulfills but does not supersede the first two. So within the triad of the paschal mystery, the resurrection is the culmination and fulfillment of Christ's dying and being dead, and within the triad of all of history the age of the Spirit beginning in Christ's resurrection and Pentecost and culminating in the eschaton completes and fulfills the first age (from creation to the Annunciation) and the second age (the age of the incarnation). In each of the triads in history, Hugh maintains a keen sense that each 'age' or 'day' isn't

itself a static, set entity, but contains dynamic movement, development, and increase within itself. Each day of history and of paschal mystery is an increasingly pleromatic manifestation of the Triune LORD. Notice, now, that this is true of the (second) 'day' of history which is the time of the incarnation, of Jesus Christ's earthly life. Hugh writes in *On the Sacraments* 2.1.6:

Thus Christ the man by dwelling among men according to dispensation showed through intervals of time what was befitting human salvation and was at the same time in Him, and more and more, according as it was fitting, He disclosed through certain advances of revelation to human knowledge that He had what He himself had full and perfect from the beginning.

From the first moment of his conception in Mary's womb, Jesus Christ enjoys the full and infinite power, wisdom, and goodness of his divinity. Yet, this is entirely hidden from the world. Luke's Gospel teaches that Mary is informed of the news by the Angel Gabriel and Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit to understand something of the truth, yet Matthew's Gospel points out that St. Joseph was on the point of sending Mary away quietly when he learned of her conception by the Holy Spirit and of the mystery of Emmanuel through an encounter with the LORD in a dream. And aside from the Holy Family, the news of the incarnation is hidden from the world. Some magi follow a star, and Herod and Jerusalem, misunderstanding the news, are terrified, Herod murderous, as Jerusalem would later become. The secret of Emmanuel, the mystery of the Incarnation, only dawns on the world slowly. The disciples are slow to understand it, as Jesus' words and deeds gradually reveal more and more of the fullness of God pleased to dwell in him,

yet it is finally the resurrection itself which prompts his disciples to embark on a rereading of Israel's Scriptures.

For Hugh, it is the crowning revelation of the resurrection which grounds the biblical trinitarian pedagogy ordered to discerning and confessing Jesus' full divinity. More, it is the glorified and transfigured body of the risen LORD that shows forth the assumption of humanity by the divine Word. With the glory of the resurrection begins the open disclosure to the world of that hypostatic union which, from Jesus' conception, dwelt in the hidden temple of the Virgin's womb. The paschal mystery, as the most pleromatic manifestation of divine form in the finite created order, is the best picture of the meaning of the hypostatic union. Jesus Christ's Passover through historical death to manifest eternal life is the form of the hypostatic union itself. In the Augustinian terms Hugh employs for the paschal mystery in *On the Three Days*, the paschal mystery is the "sacrament" and "example" of the hypostatic union. The LORD's manifest Passover reveals the hidden Passover that had already taken place in the instant of Jesus Christ's conception, the Passover of mankind into God which simultaneously constitutes man by the Word's act of assumption.

The history of the world from resurrection to eschaton is, for its part, the progressive unveiling of the hypostatic union to all the peoples of the world by the news of Jesus Christ's resurrection. The initiative of the Holy Spirit of which the Gospels bear witness corresponds with the initiative of the Spirit in disclosing the resurrection and the assumption of man into God to all the peoples of the world through the Church. In the end, when the Spirit has perfected all creation in charity, every knee will bow and every

tongue confess the universally manifest mystery of the hypostatic union. On that day, Jesus Christ's humanity, passed over into hypostatic union with God, will have a visible likeness in the passed over humanity of all of Christ's members, all of Christ's brothers and sisters, who have made their passover into simple union with God in and through Christ's own passover (*Noah's Ark* 1.1.15, CSMV p. 69). Through participation in Christ's dying, being dead, and rising, all Christ's members will then fully participate in the identity of his hypostatic union in the way in which his own human soul and body do, that is, as participants assumed by and so passed over into union with Christ the whole. Hence, the paschal mystery is the visible and objective sacrament of our passover into the LORD, and of the triune LORD's assumption of our persons in Christ, making us by grace what Christ is by nature: the Father's beloved children. We are raised to equality with God in the triune life by our inclusion in the passover of Jesus Christ, such that, to switch Hugonian metaphors, we are the beloved queen of the royal king.

Hugh, for his part, does not directly say these things. He does not even, as his 13th century admirer St. Bonaventure will, play heavily on the elegant associations made visible by seeing Christ's Passover/*trasitus* as mirrored elsewhere, say, in the contemplative's responsive and ecstatic *transitus* into God. Yet, given that Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union is about the Word's assumption of humanity which is humanity's passover into God, and given that the paschal mystery is the most divinely revelatory historical form in his theology, these claims I have outlined are entailed in his christological thought and are part of its objective 'Hugonian' shape.

3.2 THE WORK OF CHRIST IN THE PASCHAL MYSTERY

Having thus far, in this chapter and its prequel, discussed the motive and goal of the incarnation in Hugh's thought, as well as Hugh's 'hierarchical identity' understanding of the hypostatic union in itself and, above, in its preserving the ontological and historical veracity of the creedal narrative of the divine Son dying, buried, and rising, it remains to discuss the *work* of Christ in the paschal mystery. In a word: soteriology. That is to say, what remains to be accomplished in this project's investigative sketch of Hugh's objective christology is a synthetic account, insofar as possible, of *how* human salvation is accomplished in the paschal mystery. What does Christ's dying, burial, and rising do in the historically unfolding cosmos, what make possible? In this section I offer an account of Hugh's doctrine of the atonement, the way in which sinners are given 'onement' or united with the Trinity, through the dying, burial, and rising of the incarnate LORD. Accordingly, I begin (in section 3.2.1) with a reading of *On the Sacraments* 2.1.12 in the frame established by the previous chapter's treatment of union as the love-motivated goal of the incarnation. This continues this project's display of the overarching coherence of the person and work of Christ in Hugh's thought. Second, (in section 3.2.2) I draw out the implication of *On the Three Days* for theological language – this section is thus styled "The Passover of Language" – and offer an example. The example is Hugh's Anselm-inflected 'courtroom drama' discussion of the atonement found in *On the Sacraments* 1.8.4. The extended treatment I give Hugh's Anselmian reception functions as an extended treatment of what I offer in section 3.2.3, that is, a

straightforward synthetic account of what Christ's dying, burial, and rising accomplishes for the re-formation of the cosmos. The extended attention given Hugh's Anselmian section is warranted for another reason, to wit: the implication of the present study for the interpretation of Hugh on the atonement, say, or on the cross, is that the reader who only reads *On the Sacraments* 1.8.4 fails to interpret Hugh adequately, for she fails to synthesize Hugh's in depth look at the work accomplished on Good Friday within his overarching account of the unifying and saving work accomplished across the three days as a whole. To interpret Hugh adequately on atonement or soteriology just is to interpret whatever one reads anywhere in his works within the unifying locus of the three days of the paschal mystery.

3.2.1 The Mediating Work of Jesus Christ: Hugh's Soteriology of Re-formation Ordered to Union

On the Sacraments 2.1.12 focuses on Christ's mediating work, the way in which the hypostatic union of the Word and man in Jesus Christ deifies and unites humanity to the Father in the Spirit. As mentioned, Hugh titles this section, "That through man united with the Word all who are His members are united with God." Hugh's adverting to all of Christ's "members" looks forward to *On the Sacraments* Book 2 part 2 and to the "third day" of pneumatological and resurrectional fulfillment of the paschal mystery and of history which I will treat in Chapter 6 below.

Hugh introduces the themes of Christ's mediation and of unity with a quote from St. Paul, and immediately expounds upon it:

The Apostle says: A mediator is not of one: but God is one, (Gal. 3,20). For God and man were two, diverse and adverse. God was just; man was unjust; in this note them adverse. Man was wretched, God blessed; in this note them diverse. Thus then man was adverse to God through injustice and diverse from God through wretchedness. For this reason man held it as necessary that first he be justified from fault in order to be reconciled, afterwards that he be liberated from wretchedness in order to be reformed. (Deferrari p. 249)

Christ's divine-human mediation, for Hugh, serves to bridge the adversity between God and man, an adversity structured by human injustice. Unjust humanity must be "justified" in order to then be "reformed." Notice that reformation, in this quotation, seems to be a process of "liberation" which culminates, ultimately, eschatologically. As shown in the first section of this chapter, Christ's mediation is motivated by love and by a desire for unity with humankind in such a way that union is the goal of the incarnation. Human justification and human reformation in wisdom make possible this divinely-desired union in love. The implication of all this is that *any adequate account of Hugh's soteriology must take it into account as the overarching process of cosmic-historical and human re-formation culminating in union with God*. This is in fact what we have already found in *On the Three Days'* account of the paschal mystery.

Hugh continues expounding the importance of Christ's mediating work, writing that "man needed a mediator before God in order to be reconciled to Him and led back to Him; but He who was not by any friendship of society and of peace related to both, could not take up the pleading of the cause of dissenters." In order to reconcile humankind to God and restore their union in love, the Word becomes incarnate, assuming human nature

into person in order to enjoy “friendship of society and peace” with both God and humankind. This lets Christ plead for, and work for, the reconciliation of dissenting humans. In Hugh’s words,

On this account then the Son of God was made man, so that between man and God He might be a mediator of reconciliation and of peace. He took on humanity through which He might approach men. He retained divinity through which He might not withdraw from God. Being made man He sustained punishment that He might show affection; He preserved justice that He might confer the remedy. (Deferrari p. 249)

Notice for now Hugh’s claim that the Son of God sustains punishment in order to “show affection” – the atonement is connected to love, for Hugh, even when he brings into his account of it the language of punishment. Moreover, ‘affection’ seems to be an Abelardian note in Hugh’s theology, in the same locution as the perhaps Anselmian note of ‘punishment’. Hugh displays here his penchant for drawing together and integrating diverse voices and accounts within his own framework. We will in time investigate what Hugh means by ‘punishment’ and ‘justice’ below in relation to *On the Sacraments* 1.8.4. Hugh continues, returning to his structuring theme of oneness in relation to Trinity and hypostatic union:

The Word indeed, which was one with God the Father through ineffable unity, was made one with the assumed man through a wonderful union. Unity (*unitas*) in nature, union (*unio*) in person. With God the Father one in nature, not in person; with assumed man, one in person, not in nature. What is more one than unity? What in one by unity is one to the highest degree (*Quod unitate unum est summe unum est*). The Word and the Father were one in unity, since they were one in nature, and the Word Himself wished to become one with us to make us one in Himself and through Himself and with Him with whom He himself was one. (Deferrari pp. 249-50, *PL* 176:412B-412C)

Hugh is claiming that the purpose of the hypostatic union, and of the work of the incarnate Christ, is to bring us ineffably into the highest unity, the unity of nature in the

eternal Triune life, through the union of humanity and divinity in Christ's person. The Son becomes one with us in order to make us one with the Father. We enjoy and are given this unity with the Father "in" Christ and "through" Christ. Hugh's own explanation of the unifying work of the incarnation culminates in a trio of near-successive quotations from John 17. While it makes for a long quotation, the passage is indeed worthy of quotation in full, since it puts Hugh's central christological and soteriological concerns on display. It should be said more strongly still: Hugh's very heart is exposed to his readers in this passage. Theologically, this is the structural center of Hugh's objective christology in its intersection with his trinitarian and soteriological concerns. I render in bold each instance of some lexical variant of unity, union, or one in order to display the mantra-like animating focus of Hugh's thinking. He writes:

Therefore, He assumed our nature from us that He might associate it, which had not been associated through **unity** in nature, to Himself through **union** in person; thus then through that indeed which He had made **one** with Himself from our own He might **unite** us to Himself, that we might be **one** with Him through that which as our own had been **united** to Him and through Him himself also be **one** with the Father who was **one** with Him. "Holy Father," he says, "keep them in thy name whom thou has given me: that they may be **one**, as we also are," (John 17, 11). "And not for them alone do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in me, that they also may be **one** in us; that the world may believe that thou has sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them; that they may be **one**, as we also are **one**: I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in **one**; and the world might know that thou hast sent me," (Cf. John 17, 20-23). **Unity prays for union.** The Word with the Father, **one** in nature; man with the Word, **one** in person. The members with the head, **one** first in justice, afterwards in glory. For that they may be **one** in justice, "the world may know that thou hast sent me;" but that they may be **one** in glory, "I will that where I am, they also may be with me, that they may see my glory which thou hast given me, because thou hast loved me before the creator of the world," (Cf. John 17, 24). (Deferrari p. 250)¹²¹

¹²¹ Assumpsit ergo ex nobis nostram naturam, ut eam sibi sociaret per unionem in persona, quae sociata non erat per unitatem in natura, ut per id quidem quod de nostro unum secum fecerat nos

When Hugh says that “Unity prays for union”, he means that Jesus Christ, who enjoys unity (*unitas*) of nature with God and unity (*unitas*) of nature with us, prays for union (*unio*), our divine union in the Son to the Father, a union made possible by the Holy Spirit. The incarnation in history is, for Hugh, a trinitarian divine union project: it is the LORD’s act to enable and elicit human union with God, to make humankind one with God. Hugh’s closing quotation from St. John is telling: the union and oneness with God which the historical act of the Son works to restore is a glory which is also the eternal Love between the Father and the Son. The Son becomes incarnate so that humans might see that eternal Love, and participate in it, and so become one with God.

3.2.2 The Passover of Language – The Degrees of Theological Language Exemplified in Hugh’s Reception of Anselmian ‘Courtroom Drama’

Having addressed the structuring heart of Hugh’s christological and soteriological concerns – namely, oneness, ‘atonement’ through re-formation in a refreshingly mystical and etymological key – we now move to Hugh’s ‘courtroom drama’ discussion of the work of Christ in 1.8.4. Here ‘atonement’ is discussed in the context of our guilt. Hugh

sibi uniret, ut cum ipso unum essemus; per id quod nostrum sibi unitum erat; et per ipsum unum esse cum Patre, cui cum ipso unum erat. *Pater, inquit, sancte, serva eos in nomine tuo quos dedisti mihi, ut sint unum sicut et nos. Non pro eis autem rogo tantum: sed pro eis qui credituri sunt per Verbum eorum in me: ut et ipsi in nobis unum sint: et mundus credat, quia tu me misisti? Sed ego claritatem quam dedisti mihi dedi eis, ut sint unum sicut et nos unum sumus. Ego in eis et tu in me, ut sint consummati in unum, et cognoscat mundus quia tu me misisti* (Joan. XVII). Rogat unitas pro unione. Verbum cum Patre unum in natura, homo cum Verbo, unum in persona. Membra cum capite unum, primum in justitia, postea in gloria. Ut enim in justitia unum sint, *cognoscat mundus quia tu me misisti* (ibid.); ut autem in gloria unum sint: *volo ut ubi ego sum et illi sint mecum, ut videant claritatem meam quam dedisti mihi, quia dilexisti me ante constitutionem mundi* (ibid). (PL 176:412C-412D)

certainly plays some Anselmian notes in this chapter of *On the Sacraments*, yet these fit within Hugh's objective christological thought in a way that remains distinctively Hugonian.

To show how the material in 1.8.4 retains its Hugonian signature it is helpful at the outset to comment on the way in which Hugh speaks in this chapter which I have characterized as a 'courtroom drama.' This section is thus concerned not only with the logic of Hugh's doctrine but with the degree (or 'day') of perfection of the theological lexicon in which he enunciates it. I have above shown the divine motive and goal of the incarnation as desire for loving union in Hugh's thought. This accords with the nature of the Triune LORD as perfect goodness and perfect love: both goodness/kindness and love are associated with the Holy Spirit, who completes and fulfills the eternal *in se* act of the Triune life. Love, for Hugh, is that with which the LORD regards everyone, most properly speaking. However, recall that for Hugh the revelation that "God is love" is the culmination of a three age historical pedagogy of trinitarian self-manifestation, itself fully contained in the three days of the paschal mystery itself. Recall further that in every age of history, for Hugh, there are humans at different stages in this pedagogy. Individuals are subjectively participating in, and so cognizant of, the Triune LORD's Love-nature in different ways and degrees, and some are not cognizant of it at all. Moreover, at the objective level, there are different ways of speaking proper to the three days, different semantic fields within the biblical lexicon proper to each 'day/age' of history. This does not mean, for Hugh, that the LORD changes from day to day – the LORD is the same yesterday and today and forever. Yet it does mean that things are expressed of the LORD

which are proper to the sojourn and travail of Israel under the Law, for example, which must be understood as expressions of the LORD's omniscient love keyed to lower levels of human responsiveness, and to earlier 'days/ages' in the biblical pedagogy of trinitarian revelation. Objectively, these ways of speaking are not false, not fiction,¹²² but neither are they the most proper ways of speaking in the full light of the Godhead. Moreover, they are pedagogically necessary. For Hugh, a person cannot understand what it means that God is perfect love without understanding first that God is angry, even though divine anger will only later be recognized as a way of saying that 'God is love' in the context of human sin. Moreover, such 'imperfect' ways of speaking are not only objectively true and necessary; they are subjectively resonant. To speak of divine anger at human sin rings true and right to the sinner who desires to be reformed. There is an apt existential quality to the lexicon of Israel under the Law or of Good Friday which is true to human experience and captures the light and shadow of the drama of human redemption. Human fear must be not abolished but reformed into loving awe. This is a long preface in order to make a simple but very important claim. To wit, in discussing our redemption as a 'courtroom drama' Hugh speaks at times in these 'imperfect' ways, in these existentially fitting and pedagogically necessary ways. The lexicon he here employs is befitting 'day one': the age of Israel's travail in the wilderness and of Good Friday. Yet, unless reread in the Spirit, this lexicon is inadequate for expressing the higher love-light of the Resurrection and Eschaton. That Hugh speaks in these 'imperfect' ways does not call into question the coherence of his theology. Rather, it is a display of that

¹²² "Theology is mostly fiction." Sallie McFague, *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), xi.

distinctively trinitarian and paschal coherence which is a signature of his thought. It may be a significant contribution of Hugh's to offer a trinitarian revelational and pedagogical framework capable of rightly situating Anselm-inflected atonement theories.

Into the courtroom, then. Hugh introduces his three actors, "man, God, and the devil." The relations between these three are complex:

The devil is convicted of having done injury to God, since he abducted man, His servant, by fraud and held him by violence. Similarly, man is convicted of having done injury to God, since he contemned His precept and placing himself under the hand of another caused Him the loss of his service. Likewise the devil is convicted of having done injury to man, since he deceived him beforehand by promising goods, and afterwards harmed him by inflicting evils.

Bear the above note about Hugh's intentionally 'imperfect' language in mind when reading that "injury" is done to God, who is held by Hugh to be impassible. Despite the fact that the devil holds man unjustly, Hugh points out (as per patristic precedent) that man is yet justly held: "Justly... was the man subjected to the devil, in so far as pertains to his sin, but unjustly, in so far as pertains to the devil's deception." What man needs is an advocate, an "advocate that through his power the devil could be brought to court".

Yet no advocate is initially forthcoming:

Now no such advocate could be found except God, but God was unwilling to take up man's case, since He was still angry with man for his sin. Therefore, it was necessary that man first placate God, and thus afterwards with God as advocate enter suit with the devil.

If any doubt remained, one would certainly know now that Hugh has embraced a style of loose and dramatic speech. There is no literal sense in which God is "unwilling" to

deliver man.¹²³ Hugh is well aware that to hold this would either mean that God changes or that the incarnation would never have happened. It would also entail that God is not perfect Love – but substantiating that claim would require a longer argument. Recall only Hugh’s claim in *On the Praise of Charity* 10 that “neither God nor we are able to go to the other except through you [Charity].” Though loose and keyed to the lexical ‘day’ of Good Friday rather than Easter Sunday, Hugh’s description of God as “unwilling” to help man against the devil because “still angry” is at once existentially apt, dramatically poignant, and befitting Hugh’s pedagogical purpose.

Back to the courtroom drama. Man is in a bind, able neither to “restore” the damage he has caused God nor to “make satisfaction for his contempt.” Indeed, “man found nothing with which he could placate God toward himself, since whether he should give what was his [i.e. material creation] or himself [a sinner], the recompense would be unworthy.” So God takes pity:

God, seeing that man by his own power could not escape the yoke of damnation, took pity upon him, and first He assisted him gratuitously through mercy alone, that afterwards He might free him through justice, that is, since man had not the power of himself to escape justice, God through mercy gave justice.

Here is where the incarnation comes in. And notice the way in which, in this lexical field we have just heard (different than the previous one in which God was angrily unwilling

¹²³ cf. *On the Sacraments* 1.3.14’s “Creation itself adds a reason to believe that there is nothing new in God, so that then or now He begins to love what before He did not know, or to forget like man His former love....” (Deferrari p. 46); and *ibid.* 1.4.2, “God is called angry, and there is no anger in Him; but only the signs which are without, by which He is shown to be angry, are called His anger. It is a figure of speech, according to which what is said is not false, but the truth which is said is obscured out of regard for likeness. According to these figurative modes diverse wills, as it were, are attributed to God, because those things which are called His will by figure are diverse, although His will properly so called is one” (Deferrari pp. 61-2).

to help), justice is enfolded within a prior and more capacious mercy. This is a more pleromatically truthful, more pneumatological lexical field.

In order... that God could be placated toward man, God gave man freely what man might duly render to God. He gave to man, therefore, a man whom man might return for man, who, that a worthy recompense might be made, was not only equal to the first man but greater. So that man greater than man might be returned for man, God was made man for man, and as man gave Himself to man, that He might assume Himself from man.... Therefore, that Christ was given to man was the mercy of God, that Christ was returned by man was the justice of man. For in the birth of Christ God was justly placated toward man, since such a man was found for man who not only, as was said, was equal to but even greater than man. On this account at the birth of Christ the angels announce peace to the world....

Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union is once again relevant. Man-greater-than-man is returned to God from man in and as the assumed humanity of the Word. The Word has assumed human nature into personal identity, and hence in this assumption is a just man-greater-than-man. Hence, Christ/God is, in the assumption of the human nature, justly returned to God from man. The divine act of assumption by which man returns God to God for man plays out, for Hugh, across Christ's whole life, culminating in its manifestation in the paschal mystery.

Whereas the birth of Christ – which follows upon the assumption of human nature into divine person – pays man's debt to God, man's guilt is atoned for, for Hugh, by the Son's assumption unto experience of sin's punishment unto death. The efficacy of this latter, experiential, assumption is of course predicated on the foundational assumption of humanity in the hypostatic union itself. Hugh writes:

But there was still left for man that, just as by restoring damage he had placated anger, so also by giving satisfaction for contempt he should be made worthy to escape punishment.... Therefore, that man might justly escape the punishment due, it was necessary that such a man assume punishment for man who had owed no punishment. But none such could be found save Christ. Christ, then, by His birth

paid man's debt to the Father, and by His death atoned for man's guilt, so that, when He Himself assumed death for man which He did not owe, man on account of Him might justly escape death which he owed and the devil might no longer find room for calumny... and man was worthy to be freed.

We should not be overly deterred by Hugh's use of the language of punishment, in the first place, because we know that Hugh is speaking imperfectly. Moreover, though, the courtroom drama in which sin is justly punished by definition contains at its heart a human relational logic which holds true outside of the courtroom and even without the language of punishment. What Hugh's courtroom drama is concerned to display is the reality that when one person wrongs another, the relationship as it exists in and between each of the individuals is most truly restored by the party that has done wrong offering a sacrifice that truly costs her or him something in a gesture of love and goodwill. If we accept these terms, the point of the courtroom drama analogy, for all its imperfection, is to showcase a truth Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union is keen to guard, namely, that in Christ the wronged party finds a way to restore the wrongdoer through a surpassing act of solidarity and sacrifice. The Triune LORD's gift to sinners of union with God truly costs God something: God dies. God dies, suffering and assuming death personally and impassibly in the Son, in order to be personally the only gift by which the relational integrity of humankind toward God could be restored. The LORD's anger and wrath against sinners (imperfect speech) is a flowing from and expression of Triune Love (perfect speech). Continuously and reciprocally, then, in Christ humankind makes an all-surpassing gift to the LORD which humankind is otherwise utterly unable to offer. The LORD, for Hugh, does not merely let bygones be bygones. Such help would be no help, for humankind would remain lost, disintegrated, wrongly related to God rather than at

one. No. For Hugh, the LORD truly justifies humankind before God, in the sense of making humans just, making humankind at one with God. To those who participate in Christ's death through the Spirit, it is a way and site of purgation. For Hugh, the mystical and sacrificial renderings of atonement are themselves at one: they are in fact one. The One who is the hypostatic unity of God and man is the One who dies, is buried, and rises – to mankind an unfathomable, excessive, infinite gift – from mankind infinitely to God, at once a gift greater than which none can be conceived, and simultaneously a gift greater than can be conceived.

3.2.3 Cosmic Re-formation in *Tribus Diebus* – For a Synthetic Reading of Hugh's Soteriology

In sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 above I have given warrant for and offered an example of a practice I programmatically commend in this section. To wit, Hugh's various soteriological notes should be read synthetically in light of – that is to say synthesized as far as possible within – the re-formatational and unitive paradigm we see at the conclusion of *On the Three Days*.¹²⁴ The advantages of this approach are themselves synthetic. For example, this approach allows Hugh's otherwise disparate Anselmian notes to be read with his other, e.g. Abelardian, notes, and within his overarching soteriological vision christologically centered in the paschal mystery. Moreover, the synthetic character of

¹²⁴ Indeed, texts we have examined above in *On the Sacraments* readily lend themselves to this kind of synthetic reception within a paschal mystery centered re-formation and union paradigm. E.g., "For this reason man held it as necessary that first he be justified from fault in order to be reconciled, afterwards that he be liberated from wretchedness in order to be reformed" (Deferrari p. 249). Justification/reconciliation here precede liberation and (presumably complete) reformation.

Hugh's soteriology in relation to the three days actually signals a rare strength: whereas, for example, Christ's burial and resurrection do no real work for Anselm, yet, for Hugh, each of the days of the paschal mystery contributes and operates with the others to re-form human persons.

This overarching objective soteriology of re-formation unto union may be summarized as follows. Christ, who is by the hypostatic union identically God and human, Creator and creature, illuminates the mostly-ignorant world with divine rays of plenary eschatological illumination.¹²⁵ This takes place more intensely in the paschal mystery than in his life leading up to it, and, within the paschal mystery, takes place fully only on the third day.¹²⁶ It is Christ's resurrection which discloses the eschatological light most fully in history, and so reveals and manifests abroad, for those with ears to hear, that the Triune LORD is Love and Kindness (*benignitas*).¹²⁷ Yet, in the process or 'passover' leading to the third day, there is an illumination proper to each day.¹²⁸ The first day, Good Friday, reveals divine judgment against sin.¹²⁹ As we have seen in section 3.2.2 above, Hugh's Anselmian remarks about divine anger pertain to this day. And this day, for its part, does its re-forming work in the world. Knowing divine anger at sin, the world is brought to repentance and pursuit of the likeness of the Triune LORD

¹²⁵ "The day of truth brings light to the day of fear; the day of charity brings light to the day of fear and to the day of truth, until charity is perfect and all truth completely manifest" (*On the Three Days* III.27.1).

¹²⁶ *On the Sacraments* 2.1.6.

¹²⁷ "[K]indness on its day may cause us to rise revived through desire of divine love" (*On the Three Days* III.27.4).

¹²⁸ "We have three days internally by which our soul is illumined" (*ibid.*, III.27.3).

¹²⁹ *ibid.*, III.27.1.

revealed in Christ.¹³⁰ The perception of divine anger disclosed in relation to divine power thus has a ‘purgative’ effect in the world.¹³¹ If the first day is purgative, the middle, transitional, day is properly illuminative. As Christ, the Truth, is buried in the darkness of the tomb, Christ is yet passing through death and hell and towards the eschatological disclosure of bodily resurrection. Hence, St. John’s remark that the light shines in the darkness but the darkness does not overcome it pertains to the gift of the increasing, if still hidden, light of Holy Saturday: the world, yet in partial ignorance, is becoming bright, intellectually illumined.¹³² The third and culminating day is the perfection of charity or divine union: the risen Christ is revealed in his glorified humanity, making manifest the hypostatic union of human nature passed over into God. This day is the victory of love and charity over their lack, and is hence the full disclosure, in the world, of the eschaton. Christ’s resurrection shines the light of love abroad in the world with unparalleled brightness. It is making history not just wise but kind, good, actively loving. Indeed, history’s eschatological perfection will be nothing other than a sharing in Christ’s resurrection, a passing over into God in and through Christ the mediator.¹³³ Nonetheless, this final fruit of the third day of Christ’s Passover has not yet been made manifest in the whole world, save in Christ’s resurrection and in the illuminated intellects of those who trust, hope in, and love him. Yet it is the resurrection which fully reveals the love that has been the motive and deepest aspect of the whole of the Son’s incarnate engagement in the world. This overarching process of the world’s

¹³⁰ cf. III.26.5, III.27.1

¹³¹ “What He does will, however, is that His chosen should go through (*transeant*) the purgation (*purgandi*) of divers troubles and numerous trials” (*Noah’s Ark* 4.5, CSMV p. 127, Sicard p. 91).

¹³² *ibid.*, III.27.3

¹³³ *Noah’s Ark* 1.1.15, CSMV p. 69.

reformation unto memory, mindfulness, and love of God is the ‘divine union project’ the Triune LORD works through the paschal mystery.

3.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I continued unfolding the systematic coherence of Hugh of St. Victor’s christological thought. To show this, I first argued that Hugh is concerned with maintaining an account of Jesus Christ’s hierarchical identity in relation to a hierarchically participatory theological anthropology and mereology in order to maintain the truth of the biblical and creedal claim that we are saved because the LORD is the ultimate operating referent in all of Jesus Christ’s acts and sufferings. Because this is the case – because in the paschal mystery *God* unites himself to human nature in such a way that *God* is mankind’s atoning gift to God – humankind is restored to integrity and justice in relating to God. More, and consequently, humankind participant in Jesus Christ is, by virtue of the assumption of human nature into the person of the Word, united mystically and really to the unbegotten Father in the eternal Love who is the Spirit. Hugh’s concerns as he addresses both hypostatic union and paschal mystery are, we see, soteriologically unitive – this was shown in the last chapter, and it is borne out in this chapter’s analyses of union as the goal, and love the resurrectionally revealed pneumatic motive, of the overarching process of historical and human re-formation happening through the three days of Christ’s own Passover.

Further, I argued in an excursus of ‘Hugonian’ extension that it is not only the case that Hugh protects the soteriological integrity of the paschal mystery by his doctrine of the hypostatic union: it is also the case that the paschal mystery itself is the most intense historical manifestation of the hidden divine act of the hypostatic union. In the paschal mystery, after all, we see a human nature pass over into eschatological union with God. For Hugh, the eschatological light of the resurrection is only the manifestation of what has been the case since the first moment of Jesus Christ’s conception in the darkness of Mary’s womb.

This chapter further begins to address an important feature of Hugh’s thought which will be further developed in Part Two of this project: three degrees of perfection in theological language indexed to three degrees of divine revelation, i.e., according to the progressive historical revelations of the three divine persons. All of these persons are, for Hugh, revealed in the paschal mystery, which is likewise the soteriological source and enactment of history’s re-formation unto union with God, enabled by the hypostatic union and participant in Christ’s own Passover. This feature of Hugh’s thought was examined with reference to his reception of Anselmian ‘courtroom drama’ soteriological notes: I demonstrated how Anselm, like Hugh’s other soteriological sources, can and should be read synthetically in light of his overarching soteriology of re-formation in the paschal mystery unto divine union. Further, I suggested that this feature of Hugh’s thought is a significant strength: that Hugh’s soteriology of re-formation involves each of the three days gives it a supple and wide synthetic power. Ever beyond our divisions, Hugh’s soteriology, like his theology as a whole, is both integral and integrating.

In completing my systematic exploration, begun in the last chapter, of the most important contours of Hugh's objective christology and soteriology, this chapter brings Part One of the present project to a close. The four chapters which comprise Part Two treat the subjective polarity of responsive union with the Trinity through the paschal mystery. Chapter 4 is foundational for the rest. It parallels Chapter 1 and continues the exposition and interpretation of *On the Three Days* there begun. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 form a trio of chapters which offer in-depth exploration of Hugh's subjective christology. These chapters are thematized (and titled) according to Christ's dying, burial, and rising. As Christ has brought us through death, burial, and into resurrection in himself, so these chapters explore the receptive-constructive spirituality – including theological practice – by which Christ's death, burial, and resurrection is appropriated unto our reformation and union with the LORD.

In light of Hugh's objective christology this ordering is indeed fitting. The Triune LORD undergoes pain, dereliction, and death, in Hugh's doctrine, in order to propose to us marriage. The LORD is both fully identified with us, becoming in Christ identical with our nature – stunningly becoming our equal – in a way that raises us up to equality with the LORD in the heavenly court. We are made equal with the LORD such that we might, Queen Vashti-like, respond 'Yes' to the LORD's marriage proposal.

PART TWO

**4.0 UNIFICATION IN THE PASCHAL MYSTERY – SUBJECTIVE POLARITY:
HUMAN PARTICIPATION IN THE TRIUNE LORD’S RE-FORMING ACTIVITY IN
HUGH OF ST. VICTOR’S *ON THE THREE DAYS***

In Part I, I explored the ‘objective polarity’ of the Triune God’s work of unifying all things in the paschal mystery as presented in the culmination of Hugh of St. Victor’s *On the Three Days*. This involved treating Hugh’s christology in chapters 2 and 3. This chapter is to Part II what chapter 1 is to Part I: foundational. I here turn to the ‘subjective polarity’ in which the act of the Trinity is joined – cooperatively and participatively – by the human person. By holistic spiritual participation in the paschal mystery, the human person is re-formed in the image of the Triune LORD. For Hugh, the practice of theology is *within* this all-encompassing trinitarian spirituality. In this chapter I first discuss reformation of the human person and then the place of the theological craft within it. Doing so completes my initial exploration of the culmination of *On the Three Days*. This sets the stage for the trio of chapters which continue Part II, each of which is dedicated to one of the ‘days’ of our participation in Christ’s dying, burial, and rising.

4.1 THE HUMAN PERSON BEING REFORMED IN CHRIST THROUGH RESPONSIVE FEAR/WONDER, CONTEMPLATION, AND LOVE

The activity of the Triune LORD in Jesus Christ's Passover, as the recapitulatory unification of all history and all of God's restoring works therein, is the double, divine-human form which, internalized, reforms humans in the likeness of God. In responding to the light of the Trinity as it is concretized most fully in Jesus Christ's dying, burial, and rising, the human soul is actualized in triadic likeness to the Trinity's own act. Centrally, historically speaking, this takes place within the liturgy – the horizon of divine action in history and of human response, as will be discussed further in Part Two. In *On the Three Days* Hugh situates the whole of the spiritual life within the paschal mystery.

Indeed, *On the Three Days* makes most sense when read as a style, outline, sketch, enactment of a distinctive Victorine spirituality. While Hugh shows the recapitulation of all things in the paschal mystery, the living, beating heart of his interest in offering the treatise as a whole is teaching a spiritual way of human reformation in Christ. This core interest can be seen by a consideration of the cyclical and repeatable pattern of the whole. After ascending to the rational glimpse of the Trinity through contemplation of created forms (parts I and II), a process Hugh calls the 'order of cognition', the contemplative returns back down to creatures by following the 'order of creation'. This 'order of creation' Hugh follows in part III, emerging from contemplation of the imminent Trinity and stretching to the paschal mystery, is in fact a style of discursive contemplation (which he would elsewhere locate within 'meditation') that

moves the contemplative from the ‘heights’ to the ‘depths’ and finds God in both. One moves from God’s *in se* act to God’s historical works. In so doing one spans in one’s soul, as best one may, the infinite distance the LORD transverses and contains by incarnation, humility, and love. Leaving the ‘heights’ of contemplation of the imminent Trinity, in which the soul cannot in any case remain due to the “ebb and flow of its mutability” (III.25.3), the soul “returns” to creation by returning to God’s enactment manifest *in* creation, ultimately in the paschal mystery. Hugh enjoins his reader not just return to creation, but return to Jesus (II.24.3) – and the return to creation (III) is enfolded within the return to Jesus (which begins in II.24.3-4 and culminates in III.27.4). The contemplative’s movement ‘downward’ from Trinity into creaturely ontochronologicity is itself mediated by Jesus Christ, who as the hypostatic union of divine and human natures, and so forms, is the divine presence (Mt 1:23’s “Emmanuel”) re-forming the world – and so is as much the Christian’s bridge of passage phenomenologically into the world as he is of passover beyond it. Having returned ‘downward’ to Jesus’ Passover – and so again to the Trinity – in the order of creation, the contemplative is prepared anon to ascend anew from the forms of creation to the Trinity *in se*, repeating the cycle again and being progressively reformed in the process.

The structure of *On the Three Days*, and the spiritual or contemplative practice it teaches and exemplifies, can thus be understood in relation to the following figure:

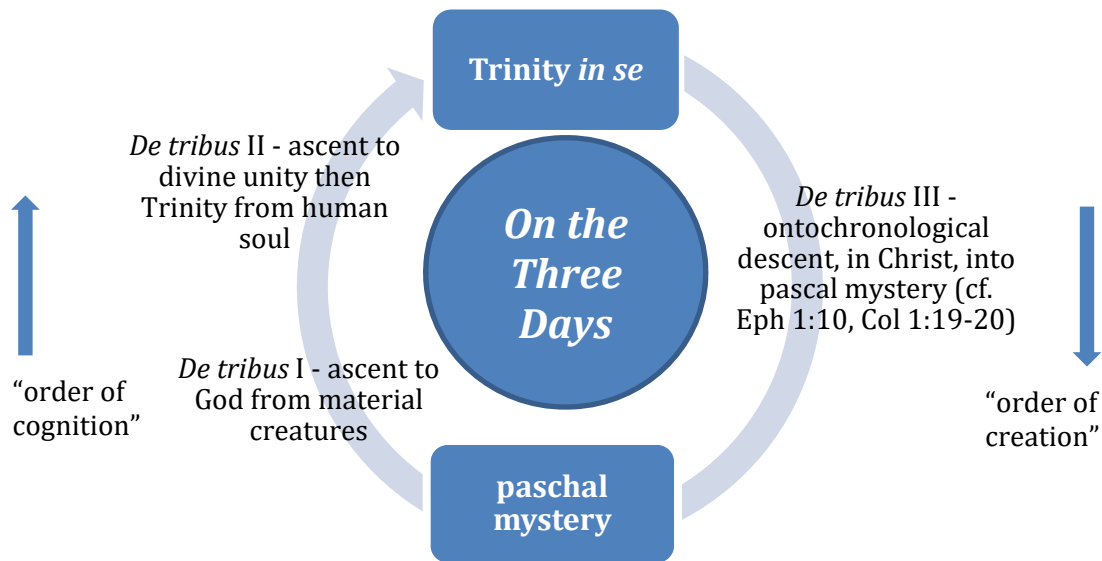


Figure 1. Structure of *On the Three Days*

In the figure above, we see depicted the structure of *On the Three Days* as a circular and repeatable outline, a spiritual exercise which contains a particular theological construal of Christian spirituality and theological practice.¹³⁴ The ‘height’ of the figure is the Triune God *in se* and the ‘depth’ of the figure is God in historically manifest act in the paschal mystery – and we recall that, for Hugh, divine Wisdom comprehends, spans, transverses both of these in Christ’s person and historical act.¹³⁵ Hence the height (divinity) and the depth (created materiality and history) express the duality of natures in the hypostatic

¹³⁴ As Feiss notes, “*On the Three Days* leads from visible creation to invisible creation, to contemplation of God – the order of cognition; then it leads from God to the rational creature who lives amid created realities – the order of creation. The pattern could be repeated endlessly, and deepened each time. Perhaps, that was what Hugh intended *On the Three Days* to be: an object of meditation, tracing a path that readers take each time they take up the book” (Coolman and Coulter, ed.s, 60). Coolman poignantly summarizes the spiritual import of *De tribus*: “if the conclusion of the *On the Three Days* is any indication, the entire spiritual life is an ever-increasing participation in the created dynamic and interpenetration within the human soul of the uncreated divine life of power, wisdom, and goodness” (Coolman and Coulter, ed.s, *Trinity and Creation*, 34).

¹³⁵ “Wisdom reaches forth from end to end, above and below. Above in majesty, below in humility. If you look to the heights, no one is more sublime than Christ. If you reach to the depths, no one is more humble. Humbled even to the lowest, exalted to the highest.” *Misc.*, 1.71 (PL 177.507C), quoted and translated in Coolman, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor*, 83-4.

union, while the unity of the whole expresses the unity of Christ's person. The practitioner follows the cycle, as described above. As repeatable, *On the Three Days* is significant as a display of a kind of "thinking prayer" or style of "theological thinking" which progressively assists not only in the clarification of thought and sight but in the reformation of the human person in the triune likeness.¹³⁶ The circle shows, as well, that the spiritual practice presupposes faith, participation in the Christian sacramental and spiritual life, vision reformed by Scripture.¹³⁷ Inasmuch as Hugh is heard as showing 'necessary' reasons for God's existence and God's Trinity, they should be taken as necessary in the sense of a reason working things out rationally, 'seeing' the invisible things of the Trinity as best one may, on the ground of Triune revelation. That is, rather than only saying with Augustine that 'persons' answers "Three whats?", Hugh's meditative contemplation sees what must be, what necessarily is, not in the sense that sickly sinners couldn't mis-reason otherwise, but in the sense of the rational outworking of the Triune LORD's transfiguration of reason itself. Parts I and II, no less than part III, situate the practitioner in her present moment in history, practicing life in the Spirit (and so oriented to the eschaton), seeking and finding the Triune God in the world and in the self. As such, beginning 'in' the paschal mystery, and so always spiritually and rationally 'in' the hypostatic union, is as much a presupposition for practicing parts I and II as contemplating the Trinity is for practicing part III. In the familiar term, it is a hermeneutical circle. As such, I note, the practice of theology or Christian doctrine contained within the spiritual life in *On the Three Days* is, in the words of Khaled

¹³⁶ The allusions are to Lacoste, *From Theology to Theological Thinking* and Prevot, *Thinking Prayer*.

¹³⁷ Coolman, "Pulchrum Esse", 176-82.

Anatolios, “global” and “systematic” – capable of embracing and exploring the whole field of experience and existence Christianly in responsive reference to the Triune God.¹³⁸ I now explore the way in which Hugh situates the spiritual life within the paschal mystery.

Hugh’s situation of the spiritual life within the paschal mystery as it becomes clear at the end of his treatise springs from his prior contemplation of the imminent Trinity. Hugh writes:

Therefore, after we have, to the extent that God deigned to grant us, arrived at the knowledge of invisible things from visible things, let our mind now return to itself and pay attention to what use can come to it from this knowledge. For what good is it to us if we know in God the height of his majesty, but glean from it nothing useful to us? But notice, when we come back from that interior, secret place of divine contemplation, what will we be able to bring back with us? Coming from the region of light, what else except light? For it is fitting and necessary that if we come from the region of light, we carry with us light to put to flight our darkness. (III.26.1)

At least two notes are apposite here. First, note that the glimpse of the region of light is brought back. This glimpse of heavenly light is the key to Christianly remembering, meditating, contemplating the things of the world. The rational and luminous, ever-more interior glimpse of triune divine form one has rationally enjoyed keys one to find this form below in the triadic-paschal creaturely forms encountered below or outside.

Second, in a way that might ring scandalous to some, Hugh seems to question the worth of divine contemplation that fails to bring some useful good to the contemplative after she returns from the heights. Yet, Hugh is no utilitarian; his sense is rather that the light of the Trinity ought to be embraced in memory and affection and reflection even after

¹³⁸ Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, 7-10.

one returns from the spiritual sight of it. That is to say, his ‘forward’ orientation to utility is as pneumatologically grounded as is his ‘upward’ orientation to (also eschatological) contemplation. The trinitarian and pneumatological shaping of Hugh’s convictions will be elucidated below. Hugh proceeds to specify the “light” according to the trinitarian appropriations he has used throughout the treatise: power, wisdom, and kindness:

If there we saw power, let us bring back the light of the fear of God. If we saw wisdom there, let us bring back the light of truth. If we saw kindness there, let us bring back the light of love. Power rouses the sluggish to fear; wisdom illumines those who were blind from the darkness of ignorance; kindness enflames the cold with the warmth of charity. (III.26.1)

Hugh wastes little time before explicitly naming these trinitarian appropriations as a pattern of the spiritual life, and connecting them to their respective persons (III.26.2). At the same time, he begins to use explicitly the theme of “the three days”, foreshadowing the spiritual life’s orientation to the paschal mystery. His tone is one of preacherly exhortation. Hugh:

Look, please! What is light if not the day, and what is darkness if not the night? And just as the eye of the body has its day and its night, so also does the eye of the heart have its day and its night. Therefore, there are three days of invisible light by which the course of the spiritual life is divided. The first day is fear; the second day is truth; the third day is love. The first day has power as its sun. The second day has wisdom as its sun. The third day has kindness as its sun. Power pertains to the Father, wisdom to the Son, kindness to the Holy Spirit. (III.26.2)

Feiss notes that the eye of the body and the eye of the heart correspond respectively to the humanity and divinity of Christ, a connection Hugh makes explicitly elsewhere in his works (*Misc.* 1.87) – and a connection previously made by St. Augustine.¹³⁹ In the context of *On the Three Days*, this connection accords with the importance of corporeal

¹³⁹ cf., e.g. Augustine, *Civ. Dei* 22.29.

forms and corporeal history, both in the ascent to God (parts I and II) and in the return to God in Christ's humanity in the order of creation (part III). Yet, the three days Hugh here speaks of are characterized by "invisible light": they are the three days of the soul, effulgences of triune divine form appearing to the heart and mind, for Hugh has not yet made his Christologically-mediated descent to corporeal history. In the language Hugh next takes up, they are "interior" days rather than "exterior" days. "Our exterior days pass by, even if we do not want them to. Our interior days can, if we want them to, remain for eternity" (III.26.2). The interior light of the Trinity, embraced in the soul, is a light which will continue forever: "Even if truth begins in this life, it will be full and perfect in us then, when He who is truth will appear clearly after the end of this life. It is also said of charity that "*charity never fails.*" Notice Hugh's temporal specifications. The light of the Trinity, remembered and held in the soul as truth and love, is a foretaste of the eschatological vision of God. Several paragraphs later, Hugh will again praise the "interior days":

Blessed are those days! Human beings can be fulfilled by these days, when future things supervene but the present things do not pass away, when their number will increase and their brightness will multiply. (III.26.6)

Yet, as Hugh speaks of the interior days here, a change has taken place. These interior days are no longer those of sheer eschatological participation in eternity, rationally recalled light of the imminent Trinity. Rather, "these days" which fulfill humans include the corporeality assumed by the Word of God in history. All things are united in Christ.

Hugh makes this Christological descent into history through exegesis of Ps. 95:2, "Announce from one day to the next His salvation." "What is "His salvation" if not His

Jesus?”, Hugh asks. “For that is how “Jesus” is translated, that is, “salvation.” He is spoken of as salvation because through Him humanity is reformed for salvation”

(III.26.5). Thus, when Hugh speaks of ‘interior days’ in light of the incarnation of the Son of God, he enjoins a contemplative or meditative internalization of the historical form of Christ as sacrament and example:

because what was done in Him was not only a remedy, but also an example and a sacrament, it was necessary that it happen visibly and outwardly, so that it might signify what needed to happen in us invisibly. Therefore, His days are external; our days are to be sought internally. (III.27.2)

External and internal, in Hugh’s usage, approximate to what in contemporary theology is sometimes referred to an objective event and its subjective appropriation. In our spiritual life we must subjectively receive and be reformed by what the Triune God has accomplished objectively and in history. So Hugh:

For we have heard and rejoiced about how our Lord Jesus Christ rising from the dead on the third day enlivened us in Himself and raised us up. But it was very fitting that we reimburse Him for his favor, and, just as we have risen in Him as He rose on the third day, so, too, let us, rising on the third day for Him and through Him, make Him rise in us. (III.27.2)

In fact, not only the resurrection, but each day of the paschal mystery is to be appropriated in the Christian spiritual life in this way.

This brings us to the conclusion of Hugh’s treatise, as the three days of the paschal mystery come clearly into view. As Hugh’s treatise culminates in a coincidence of the objective event of the paschal mystery and its subjective appropriation, Hugh’s reader finds herself in the throes of the Trinity’s human-reforming action in the paschal mystery, undergoing each of the three days in and with Christ. Hugh writes:

When... the omnipotence of God is considered and arouses our heart to wonder, it is the day of the Father; when the wisdom of God is examined and enlightens our heart with recognition of the truth, it is the day of the Son; when the kindness of God is observed and enflames our hearts to love, it is the day of the Holy Spirit. (III.27.4)

It is noteworthy that, corresponding respectively to the divine act of enlightenment revelationally appropriated to each of the persons of the Trinity, Hugh identifies a specific effect in or response of the human person. These effects in or responses of the human person form a triad which mirrors the Triune actor eliciting them. Our “heart”, for Hugh, wonders, recognizes the truth, and loves. This triad of fear/wonder, truth recognition, and love fits loosely with another triad Hugh has shown us in part II, one which we have already discussed: the mind, understanding, and love (II.21.3). Hugh’s triadic analysis of the mind in the act of loving understanding – from which Hugh begins his discursive contemplation of the Trinity in God – corresponds here to the mind/heart fulfilled by fear/wonder, understanding, and loving in response to the same Trinity’s works.¹⁴⁰ Thus the triadic human mind-in-act, as a kind of mirror through which one can ascend by discursive contemplation and perhaps glimpse the luminous love of the Trinity, is itself progressively reformed in the image of the Trinity as the mind descends into the ‘order of creation’ by ‘wondering contemplating loving’ the Trinity’s self-manifestation in history.

And here, at the culmination of the ontochronological ‘order of creation’, the primary work of the Trinity Hugh has in view is the paschal mystery. The divine act or

¹⁴⁰ Hugh often makes a division between two kinds of “works” of God: the “works of foundation” (i.e. creation) and the “works of restoration”. (cf. *On the Sacraments* 1, Prologue 2, Deferrari p. 3.) This division seems to fit neatly the two ‘orders’ of discursive contemplation Hugh shows in *On the Three Days*: the ‘order of cognition’ corresponds to the “works of creation” by which Hugh ascends in parts I and II, while the ontochronological ‘order of creation’ corresponds to the “works of restoration.”

work of the paschal mystery is the recapitulating culmination of God's "works of creation" (corresponding to the 'order of cognition', parts I and II) and "works of restoration" (corresponding to the 'order of creation', part III), as these alike manifest divine power, wisdom, and kindness. Hugh describes vividly how each day of the paschal mystery reforms the responsive human:

On the day of power, we die through fear. On the day of wisdom, we are buried away from the clamor of this world by contemplation of the truth. On the day of kindness, we rise through love and desire of eternal goods. Therefore, Christ died on the sixth day, lay buried in the tomb on the seventh, and rose on the eighth day, so that in a similar way through fear the power of God on its day may first cut us away from carnal desires outside, and then wisdom on his day may bury us within in the hidden place of contemplation; and finally, kindness on its day may cause us to rise revived through desire of divine love.

Here Hugh's accent is again, and more than ever, on divine action. God's Power, Wisdom, and Kindness act to reform the human through a unified agency, in such a way that Hugh's reader might even take Power, Wisdom, and Kindness for names of Father, Son, and Spirit so long as she remembers the unity in operation of the divine persons. And in the Trinity's act the human person is unified, reformed in the image of the Trinity. The mind's knowing loving directed to the Son of God who dies, is buried, and rises again reforms the soul in responsive triadic act. Humans are re-formed in the likeness of the divine *form* displayed in history in the paschal mystery. Power manifest in Jesus' death on Good Friday operates through our responsive fear to "cut us away" (*occidat*) from external carnal desires. Wisdom manifest in Jesus' buried being-dead on Holy Saturday acts to bury us in the silence of contemplation. Kindness manifest in Jesus Christ's resurrection on Easter works the same resurrection in our hearts through the desire of eschatological divine love. As we participate in Christ, in his and our de-

formation, we are softened like wax and broken in mystical death. We are subsequently enlightened and made wise by mystical burial. We too can thus be raised new, raised by the Spirit of love, raised in Christ's personal form/likeness. The divine Word's form, enacting and transfiguring the Word's human paschal form unto its transfigured resurrectional form, itself determines and cooperatively works human reformation.

In this section I have shown the way in which the human person is fulfilled through responsive act within the Trinity's act in the paschal mystery. In the next section I look more deeply at the place of contemplation within the spirituality Hugh teaches.

4.2 THE PRACTICE OF THEOLOGY EMBEDDED WITHIN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF RESPONSE TO THE TRINITY'S SELF- MANIFESTATION IN THE PASCHAL MYSTERY

In this section I analyze the practice of "contemplation" enjoined by Hugh in *On the Three Days*. My goal in doing so is to understand the place of theology within the paschally-formed spirituality Hugh teaches in *On the Three Days*. Yet, understanding the distinctively Victorine and comprehensively paschal Trinitarian spirituality Hugh offers in *On the Three Days*, and especially the place of discursive theology within it, requires attention to how Hugh describes the intellectual activities schematized as cogitation, meditation, and contemplation more widely in his corpus. To this end I engage the discussions of meditation and contemplation offered by Matthew McWhorter and Boyd

Taylor Coolman.¹⁴¹ In *On the Three Days* Hugh never speaks of meditation. Hugh is here using “contemplation” in a sense sometimes broad, sometimes narrow. The result of his relaxed lexical posture in this treatise is that his own discursive practice would sometimes fall within what he elsewhere terms ‘meditation’ and sometimes reflects what he elsewhere terms ‘contemplation’ in a more strict sense. In closing this section I will discuss the way intellectual activity, and theology in particular, is embedded within the comprehensively paschal and Trinitarian spirituality Hugh offers in *On the Three Days*.

The task of situating and describing Hugh’s discursive theological craft in *On the Three Days*, which travels under the blanket description “contemplation” in the paschal culmination of the treatise, entails understanding different styles of thought, or different intellectual activities, Hugh describes in light of the Trinitarian and paschal triads which organize the treatise. Allow me to come to my point gradually. The subjective triad of interior human response to the Trinity’s acts Hugh deploys – fear/wonder, contemplation, love – has its anthropological corollary and condition, as mentioned above, in Hugh’s triadic analysis in part II of the mind in act: mind, understanding, love. Now, notice that in *On the Three Days* the persons of the Trinity, as progressively revealed in the stages or ‘days’ of history appropriated to each, find fulfillment in the third, in the one Hugh has called sometimes Love and sometimes Love-of-the-Father-and-the-Son. It is in the light of the *Holy Spirit’s* revelation that the Father and Son’s work in history is (or, rather, will be eschatologically) fully understood. Hugh says as much: “Even if truth begins in this life, it will be full and perfect in us then, when He who is truth will appear clearly after

¹⁴¹ McWhorter, Matthew R. “Hugh of St. Victor on Contemplative Meditation.” *The Heythrop Journal* LV (2014), 110-122. Coolman, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor*, 166.

the end of this life” (III.26.3). Moving to the Trinity’s paschal act, the same, we should think, obtains of the third/eighth day, the day of resurrection. In light of the Resurrection (itself associated with the Spirit), Christ’s death and burial are fully understood, as I argued in section 1.2.3. Hugh depicts love as the fulfillment of truth or Wisdom in a way that coincides with St. John’s teaching (from Jn 16, quoted by Hugh in III.27.1), “when that Spirit of truth comes, he will teach you all truth.” This is the way it works with Hugh’s triads in the theater of history. The third member of the triad also fulfills or completes the first two, and so fulfills the unity of the three. And, analogously, in the act of the human mind in part II, the third moment, love, though simultaneous or nearly so with the act of understanding, is the fulfillment of the mind’s proper act. (Hugh perhaps equivocates on the simultaneity: compare II.21.2 and 3.) Incidentally, one will see the same dynamic in biblical interpretation: the literal/historical sense and the allegorical/doctrinal sense incline toward and are fulfilled in the moral/spiritual sense, or tropological sense.

Now – and here we come to our present point – this same dynamic applies *within* the sequence of a triad of types of thought Hugh sometimes differentiates: cogitation, meditation, contemplation.¹⁴² This triad is discussed in various places in Hugh’s works, including in his first sermon *On Ecclesiastes*. There is a progression between these three which mirrors the progression of the ‘days’ of the paschal mystery, the ‘days’ or stages of history, and, ultimately, the Trinity’s unity. As such, the ‘horizontal’ continuum of styles

¹⁴² This triad is not found in *On the Three Days*, but rather in, e.g., his first sermon *On Ecclesiastes*. In *Eccl.* (PL 177.116D).

of human thought is in a certain way, through the Trinity's manifestation in history, a mirror of the eternal act of the Trinity *in se*. We start with cogitation.

Of the three styles or stages of thought, *cogitation* is the least disciplined: it is the more or less free flow of thoughts and forms passing through one's mind.¹⁴³ For Hugh, these originate in either sense perception or memory (Coolman, 166). McWhorter notes that Hugh might well have added 'imaginative fabrication' (itself, of course, memory-dependent) to his list of sources for cogitation (114), but there are complexities here. Is there a difference between the imaginative fabrication which McWhorter would locate within cogitation and the practice of meditative symbol construction which is rightly located within meditation? McWhorter's positing of imaginative fabrication within cogitation makes sense if we stipulate a distinction between imaginative fabrication and meditative symbol construction/fabrication in the degree of intentionality involved.

Though a deeper analysis would reveal that often the difference between sense perception and memory is not an either/or, 'sense perception' generally and loosely applies to the 'way of cognition' by which Hugh first ascends in *On the Three Days* parts I and II, while 'memory' applies generally and loosely to the 'order of creation', the biblical history which Hugh and his students work to memorize. In each case I say generally and loosely, since the beauties of nature which one encounters through sense can, after all, become formed in one's memory so that one can wonder at them after the fact, and the biblical history one has memorized does continue in the sensible, visible

¹⁴³ McWhorter, 113-4; Coolman, 166.

present moment through sacramental practice. Forms and thoughts flow through one's mind from things one senses or remembers and, were these recorded discursively, the result might be, at best, *Finnegans Wake*. Yet, of the three styles of thought, cogitation is the one most immediately connected to the sensory experience of the outside world, whether as seen or as remembered. One sees or otherwise senses natural beauties, and they are cognized forms that are (hopefully) then stored in the memory. Alternately, cogitation produces a stream of forms and thought arising from the memory. A corollary to Hugh's dictum *historia fundamentum est* might thus be that 'cogitation is foundational': cogitation is the foundation and starting capacity for all higher, more disciplined, more intentional, more truth-comprehending, more unitive intellectual activities. In the same way a mind would never be fulfilled in an act of understanding love if there were no mind to start with, so there would be no meditation and no contemplation without cogitation. In the terms of part II of *On the Three Days*, there would be no eternally completing Love-of-the-Father-and-the-Son were there no Father in the first place, and in the terms of the paschal mystery (and as preachers love to say to rally for attendance during Holy Week) there would be no Easter Sunday without Good Friday. In the very last sentence of *On the Three Days*, Hugh says that Good Friday is for "work (*laborem*)", which in the context of styles of thought is suggestive of the importance of cogitation in its relation to memory and perception. There is no meditation and no contemplation without the sense perception of the world's precise and particular forms as they come to be stored in the memory, or without the memory of the biblical history. Formative sense perception and memorization are both labors, works – and thus

Good Friday even contains a note of the ‘work’ of careful perception and memorization, and of the corresponding importance of cogitation. Noticing this, of course, entails that while cogitation is, of itself, somewhat undisciplined, the rolling hills of memory from which it frivolously plucks dandelions are sometimes cultivated by activities that require a high degree of intentionality.

Meditation, then, is more disciplined, more intentional thought which seeks to remove obscurities and penetrate to the truth. Meditation stands in a middle place between cogitation and contemplation. Coolman writes:

The first [cogitation] is simply the mind’s awareness of the mental image of something “passing through it,” arising either from sense experience or memory. The third [contemplation] is a more intuitively direct and encompassing insight into something, either created or Uncreated. Between these, meditation is “the concentrated and sagacious reconsideration of thought (*cogitatio*) that tries to unravel something complicated or scrutinizes something obscure to get at the truth of it.”

Coolman’s quotations within my quotation of him come from Hugh’s sermon *On Ecclesiastes*. Meditation, then, starts from the resources cogitation provides, and pursues deeper truth through scrutiny, analysis, or other modes of thinking that seek to unravel it or get to the truth of it. McWhorter helpfully contrasts Hugh’s version of meditation from Abelard’s penchant for dialectic, while being careful not to overdraw the contrast.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ McWhorter points out, “some Victorine scholars go so far as to contend that Hugh, unlike his contemporary Abelard, altogether avoids the use of dialectic. Such a claim, however, must be nuanced. First, one may observe that certain passages in Hugh’s *De tribus diebus*, an early work likely influenced by Anselm, do approach a more dialectical mode of thinking. Likewise, Hugh discusses logic as part of the trivium in the *Didascalicon de studio legendi* and he affirms in both *De sacramentis Christiane fidei* and *De scripturis et scriptoribus sacris* the value of the trivium for investigating any philological ambiguities which an exegete may encounter when reading the literal sense of Scripture” (110). So: “Although Hugh did not altogether banish dialectic from his approach to theology, it is clear that his emphasis upon the role of dialectic in theology is markedly different from that of Abelard. As is evident from his discussion in the *Didascalicon*, Hugh’s understanding of dialectic is not limited simply to logical categorization or the formation of propositions. He also refers to a kind of

Dialectic, on the occasions when Hugh engages in it, should be considered one among many styles of meditation he employs in the pursuit of a clearer grasp of truth. Coolman observes that the imagery by which Hugh describes meditation is sometimes “agonistic, almost violent”, a wrestling match in which knowledge subdues ignorance (166). Yet, at other times, “his imagery is more irenic” – and here Coolman translates a quotation from Hugh’s *On Ecclesiastes* apt for full quotation:

[Meditation] delights to range along open ground, where it fixes its free gaze upon the contemplation of truth, drawing together now these, now those causes of things, or now penetrating into profundities, leaving nothing doubtful, nothing obscure.¹⁴⁵

Note the way in which Hugh here speaks of contemplation in a looser way (as he does in *On the Three Days*), or as taking its start from a kind of intellectual sight that begins within the clarifying activity of meditation. Both Coolman and McWhorter note the way in which meditation, in Hugh’s words, “takes its beginning from *lectio*, but it is not constrained by the rules and precepts of reading” (*Didasc.* 3.10). This claim corresponds harmoniously to Hugh’s description of meditation as more disciplined than and subsequent to cogitation: reading, for Hugh, is frequently about memory formation, and so meditation stands subsequent to and in continuity with reading (by way of increased freedom) and with cogitation (by way of increased discipline).

Just as cogitation and meditation stand on a continuum, so, for Hugh, discursive meditation is oriented intrinsically toward its fulfillment in *contemplation*. The

‘demonstration’ which ‘belongs to philosophers.’ It is reasonable to affirm, therefore, that Hugh had the ability to appropriate a variety of dialectic which was developed to the point of including a demonstrative logic and that he could have cultivated dialectic, as did Abelard, as the primary way of proceeding in theology. Yet, by and large, Hugh chose not to do so. He decided to cultivate a practice of contemplative meditation within theology instead. This choice yielded results of a different character from the dialectical theology of Abelard” (110-11).

¹⁴⁵ Quoted in Coolman, 166.

relationship of continuity oriented to fulfillment between meditation and contemplation matches the relationship Hugh has described in *On the Three Days* between the “day of truth”, or of the Son’s incarnation culminating in his Passover, and the “day of charity” or of the Holy Spirit, which lasts “until charity is perfect and all truth completely manifest” (III.27.1). Divine Truth is appropriated to the Son – and Jesus Christ is spoken of in Scripture as “the Truth” (Jn. 14:6) – yet this Truth is only, or better *will* only, become manifest in the eschaton as the full self-disclosure of the Spirit of Love and the perfection of creation. So it seems to be with meditation and contemplation in Hugh. Meditation gets at the Truth – indeed, in *On the Three Days*, discursive meditation takes us into the inner life of God and perhaps into contemplative glimpse of God. Yet contemplation, which we can never sustain in this life, is only fulfilled in the eschaton: contemplation’s sustaining depends utterly on the Spirit’s appropriated manifestation of the fullness of the Trinity which coincides with the perfection of creation in Love.¹⁴⁶ The sporadic nuptial

¹⁴⁶ By directing attention to the eschatological inflection of ‘contemplation’ in Hugh – and so to the ultimately historical-eschatological trajectory of the whole cogitation-meditation-contemplation triad in Hugh’s thought – I hope to supplement McWhorter’s own treatment. McWhorter’s very helpful and clear treatment of ‘contemplation’ and the contemplative life in Hugh, in (to me commendable) concern for its relevance for the practice of contemporary theologians, is well-keyed to the vertical (ontological) axis in Hugh’s thought, and so to the sense in which the contemplative life is oriented to mystical ascent and divine union *through* ascent. And this emphasis is consonant with the context of the discussion of the ‘four steps plus contemplation’ from the *Didascalicon* 5.9. Yet, though he notes Hugh’s attention to “historical narrative” as part of the “broad and multifaceted” (111) vision of the theological task Hugh offers, McWhorter overlooks the importance of history in Hugh’s thought as it bears on the contemplative life. Thus his treatment does not account for the simultaneously ascending *and* eschatological character of contemplation in Hugh. Admittedly, these vertical and horizontal axes of reality are perennially difficult to attend to together – they are a constant cross for Christian thought to attempt, Cyrene-like, to carry. Yet Hugh is doing something more complex and holistic in the contemplative spirituality of *On the Three Days*, something which I think bears on our appreciation of his theology as a whole, and I am struggling to account for it, as awkwardly as I may, with a word like ‘ontochronological’. Inasmuch as Hugh shows the contemplative life as both meditative *ascent* to glimpse the inner love-life of the Trinity and ontochronological *descent/integration* into the Triune God manifesting in the paschal mystery which is itself a triadic unification of all history, eschaton included, a full account of Hugh’s vision of the

cleaving to God enjoyed on occasion by pilgrim contemplatives is by a temporary inbreaking of the Eschaton – and that is to say, of the risen Christ – into the human mind.

For Hugh, contemplation in the strict sense deals with a more unified intellectual sight or comprehension of the truth under consideration – ultimately, of the Triune God. Whereas meditation thrives in various styles of disciplined discursivity, contemplation transcends this discursivity toward a simple gaze at naked truth. Moreover – and I discuss this further in Chapter 4 – contemplation involves seeing history itself as a whole before God. It is a cleaving to God which, as the fullness or fulfillment of the act of the human mind, includes also wonder and love.¹⁴⁷ Recall the sapiential, loving, experiential character of the act of human understanding as Hugh describes it in *On the Three Days* part II. Recall that God contains or comprehends the whole creation. Recall, moreover, that contemplation of the inner life of the Trinity is that which provides the “light” of eternity which one carries back down – and backwards chronologically – into one’s place in history. The foretaste of God in contemplation, for Hugh, changes the taste of the present moment, yielding wisdom and insight. “What else except light?” (III.26.1) And this, in the unity of love.¹⁴⁸

My brief taxonomy of the triad of cogitation, meditation, and contemplation in light of *On the Three Days* allows a brief rereading of an oft-quoted passage from the

spiritual life and the place of discursive and nondiscursive contemplation within it calls for an attempt to deal simultaneously with both axes, however inadequate my attempt may prove.

¹⁴⁷ The Virgin Mary, for Hugh, seems to be the model of this. Hugh of St. Victor, *Exposition on the Canticle of Mary*, Franklin T. Harkins, trans., in Evans, ed., *Writings on the Spiritual Life*, 427-450.

¹⁴⁸ Hugh’s views on cogitation, meditation, and contemplation, as I have described them, concur reasonably well with those of Richard of St. Victor as given in the early chapters of Book 1 of the *Benjamin Major*. Richard of St. Victor, *The Twelve Patriarchs, The Mystical Ark, Book Three of The Trinity*, trans. Grover A. Zinn (New York: Paulist, 1979).

Didascalicon which might otherwise be easily read as characterized by principally or exclusively ‘vertical ascent’. Hugh writes:

The life of the just person is trained in four things, which serve as certain stages through which he is raised to future perfection: namely, reading or learning, meditation, prayer, and action. Then follows a fifth, contemplation, in which – as if by a certain fruit of the preceding stages – the just person enjoys even in this life a foretaste of the future rewards of good work. (*Didascalicon* V.9)¹⁴⁹

It is fair enough to read these activities along the ‘vertical’ ontological axis of hierarchical ascent. Hugh, after all, speaks of “the life of just men” being “*raised*, as it were by certain steps” (emphasis mine), and verticality is suggested also by the section of the *Didascalicon* in which this quotation is situated. Yet Hugh also speaks repeatedly in terms of the ‘horizontal’ historical axis: the life of just men is not only raised by these activities but is *now* practiced. Moreover, contemplation is a “foretaste” of a “future reward.” The whole raft of activities is ordered to justified humanity’s “future perfection”. One could say more – the notion of “preceding steps” implies chronology no less than ascent – yet the key is to see how the above five activities map onto the triadic history-mirror of the cogitation, meditation, contemplation continuum. Indeed, they do match this continuum, loosely but also distinctly, and as well harmonize with what Hugh is doing in *On the Three Days*. “Study or instruction” is the formation of memory, which is the prerequisite for moving past cogitation into the freeing discipline of Christian theological meditation in its various kinds. Meditation, as we see in the triad of Scripture’s senses, corresponds to allegoresis which proceeds into tropology – and hence “meditation” in the *Didascalicon*’s list above is followed by “prayer” and “performance”,

¹⁴⁹ Harkins and van Liere, eds., *Interpretation of Scripture: Theory*, 161.

both of which are loving enactments of the truth seen in meditation/allegoresis and rendered practical in tropological interpretation. Thus, just as contemplation succeeds meditation with an increased character of love and of reliance on the Spirit, so “prayer” and “performance” follow upon meditation as enactments of love. Contemplation, in the *Didascalicon*’s above list, is tricky, at once “foretaste” of the eschaton and “fruit” of the preceding steps – both chronologically implicated metaphors. Hugh’s characterization of the five appear by this time to follow more the ‘horizontal’ than the ‘vertical’ axis – or, better, to be characterized by both at once. To invoke again my chosen term, they are ontochronological progression-ascent. Contemplation, moreover, seems set apart from the others by its increased eschatological and Spirit-dependent nature (to draw in *On the Three Days*). It is nearer to charity perfected, nearer to history’s end, nearer to the full manifestation of God and history *in the Spirit*. Contemplation is set apart because it depends on the future. When Hugh, or the reader of *On the Three Days*, glimpses the light of God’s eternal life at the end of part II, she is “raised”, yes, into the future, and her past and present are illumined and fulfilled such that she is reformed in love:

A second day came, the day of truth. It arrived, but did not replace, because the first day did not cease. Behold, two days! There was a movement toward the third day, the day of charity. But when it came, it did not expel the former days. Blessed are those days! (III.26.6)

As described in the *Didascalicon* read in light of *On the Three Days*, contemplation gathers ‘forward’ and ‘up’ into itself the activities and benefits of study, meditation, prayer, and good works, exceeding but including and unifying these like the Omega, who is the Alpha and is manifest as both in the paschal mystery, includes, exceeds, and so unifies all things.

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I now return our attentions *from* the continuum of intellectual activities Hugh gathers by the triad cogitation, meditation, contemplation and *to* the import of this triad for the practice of theology within spirituality as displayed in *On the Three Days*. The first thing to be said is that the unification of the person progressively achieved along the continuum of cogitation, meditation, contemplation finds its fullness in contemplation, and this is the logic behind Hugh's gathering all three under the eschatologically-inflected term 'contemplation' at the end of *On the Three Days*. Wonder and contemplation are themselves eschatologically inflected since they are only fully themselves when fulfilled by Love. Notice that this fulfillment coincides with the full actualization of the paschal mystery as it elicits human response within its recapitulation. Thus, the second thing to be said is that the continuum of activities of discursive and ultimately nondiscursive contemplation progressively actualize and unify the person *as an image of the Trinity and in response to the paschal mystery*. The spiritual life Hugh wishes for himself and his readers is characterized by increasing degrees of wonder, contemplation, and love for God, centered in a lavish attention to God's act in the paschal mystery. In the increasingly unified activity of 'wondering-contemplating-loving', the human is increasingly a unified triadic likeness of the Trinity acting in historical manifestation and *in se*.

This perspective Hugh offers situates discursive theological meditation/contemplation *within* the spiritual life as paschally-shaped response to the Trinity. In doing so he accords a unifying dignity to the craft of theology. Notice how

the contemplation characterizing theological craft, for Hugh, corresponds at once to the divine person of the Son, beloved of the Father; corresponds to Wisdom and to truth; and corresponds to Jesus Christ as he is dead and buried in the tomb, still and silent. This day of Christ's burial is, for Hugh and his readers, the day of wisdom, of the practice of the various kinds of discursive meditation or discursive contemplation, which are ordered, for Hugh, and beyond human control, to a kind of contemplation that is a foretaste of eternal life, and in which we cannot remain long. Coolman emphasizes the nuptial character contemplation sometimes assumes in Hugh's thought (226-28), and the activity of theology inclines one, on the same continuum, towards this nuptial union. Such is the place where the leisured professional theologian's reflective activities fit in Hugh's scheme, not as something apart from the meditative activity of all Christians, but as a honing of those practices into an array of specific meditative skills. One might even heighten Hugh's nuptial metaphor and suggest that the paschal mystery is God's giving a kiss to humanity, and theology is one of the crafts by which humanity learns to kiss back. Thus, for Hugh, speculative or discursive theological activities or practices are only fully themselves as they develop in *response* to the Trinity as manifest, most normatively, in the paschal mystery. This is to say, they develop from and succeed upon (while striving to retain) the *wonderful fear* of God which the Scriptures call the beginning of Wisdom. And, such discursive meditation or contemplation inclines toward, develops into, *rises up* in the life of *love*.

The way in which Hugh locates theology in the second 'day' of the paschal mystery – associating it thus with the second person of the Trinity – Wisdom or the Son –

and thus also with Christ's being dead, means that the practice of theology, for Hugh, must be thematized in two ways. First, it must be thematized in relation to the second day, the tomb, and Christ's being dead. Second, it must be thematized in relation to the third day, the resurrection, and so also in relation to the Holy Spirit, as this pneumatologically and eschatologically-inflected third day fulfills and completes the second day. Such is the logic of Hugh's triads. Theology must be thematized in relation to both the second and third 'days' of the triad in such a way that both are honored but the third is the decisive completion.

First, we thematize theology in relation to the second day. A minor theme in 20th century and contemporary theology is a renewal of interest in theologies and spiritualities of Christ's being-dead, of Holy Saturday.¹⁵⁰ Hugh's distinctive offering contrasts markedly with these. For Hugh, Holy Saturday is characterized by the structured, crystalline brightness of divine Wisdom and by increasing light in created minds, and so in history as a whole. Jesus Christ's victory over sin, death, and darkness is participated by the theologians' meditative, gradual, agonistic victory over the darkness of ignorance and disorder in their own intellectual and spiritual lives. In the dark and silent mystery of the tomb, the LORD passes through death imperceptibly to our worldly eyes, but the eyes of our minds begin to be restructured, or re-constructed, on the basis of the divine victory

¹⁵⁰ These are associated particularly with the influence of Hans Urs von Balthasar, who made it his business to be influenced by his friend, the mystic, Adrienne von Speyr. On von Speyr, see Matthew Lewis Sutton, *Heaven Opens: The Trinitarian Mysticism of Adrienne von Speyr* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014). For examples of von Speyr and von Balthasar's influence with respect to their peculiar theology of Holy Saturday in diverse subdisciplines within contemporary constructive theology, see Celia Deane-Drummond, *Christ and Evolution: Wonder and Wisdom* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009) and Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010). What these theologies of Holy Saturday share is a desire to give full space to the existential and moral horror of evil so as to overcome it christologically.

by the disciplined craft of theological thought, or meditation. The Spirit, on Holy Saturday, guides practitioners of theology to speak in light of a risen LORD who is not yet universally manifested or trusted. Hence, Hugonian theological craft, and the way it constructs the world as a christocentric unity in an intellectual construction ordered to the mystical union of the theologian, or her hearers, with the Triune LORD, has the character of witness.

Hence too, Hugonian theology must also be thematized according to the third day, the day of resurrection in its intimate association with the Holy Spirit. Theology, for Hugh, even as it includes the structuring meditations of the tomb, is always, and through these, oriented (perhaps dangerously) beyond these. It is in the daylight in a way that seems unwarranted to the world. Theology is resurrection speech. It is not the wisdom of the world, for it knows that wisdom to be an incomplete wisdom that leaves dead. Discursive theology, for Hugh, is completed not only in eschatological contemplation but in an ecstatic speech, a Spirit-empowered declaration of the reconciliation of all things in Jesus Christ's Passover (Col. 1:20). It is speech unwarranted by the present state of the world, making theological and moral claims on the basis of an eschaton as yet unveiled. In doing these things theology participates not only in Christ's being dead, but in his risen life, issuing the living, true, loving and lovely words of the last day. Launching from the darkness of this present evil age (Gal. 1:4), which is the darkness of tombs and the tomb, theology is the resurgence of words naming the resurgence of all things in the Word. This speech is the suspended across the fulcrum of this age and the eschatological age, and the latter is apprehended only in faith, as faith is illumined and structured by divine

Wisdom's revealing rays. Like our mortal selves, theology is outwardly wasting away but inwardly renewed day by day. It is crucified, buried, and eschatologically risen speech, thought in the Spirit and heard, shockingly, in the present day. It seeks and loves the comprehensive Wisdom that is completed in Love.

The tension between Christ's being dead and its fulfillment in Christ's resurrection, as this tension and fulfillment is determinative for theology, lends Hugh's theology a distinctive dynamism in its relation to historical life in the present. Specifically, by locating theology in the second day of the paschal mystery, the theological craft is characterized by transition. First, by Christ's own mysterious transition from death on the cross (Friday) to eschatological and indestructible risen life (Sunday). Second, with the theologian's transition or participatory passover through Christ's (and her) death and into Christ's (and her) eternal life. Theology is thus the meditation, speech, writing in the middle of this Passover, *in medias res* of the paschal mystery, dynamically *in via* on the way made possible, because constituted by, the gift of the hypostatic union of God and creation in Jesus Christ. Theology is thus entrance into revealed and rational Truth in a way that is predicated on patterns of repentance, asceticism, and purification – Good Friday – and conducive to patterns of affective spirituality and an ethics of Love – Easter Sunday. The theological craft is the particularly rational moment and movement in the transition into the life of the Spirit, as the Spirit's revelation of divine goodness/kindness completes, by pleromatically contextualizing, the revelations of Father and Son.

As discussed previously, and as entailed by Hugh's associating the Holy Spirit and the eschaton, theology orients one not only hierarchically upward but, as hierarchically upward, so too eschatologically forward. As responsive to and formed by the whole of the paschal mystery, theology is an activity of discernment in history in which thought and life are directed toward, or stretched out toward, the eschaton. In Paul's idiom, Hugonian discursive theology is a response to the paschal mystery which endeavors, by responsive sacrifice and a 'renewed mind', to "discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect" (Rom. 12:2). A modicum of attention to the spiritual practice of theology enjoined or modeled by *On the Three Days* is apt. In spiritually reflecting on the paschal mystery, Hugh displays the way in which all the 'days' of history (the third of which is, in the present, unfinished) are gathered into Christ's dying, burial, and rising. In making this move, Hugh incorporates into Christ's Passover the discursive contemplative who herself follows the pattern of contemplation he models in his treatise. She is enlightened, with Hugh, in Christ's tomb, in anticipation of a goodness which exceeds and perfects all history in love. With the unfolding of history, the shape of the 'third day' (stretching from Pentecost to Eschaton) becomes ever more manifest to mortal minds. Thus, even as there is the historical remembering of a past historical form (namely the paschal mystery) within which are gathered all historical forms, with the connotation of their eschatological completion, yet and so there is also an element of irrepressible *newness* in the practice of *On the Three Days*, any time its outline is contemplatively followed. That newness is the newness of the present moment, the present historical context, in which the contemplative responsively gathers herself and

all things into the paschal mystery, gathering with this new unfolding of the historical moment in which she stands a new continuation of the unfolding of the third day of Christ's resurrection. This entails that the practitioner of discursive theology, á la Hugh, will responsively practice Christian spirituality's paschal (and so historical) form in an ever-new way.

4.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have treated the subjective polarity of human response to, and incorporation into, the Triune God's historical act of reconciliation in Jesus Christ's Passover. In particular, I attended to the place of theological craft within Hugh's spirituality. This craft is centrally constituted by the activity of meditation, which Hugh often in *On the Three Days* calls contemplation. Meditation itself, in Hugh's thought, is the middle member of the triad of cogitation, meditation, and contemplation, a triad which itself is marked by progressive increase in intensity and which mirrors distantly the Trinity *in se*, the three days of the paschal mystery, and the three ages of history.

Having laid the foundation of the subjective christological polarity by which human persons, in the Spirit, participate co-operatively in the re-forming work of Christ, we now, in the next three chapters, do an in-depth study of humans' re-forming participation in each of the three days individually and cumulatively.

5.0 DYING

Our point of entry into the paschal mystery is the death of the Son of God. This entry of ours into the paschal mystery through Christ's passion and death, an entry we share with all creation, is the topic of the present chapter. In the previous chapter, which was foundational for our exploration of the subjective polarity of human participation in Christ, I sketched an overview of this subjective polarity in *On the Three Days*. The present chapter, then, is the first of a trio of chapters which further outline and build upon the human person's spiritual participation in Christ via the paschal mystery, with an eye especially to the practice of theology in the spiritual life. Each of these chapters takes its theme from a day of the paschal mystery. Hence, this chapter on Good Friday is followed by chapters on Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday, each emphasizing the subjective pole of human persons', with and within the whole creation, responsive participation in the paschal mystery through the work of the Holy Spirit.

5.1 THE DEATH OF CHRIST IN US – UNION WITH THE TRIUNE GOD THROUGH RECEPTIVE MYSTICAL DEATH

Jesus Christ's suffering and death on Good Friday recapitulates the long history of the world and of Israel prior to the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, the period in which God was recognized as omnipotent Creator, increasingly feared as Judge of sin, and increasingly manifest as Father. So Hugh writes,

First, human beings, placed under sin, were rebuked by the law and began to fear God, the Judge, because they knew their wickedness. Now, to fear Him was already to recognize Him, because surely they could not fear Him at all, if they had no inkling of Him. Already this recognition was some measure of light. It was already day, but not yet bright, because it was still shadowed by the darkness of sin. (*On the Three Days*, III.27.1)

For Hugh, all of this history is to be spiritually appropriated and internalized by Christians as means of our dying spiritually (and ultimately physically) in imitation of Jesus Christ, and in union with Jesus Christ. "On the day of power, we die through fear" (III.27.4), Hugh writes in *On the Three Days*. The objective death of the Son of God in history is given to be subjectively and interiorly appropriated for human spiritual reformation: "Therefore, Christ died on the sixth day... so that in a similar way through fear the power of God on its day may... cut us away from carnal desires outside" (III.27.4). Hugh's view is that as humans respond spiritually and intellectually to the death of Jesus Christ in a variety of ways, we progressively and repeatedly undergo a mystical death which cuts us away from the fleshly desires which draw us into perpetual distraction and away from the love of God and neighbor. Our spiritual life of response to the Trinity's saving self-manifestation in history in the paschal mystery thus begins, in a

sense, in Good Friday. Christ's compassionate suffering and death, as the first 'day' of the paschal mystery, is, like all the days, an outward and visible example and sacrament for our imitation:

As he [God] wished to have three days in order to work out our salvation in Himself and through Himself, so he gave three days to us in order that we might work out our salvation in ourselves through Him. But because what was done in Him was not only a remedy, but also an example and a sacrament, it was necessary that it happen visibly and outwardly, so that it might signify what needed to happen in us invisibly. Therefore, His days are external; our days are to be sought internally. (III.27.2)

As Christ dies externally in history, our spiritual life consists, first of all, in dying like, in, and with Christ internally. What he has undergone in the theater of history, he is to undergo in us and with us in our hearts – and this is to say that it must be impressed deeply on our memory, such that, in Hugh's way of thinking, our soul is determinatively formed by it, as Christ's death is formed within us. Moreover, Hugh particularly associates a particular affection, fear, with our internalization of Good Friday. Mary Carruthers has shown that it is not uncommon for medieval thinkers to associate or 'color' a certain memory with a certain affection or emotion, such that the memory as formed carries and is associated with the 'hue' or 'shading' of that affection.¹⁵¹ For Hugh, to the extent that we are in sin, we rightly fear God's just judgment against us.

And yet, just as *On the Three Days* is a repeatable cycle or spiritual outline, the practice

¹⁵¹ "Successful memory schemes all acknowledge the importance of tagging material emotionally as well as schematically, making each memory as much as possible into a personal occasion by imprinting emotional associations like desire and fear, pleasure or discomfort, or the particular appearance of the source from which one is memorizing, whether oral (a teacher) or written (a manuscript page). Successful recollection requires that one recognize that every kind of mental representation, including those in memory, is in its composition sensory and emotional. Recollection *may employ* schemes, but it *is like* reading a book, that is, an event involving judgment and response (*intentio*) in addition to intellect." Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 60.

of which progressively and gradually reforms the practitioner in the image of the Triune God in historical manifestation, so the character of one's fear of God is transformed in the course of one's spiritual progress. One's perception of God, and so one's affective experience of God, is tied to the depth of one's appropriation of the Trinity's progressive historical self-manifestation. Hugh says that, "The day of fear is the day of power, the day of the Father" (III.27.3). What he means by this locution is that to the extent of one's reformation in the image of the Trinity – and so as one more deeply perceives God as not only powerful but as wise and good – one's "fear" of God ceases to be slavish fear and becomes the "reverent fear" or "wonder" proper to a child of God. The rich sense in which one perceives the character of God as Father is hence a matter of one's progressive attentiveness to – and reformation in the likeness of – the unfolding self-manifestation of Father, Son, and Spirit in the pedagogical course of Scripture and history.

For Hugh, our responsive participation in Good Friday is intrinsic to, and in a way is the beginning of, our reception of triune divine form in history, and our coincident construction of ourself in eschatological hope. In *On the Three Days*, Hugh is not shy about associating Christ's death with work (*laborem*), a labor we too responsively imitate in the labors by which we cooperate with the Triune God's grace. "The sixth day" –i.e., Good Friday – "is for work" (III.27.4). Hence, Christ's death, like Christ's being dead and his rising, is participated responsively by the Christian in a receptive-constructive, mimetic fashion. While both 'receptive' and 'constructive' aspects may be noticed, the emphasis in our interior appropriation of Christ's death clearly falls on reception: we receive the impress of the death of Christ into our memories in a way cuts away sin.

Hence, Christ's death has an exemplary and sacramental value. The triduum of the Triune God's most normative reforming act in history is, as discussed in chapter 1 above, the norm that norms all the sacraments. Hence, all the sacraments proffer, in some way, an imposition of the form of Good Friday on their practitioners, to be received by those practitioners as an offer of divine form as manifest on the cross, and so simultaneously an invitation to their practitioners to spiritually construct themselves in the image of Christ crucified. The same is true of Holy Saturday as well, and supremely of Easter Sunday, and those are topics for subsequent chapters.

As discussed briefly in section 1.2.5 above, God the Holy Spirit is the initiator and primary operator in the whole process of our re-formation. Hence, for Hugh, the repentance, memory-formation, and mystical death which are received through subjective immersion in Good Friday are all nonetheless appropriated to the work of the Spirit (indivisibly with the Son and the Father) in a way that is, nevertheless, not yet fully revealed in the subjective participant, much as it was not yet revealed in the stage of history on the first Good Friday.

5.1.1 The Lexical Field of Good Friday

A signature feature of Hugh's spirituality and practice of theology, from the perspective of *On the Three Days*, are what might be termed his 'lexical fields'. These are fields of associated terms and concepts, all ultimately normed, from the perspective of human re-formation, christologically: as we see in *On the Three Days*, the fields

correspond to the three days of Jesus Christ's dying, burial, and rising. Here we examine the lexical field of Good Friday, after making a few notes about his lexical fields in general.

First, Hugh's lexical fields are symbolic and associative, rather than logical in an *a priori* sense. That is, the lexical fields emerge through Hugh's *a posteriori* engagement with the Triune LORD's self-manifestation in history and especially in Jesus Christ. Hugh's associations make sense to the degree that one adopts his christocentric spiritual practice and craft of trinitarian doctrine, the practice of interpreting the memory of Jesus Christ, and all else, in light of the Triune LORD's divine union project. To significant extent, the associations in Hugh's lexical fields are suggested to some degree by Scripture itself, which results in their having a sort of 'grammatical' quality in terms of their particular reception and soteriological construal of the biblical lexicon. In fact, taken as a whole, they offer a grammar of the biblical lexicon ordered by the paschal mystery and oriented toward human re-formation resulting in mystical and, ultimately, eschatological union with God.

Second, some of the given members of the lexical fields are more prominent in Hugh's thought than others, and there are inevitably members of this lexical field which are not on this list. The hope is that the limited ways in which I can sketch and explore these fields in the present project will train other readers of Hugh to notice the associations themselves and so notice ways in which Hugh's fields extend beyond the terrain I have been able to cover. In general, one should be alert when one encounters one of Hugh's triads, which are a rather prominent feature of his thought. With respect to

Good Friday, one should test the first member of any triad and see if and how it might signify, conduce to, invite spiritual participation in Jesus Christ's dying, and so the reader's own dying to sin.

Third, notice the way in which this lexical field – like all of Hugh's re-formational lexical fields – presupposes the fall.¹⁵² Humans are created for a contemplative union with God they do not, at present, enjoy, and cannot, in the best of mundane conditions, uninterruptedly sustain. Yet these fall-enfolding lexical fields nevertheless conduce to divine union.

Finally, and as mentioned above, the associative field of Good Friday or 'dying' bears the general emphasis, on the part of the human's engagement with it, of the human subject's receptivity and malleability: like soft wax,¹⁵³ one's memory is formed by participation in Christ's dying, the better to reconstruct one's understanding and beautify one's moral character (i.e., participation in Christ's burial and resurrection, respectively), on the foundational basis of Christ's (and our) dying.

The lexical field of our dying in Christ includes our 'fear' which becomes, over the course of our re-formation 'reverent fear', as well as 'wonder' at the 'immensity', 'multiplicity' and 'magnitude' of creation as a whole and of particular created things. Created immensity, for its part, corresponds to divine 'power'; and a host of other divine attributes are likewise part of this lexical field: 'infinity', 'incorruption', 'eternity', 'immutability'.

¹⁵² For a discussion of the fall and its consequences in Hugh, see Coolman, *Hugh of St. Victor*, 60-78.

¹⁵³ *Inst.*, 7 (*OHSV* 1.40:340-42:378), quoted in Coolman, 201.

The lexical field of Christ's dying likewise includes divine 'anger', divine judgment of sin, and the first age of the biblical history, signifying, in essence, Israel's time under the Law in which Israel learns to fear God as Judge, even as God is also, by these judgments against the vices which thwart Israel, revealed to a degree as Father.

In the arena of Hugh's triadic (broadly Augustinian) theological anthropology, itself foundational for his doctrine of human re-formation in the likeness of the Trinity, the lexical field of Good Friday corresponds to our memory, and likewise to sensory perception which stocks memory, and to the discipline of reading which likewise forms our memory. Moreover, it corresponds to the literal, or historical, sense of Scripture, and to history as something memorized. Within the triad of intellectual activities – cogitation, meditation, and contemplation – it is cogitation, the least intentional of the three, which is here included.

This first lexical field includes the theological virtue of faith.

The associations Hugh himself makes – and prepares his readers to make themselves – are many and various. The rest of this chapter, in showing in outline some of the central ways in which, for Hugh, humans participate in Christ's dying, sketches some of the central associations in this lexical field. But the associations in Hugh's thought are so multiple and rich that the present itinerary is far from exhaustive.

5.1.2 The Order of this Chapter's Meditations: World, Catholic Church, Person

In Hugh's *Moral Ark of Noah* treatise, he enumerates what he calls the three houses of God in a way that is instructive for the order I will follow in this section. He writes, "God's house is the whole world; God's house is the Catholic Church; God's house is also every faithful soul" (1.1.4). Accordingly, in this chapter I will treat Hugh's doctrine through a series of subsections on a trajectory beginning with most broadly and generally with all creation, then narrowing in increased specificity to the life of the Church as a sacramental community in history, and finally narrowing maximally to the pinnacle of the human soul. In each subsection I will show how Hugh's doctrine constitutes an invitation to receptive-constructive formation of the self in a way that is a participation in Christ's suffering and death on the cross. That is to say, even as we explore 'World' and 'Catholic Church' before the 'Soul', our explorations of 'World' and 'Church' concern ways in which the LORD stocks our memory, and forms our lives, such that the soul's personal participation in Christ becomes possible. This participation, founded on the 'exterior' things of the world and the sacraments – including the paradigmatic "sacrament" and "example" of Christ's own death – constitutes a unitive entry into the life and likeness of the Trinity through the unity of Christ's person.

5.2 WORLD

5.2.1 The Power of God Manifest in Creation – A Summons to Repentance and Mystical Death

According to Hugh's doctrine, the divine power of the Triune God is manifest in creation. In *On the Three Days* I.1.2 he quotes St. Paul from Rom. 1:20, and adds his own commentary:

“From the creation of the world the invisible realities of God are beheld through what is understood of the things that are made.” The invisible things of God are three: power, wisdom, and kindness (*benignitas*). From these three proceed all things. In these three all things subsist. By these three all things are governed. Power creates; wisdom governs; and kindness conserves. Just as these three are ineffably one in God, so also they cannot be in any way separated in their operation. Power creates wisely through kindness; wisdom governs kindly through power; and kindness conserves mightily through wisdom.

For Hugh, though the Word cannot be seen “itself”, or directly, through contemplation of the world, yet the Word is “perceived” or “seen through what He made” (I.1.1). This perception presupposes a measure of reformation in the divine likeness.¹⁵⁴ Specifically, Hugh here claims that divine power, wisdom, and kindness are what is perceived, and Hugh uses these suggestively in a way that entails their appropriation to the persons of the Trinity. What sense does it make to say that divine attributes are inseparable in operation? Agents act, not attributes, and it is the persons of the Triune God who are, as Hugh will reiterate in the course of *On the Three Days*, united in operation. Divine

¹⁵⁴ As Coolman points out, the reformation of our sapiential perception through the divine pedagogies of incarnation and scripture is presupposed in Hugh's teaching that we can contemplate God through creatures. Coolman, 169-72.

power, then, as appropriated to and dimly manifesting the person of the Father, is implicated in the creation, governance, and conservation of creation, even as the act of creation itself is most directly associated with divine power and so with the person of the Father.

What features of the created world most clearly manifest divine power? Though Hugh spends the bulk of part I on the beauty of creation as a manifestation of divine wisdom, yet Hugh associates the *immensity* of creatures with divine power. In doing so, he gives a division and subdivision of immensity:

The immensity of creatures manifests power.... The immensity of creatures lies in their number (*multitudo*) and size (*magnitudo*). Number is found in the similar, the diverse, and the mixed. Size is found in bulk and extension. Bulk is found in mass and weight; extension, in length and breadth, depth and height. (I.1.3)

In unfurling this division, Hugh invites us to wonder at the “kind of power (*potentia*)... that made something” – even a single, “tiny” something – “when there was nothing” (I.2.1). Imagine, then, he bids us, the “incomprehensible power” that made “countless genera of countless things, infinite genera of things.... all the infinite, innumerable things” (I.2.2). Hugh further stokes our amazement with multiplicity of particulars: men, lions, eagles, flatfish, whales (I.2.3-4) – to say nothing of magnitude: “Measure the masses of the mountains, the channels of the rivers, the expanses of the fields, the height of the heaven, the depth of the abyss. You are amazed for you fall short, but your amazement is better because you fall short” (I.3). All of these things in their immensity, for Hugh, constitute an invitation to meditate on divine power and one’s own diminutive potencies in its presence. Meditation – a topic further explored in my next chapter – presupposes here that our memories are impressed with the past or present perceptions of

created immensities, that we may be in awe of God on the basis of them. In short, Hugh here in mentioning whales and lions presupposes the self's prior construction through memory on the basis of things one has seen, heard discussed, or read about. Has Hugh seen a whale? Memory and sense impression thus found the possibility of cogitation and the further possibility of intentional self-construction through meditation on the basis of created forms remembered. We see or remember (and so, in a sense, receive anew through cogitation or meditation) the immensity of a created form and so perceive/receive beyond it the unlimited form of divine power, for example.

In the *Moral Ark* treatise, Hugh specifies further the divine governance of the world in terms of power. He writes, "God inhabits the world in one way, the Church in another, and every faithful soul in yet a third. He is in the world as ruler of His kingdom.... The heathen and the unbelievers are all of them in His house – that is, in His kingdom; for through the power of His Godhead He maintains and governs all that He has made" (1.4). In accord with *On the Three Days* I.1.3, we note the triad of creation/making, conservation/maintenance, and governance in this quotation from *Moral Ark* 1.4. In Hugh's view, those who begin to be reformed by biblical trinitarian faith and doctrine can perceive divine power not just behind what we today Romantically refer to as Nature, or the natural world, but equally behind the affairs of humans, even at their most sinful and rebellious. God's governing power is not absent from the sordid affairs of mortals, for God is King, and, as emphasized in *On the Three Days* II and III, God is Judge. Within the history of the world as summarized in Scripture and *On the Three*

Days III, this history of rebellion and death is most associated with the first ‘day’ of history, the time before the incarnation, which is recapitulated in Christ on Good Friday.

The divine power manifest in creation, ineffably one with divine wisdom and kindness in creating, conserving, and governing, is for Hugh a spiritual summons to repentance and reformation. Man, Hugh says, “was placed in this world in a place of repentance, since a time for repenting was granted” (*On the Sacraments* 1.8.3) – and repentance is invited by the manifestation of divine power. Divine power initially awakens fear. The Father is manifest via omnipotence in creation that we might enter the paschal mystery by dying to sin, dying participatively with and in Christ, and so enter by Christ’s person into the ineffable unity of the Trinity and so into the process of reformation in divine power, wisdom, and goodness. To the extent that we enter participatively into this labor (*laborem*) of reformation, growing in the love of the Spirit and constructing ourself through engagement in the paschal mystery through the many sacraments, our fear of God assumes the character of filial reverence and wonder, and we learn a more plenary meaning of the designation Father in the divine name (cf. Mt. 28:19). Once “reconciled to God through Christ,” Hugh says, a person may “afterwards await his judgment without fear of damnation” (*On the Sacraments* 1.8.4). But all this is to place us spiritually in the second house of God, the Church or family of God, which is the topic of subsequent subsections.

5.3 THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

5.3.1 The Catholic Church: Faith and Sacramental Life throughout History

The Catholic Church, in Hugh's doctrine, names the spatiotemporal reality in which God is present "as the head of the family in His own home" (*Moral Ark*, 1.4). The Catholic Church, he says, has existed since the creation of humankind and will continue to the eschaton.¹⁵⁵ As such, it has had a faith and a sacramental life which undergoes development in forms but is essentially unchanging.¹⁵⁶ This continuous development through formal change is tethered to the divine pedagogy of the Triune God's self-manifestation in history, as recorded in Scripture, and in the ongoing life of the Church in the age of the Spirit. The whole universal history, as it culminates in the full unveiling of the Trinity in the eschaton, is disclosed initially in the paschal mystery as it culminates in the eschatological-inbreaking of Jesus Christ's resurrection. Accordingly, the paschal mystery is the norm for the developing forms of the Church's faith and sacramental life through time, in a way that essentially includes the terrible rupture of Good Friday and the quiet yet agonistic brightness of Holy Saturday as these are fulfilled proto-eschatologically in Jesus Christ's resurrection. Hence, the Risen Lord and the Spirit have a certain priority in the development of the Church's faith and sacramental life.

¹⁵⁵ *Archa Noe*, 1.3 (Sicard 16.197; CSMV 58). Cited in Coolman, 108.

¹⁵⁶ This claim, which Hugh makes more explicitly in, e.g., *De Sacramentis* 1.11.8, is also contained implicitly in Hugh's christocentric mandala symbols like the Ark. "There was indeed the same Saviour, the same grace, the same faith in the former as in what was to come, in the latter in what was shown. But... it was necessary that in the same order both faith in cognition and grace in salvation increase and that the same grace in the sacraments outside and in its signs manifest itself more evidently" (1.11.8, Deferrari p. 185).

For Hugh as for St. Paul, we are made participants in the Trinity's redeeming act in Christ, initially, by faith. He writes, "we are made participants in this redemption, if to the Redeemer Himself who was associated with us through flesh we are united through faith" (*On the Sacraments* 1.8.7).¹⁵⁷ Notice Hugh's emphasis, even here, on being united (*per fidem unimur*) to God.¹⁵⁸ That we are initially united to God by operating grace through the gift of faith follows, for Hugh, from his following Augustine's doctrine that "human nature had been entirely corrupted through sin" – our nature's deformation from the divine likeness is rather extreme.

Hugh's doctrine further maintains that faith has been expressed, since the beginning, within the sacramental life, even prior to the Mosaic Law. Hugh writes:

from the very beginning of the world He [God] proposed to man the sacraments of his salvation with which He might sign him with the expectation of future sanctification, that whoever might receive these with right faith and firm hope on account of obedience to divine institution, even though placed under the yoke might arrive at participation in freedom. (1.8.11)

The present life, from fall to eschaton, is both "a time of sickness and a time of remedy" (*On the Sacraments* 1.8.11). Sacraments are this remedy that, along with faith and good works, restore us to health under the care of the divine Physician (*On the Sacraments* 1.8.1; 1.8.12). Among the many diverse and developing sacraments in history, Hugh notes that marriage is in a certain way unique: it is instituted by God even before the fall (1.8.12).

In the unfolding course of history, human cognition of the Trinity's self-manifestation and the efficacious power of the sacraments both increase in tandem. This

¹⁵⁷ cf. *On the Sacraments* 2.1.5, Deferrari p. 218.

¹⁵⁸ *PL* 176:310C.

is why “it was necessary that the former [sacraments] cease and the latter [sacraments] succeed” (1.11.8). In Hugh’s words,

just as from the beginning with the progress of time the coming of the Savior approached nearer and nearer, so always the effect of salvation and the knowledge of truth increased more and more, because the signs themselves of salvation had to be changed one after the other through the succession of times in order that when the effect of divine grace increased unto salvation, at the same time sanctification might appear more evident in the visible signs themselves.... [I]t was necessary that both faith in cognition and grace in salvation increase.... (1.11.8)

Accordingly, in the *Moral Ark* treatise, Hugh gives a typology showing the development of the sacramental life through history using the terms figure/shadow, body/actuality, and spirit/truth. He writes:

Those things are called shadows, which were done before Christ’s coming under the natural and written law, bodily and visibly, in order to prefigure the things that now, after His coming, are being done bodily and visibly in the time of grace. They are called shadows, because they were both corporal and figures of the corporal. Our sacraments themselves, which are now performed in Holy Church, are called the body. And the spirit is that which the grace of God effects invisibly beneath these visible sacraments. For instance, to take one example, the Red Sea prefigured baptism, which is not sanctified in Holy Church. And the same visible baptism signifies the cleansing of offenses, which the Holy Spirit effects invisibly within our souls, beneath the washing of our bodies, in this sacrament. Thus the Red Sea is the shadow and the figure; the baptism of visible water, which we now have, is the body and the actuality; and the washing away of sins is the spirit and the truth. (4.19)

Notice the way in which Hugh’s division of the sacraments here has a certain fit with his theory of history in *On the Three Days*. The figure/shadow (e.g. the Red Sea) is in the first ‘day’ of history, while the body/actuality of visible baptism follows upon the ‘second day’ of history, the actual coming of God in the flesh in the incarnation. The cleansing of our souls by the Spirit corresponds to the eschatological trajectory of our life in the Spirit, this age of the Spirit in which outwardly we still waste away, but inwardly are renewed

day by day (2 Cor. 4:16). Further, notice the way in which practitioners of the faith are bidden participate in Christ's death (and also the rest of the paschal mystery) in Hugh's example. Israel's passing into the Red Sea, and the submerging of the baptized in water are each forms normed by Christ's being submerged in death on Good Friday – through which immersion in the paschal mystery the Spirit cleanses our souls.

In the following two subsections I expand on Hugh's teaching on life in the Church in history in two ways: first, by going deeper into his teaching on sacraments, second, by briefly investigating the role of communal formation in cutting us away from sin.

5.3.2 Humility and Humiliation: The Soft Heart of Sacramental Participation in the Humiliation of the Lord

Stanley Hauerwas likes to repeat Enda McDonagh's gloss on humility often: "No humility without humiliation."¹⁵⁹ The shared Latin root in humility and humiliation binds this pair together in Hugh's doctrine as well, and acutely so in his doctrine of the sacraments. The doctrine of the sacraments which Hugh unfolds in *On the Sacraments* 1.9 recognizably follows the familiar triadic pattern. After giving an initial definition of a sacrament and criticizing this definition for the way it makes many things sacraments that should not be called such, Hugh offers the following definition with glowing comment:

¹⁵⁹ Hauerwas' using this saying and attributing it to McDonagh was not rare in the years I was around him at Duke, yet I have not located it in his writings. A google search quickly reveals that Pope Francis has preached at least one homily bearing the same title. Perhaps both heard the phrase from its association with Bernard of Clairvaux.

“A sacrament is a corporeal or material element set before the senses without, representing by similitude and signifying by institution and containing by sanctification some invisible and spiritual grace.” This definition is recognized as so fitting and perfect that it is found to befit every sacrament and a sacrament alone.... [E]very sacrament indeed has a similitude from first instruction, institution from superadded dispensation, sanctification from the applied benediction of word or sign. (1.9.2)

As Hugh expounds this triadic sacramental doctrine further, the trinitarian appropriations involved become more perspicuous. He writes:

Similitude itself is from creation, institution itself from dispensation, and sanctification itself from benediction. The first was imposed by the Creator, the second was added through the Saviour, and the third was administered through the Dispenser.

So, as Hugh again draws on the example of baptism, he points to a similitude between water which washes and the soul-washing grace of the Holy Spirit that comes from the “natural quality” of water itself. When Jesus Christ commands his disciples to baptize all nations in the Triune Name (Mt. 28:19), baptism is instituted by divine dispensation, and thence the Holy Spirit, or the divine Dispenser, works through the cooperating priest or human dispenser to communicate the grace of baptism with the washing in water. The sacrament of baptism hence persists throughout the age of the Church, which is the age of the Spirit, and unto the eschaton. The ‘three days’ of history are thence present in Hugh’s trinitarian doctrine of the sacraments.

Moreover, as Hugh proceeds to ask and discuss Why the sacraments were instituted, the triadic structure of the doctrine continues in a way that accords with and elicits the human person’s spiritual participation in the paschal mystery through the sacrament. Hugh claims sacraments are instituted “for three reasons: on account of humiliation, on account of instruction, on account of exercise” (1.9.3). I will

momentarily connect humiliation with Good Friday. Instruction accords with Hugh's associations between Holy Saturday, contemplation, and the incarnate Savior's teaching the truth. Exercise accords with the tropological activity of doing good works, performing the faith in the power of the Spirit and in the joy of the resurrection. Yet in this present chapter I emphasize that the sacramental life helps humans receive the divine form of Jesus Christ dying on the cross and responsively so be impressed by the LORD's own humility. Hugh writes that "since man a rational creature by the precept of his Creator is subject to the insensible elements which were founded by nature below him, he may by this very humiliation of his deserve to be reconciled to his Creator" (1.9.3). For Hugh as for Augustine and the Greek Fathers, humans have enslaved themselves to material things in idolatry, looking 'downward' to the material world when they should look 'upward' to the Creator. Looking downward has disordered human loves and made humans proud. There is thus fittingness in humans being restored to proper humility through the humiliation of looking downward to encounter the saving grace of the transcendent God in material things. This further thwarts, and heals, human pride. Moreover, because of human enslavement of will to material things, the Father's mercy is manifest in that humans can receive God in sacraments even though we cannot sustain contemplation of divinity. Most significant of all, Hugh directs our attention to a fittingness to human humiliation in the sacramental life which imitates and mirrors the divine humility in the incarnation as it reaches the end of a particular trajectory in the humiliation of Good Friday. Hugh captures the fittingness of sacraments thus: "Therefore, it is just that man, who subjected himself to earthly things through

concupiscence, first abandoning God through pride, now seeking God through humility that he may more fully declare the affection of his devotion, should incline himself to the same on account of God's precept through obedience." Such is even "a praiseworthy humility" (1.9.3). For Hugh, then, the humiliation and the corresponding re-formation of the self in humility inculcated by the practice of the sacraments are both participations in the death of Christ.

The virtue of humility, patterned on the Son of God's own humiliation, is indeed crucial to the whole process of human reformation, or construction of the self in reception of divine form. In overcoming pride, humility makes the soul capable of being constructed by divine form in further ways. Hugh describes the virtue of humility as making the soul soft like wax:

But you must know that unless the wax is first softened, it cannot receive the form (*forma*), and thus also a man cannot be kneaded to the form (*forma*) of virtue through the hand of another's action unless he is softened by humility....¹⁶⁰

Humility is a kind of enigmatic construction of the self, a construction of the self as weak, vulnerable, moldable, and surpassingly dependent on God in Christ.¹⁶¹ And the Christian virtue of humility, as we encounter it in Hugh's trinitarian doctrine, flows from

¹⁶⁰ *Inst.*, 7 (*OHSV* 1.40:340-42:378), quoted in Coolman, 201.

¹⁶¹ Indeed, contemporary secular philosophical attempts to appropriate the virtue of humility stripped of its Christian character have not met with stunning success, even exegetically. Kent Dunnington has recently shown that secular retrievals of Christian humility categorically overlook its conspicuous christological character as exhibited with emphasis in as central a text as Augustine's *Confessions* – that is to say, in the most acclaimed and studied Christian text outside the Bible. The standard account of Christian humility among philosophers is thus at once an act of historical misremembering and, from a Christian perspective, a foundational misunderstanding of the virtue itself. Kent Dunnington, "Humility: An Augustinian Perspective" *Pro Ecclesia* 25, no. 1 (Winter 2016): 18-43. While Dunnington appropriately focuses on Augustine, it may be noted, in agreement with him, that this Augustinian emphasis runs rampant through much of subsequent tradition and even reaches a certain premodern fortissimo in Franciscanism and related movements, some of which were, likewise, partakers of the Victorine theological stream. All this to say, the scope of the historical amnesia involved in the contemporary forgetting is rather profound.

the person's interior embrace and mystical participation in the divine Word's being physically de-formed, mutilated, destroyed, as Christ's body is ultimately ruptured violently from his soul in the anti-passover of death. Christian humility, in Hugh's doctrine, is grounded on confidence that God can, and does, resurrect the dead. It arises in a radical eschatological confidence in God, a radical dependence that can let go of one's form in order to be reformed by the Spirit in the likeness of the Risen One. It is thus, for Hugh, and with faith, a key to human reformation through participation in the subsequent two 'days' of the paschal mystery. To say that there is "No humility without humiliation" would be, for Hugh, a mystical posture embraced with a smile and radical eschatological hope.

Indeed, as Hugh summarizes the import of his own doctrine of humility by a bit of spiritual exegesis at the finale of *The Praise of the Bridegroom*, humility conduces to divine union by its role in what might be termed the 'simplification' or unification of the self. Hugh writes:

You will come and you will cross to Mount Seir and Hermon from the dens of lions, from the mountains of leopards".... what is it to go "from the mountains of leopards" to Mount Hermon, if not to go from pride to humility, from inflicting pain to bearing it (*de crudelitate ad patientiam*)? And note that he said... "from the mountains"... and "to the mountain,"... that is, we advance from many to one, because the more we begin to approach God by fleeing the world, the more we are gathered into one. Amen.¹⁶²

¹⁶² Hugh of St. Victor, *The Praise of the Bridegroom*, Hugh Feiss trans., in Hugh Feiss, ed., *On Love: A Selection of Works of Hugh, Adam, Achard, Richard, and Godfrey of St Victor* (Hyde Park: New City, 2012), 132.

For Hugh, humility is an essential – one should even say foundational – virtue for walking the path to divine union, and it is inscribed at once in the very materiality and christoformicity of the sacraments.

5.3.3 Communal Formation

Intimately related to the sacramental life, and indeed to humility, is the role of the Church in communal formation of its members. The Abbey of St. Victor was a structured, orderly community in which human reformation was carried on in and through a context of liturgical, social, and academic structure. At present, I argue that such community life, for Hugh, plays a role in cutting humans away from sin through fostering an orderly and disciplined pattern of life. This role is visible in Hugh's treatise, oft treated and lauded, *On the Formation of Novices (De Institutione Novitiorum)*, which describes the right way of living at the Abbey of St. Victor. Paul Rorem characterizes the ordered life of the Abbey like this:

daily life there was a distinctive combination of the hours of prayer, as in the traditional monastic communities, and sophisticated sessions of study, as in the developing schools of that creative period. The holistic formation of the novices meant more than the curriculum of subjects covered in class and also more than the liturgical order of the canonical hours and the church year. Knowledge and prayer were prominent, of course, but full-scale Christian formation, at St. Victor and elsewhere, extended to the behavior of daily life, to gestures and postures and overall attitude, as explicitly explained by Hugh's *On the Formation of Novices*.
(46)

The ordered way of life at St. Victor consists not only in liturgical cycles, study, and moral precepts, but in manners, posture, and all manner of details about good behavior.

This extends to the act of reading itself. As Emmanuel Falque observes, “what is important therefore to the reader who reads is not only to understand what he is reading, to which we often reduce reading today, but the correctness of the relationship to the one “to whom” and “with whom” I am read[ing] it. No reading ever takes place in the canonical life of the Victorines independently from the community which sustains it....”¹⁶³ Falque further observes that this is the case “in the communitarian structure of the 12th century probably more than in the individual genius of the Church fathers.”¹⁶⁴ Even the individual’s studious reading, at the Abbey of St. Victor, is partially constitutive of the moral and spiritual *interpersonal* relational fabric of the Abbey, on which it also depends. As such, the interpersonal aspects of reading are partially constitutive of the participation in the paschal mystery the Abbey lives to sustain.

On the Formation is structured according to the triad of knowledge, discipline, and goodness – which, again, seems suggestive of the three ‘days’ of history in Hugh’s thought: first, the day of increasing knowledge of God and God’s law; second, the day of disciplined and clear instantiation of that teaching in the incarnation, and last the age of growth in goodness, guided by the Spirit. The majority of Hugh’s work in this treatise falls in the first two topics of the triad: knowledge of right behavior and internalizing this knowledge by discipline. Of the passage “through goodness to beatitude”, Hugh just recommends prayer: “So, brothers, we have told you these things about knowledge and

¹⁶³ Emmanuel Falque, “The Hidden Source of Hermeneutics: The Art of Reading in Hugh of St. Victor.” *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy - Revue de la philosophie française et de langue française*, Vol XXV, No 1 (2017) p. 129.

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*, 129.

discipline. As for goodness, however, pray that God may grant it to you. Amen.”¹⁶⁵

While this statement is a humorous and quick way to wrap up a treatise in which Hugh has said what he set out to say, such a recommendation is not without truth in light of his trinitarian doctrine of history: it is the Spirit who leads the Church forward in goodness toward eschatological beatitude. Prayer is an entirely proper mode of engagement.

As in his teaching on the sacramental life, humility plays a major role in Hugh’s doctrine concerning communal life at St. Victor. Indeed, the one would seem to found the other. The humiliation and consequent humility with which one participates in the mystery of Jesus Christ’s suffering and death through the lowly material of each of the sacraments flows outward into a humble adherence to the forms, customs, manners, patterns of life, and codes of speech and gesture proper to communal life at St. Victor. The humble imitation of morally exemplary people enjoined by Hugh in this treatise is itself, ultimately, part of a process of reformation in the image of Jesus Christ. Coolman comments:

Like soft wax, the disciple receives the stamp or seal of the exemplar as matter receives form. But this does not happen all at once; there is a gradual process of formation, as humility and obedience facilitate ever greater reception of the form through imitation. Not only the process, but also the goal of this exterior *disciplina* is construed in terms of *forma*. The ultimate goal is the *forma* of the divine likeness; the intermediate goal is the interior *forma* of virtue... (201).

The liturgical and sacramental life of St. Victor, by which the canons regularly and repeatedly celebrate the paschal mystery, itself structures the forms, disciplines, and customs by which the community participates in the mystery of Christ’s death by the spiritual vulnerability and softening of humility. Formation in this virtue is the

¹⁶⁵ Quoted in Rorem, *Hugh of Saint Victor*, 46.

precondition for further construction of the self, through study, meditation, contemplation, and the moral life, in the likeness of the Trinity. In Hugh's own words, "Humility is the beginning of discipline."¹⁶⁶ The *humilitas* by which one participates sacramentally in Good Friday facilitates the *integritas* of communal life at the Abbey.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, the humility of sacramentally-induced repentance is the foundation on which the individual may be communally reconstructed in all of the virtues – charity most especially.

5.4 PERSON

In *Moral Ark* 1.4, Hugh maintains that, in addition to the whole world and the Catholic Church, "God's house is also every faithful soul." If God inhabits the world as King, and the Church as head of a family, "He is in the soul as the bridegroom in the wedding-chamber." The characteristic of the wedding-chamber is love. "[I]f you are in the house of God through love, blessed are you, for not only are you *in* the house of God, but you yourself have begun to *be* His house, to the intent that He who made you may also dwell in you." To be God's lover is, for Hugh, to engage in a receptive-constructive process by which one is built or edified into God's Temple.

A full exposition of Hugh's relevant doctrine in this section would include an account of all of the dispositions, affections, and virtues which constitute the spiritual life

¹⁶⁶ *Didascalicon* 3.13

¹⁶⁷ On *integritas*, see Coolman, 201-5, 210-13.

of reformation in the image of the Trinity. However, in the following subsections I concentrate on the aspects of personal formation which most directly found the practice of theology, or of meditation. These are the labor of study in general, reading in the liberal arts, and memorizing the literal or historical sense of Scripture. Each of these practices is, for Hugh, a means of participation in Christ's death which is a precondition for and beginning of the practice of theology. And this association with Good Friday is significant: reading and memorization are among the best studied topics in the literature on Hugh, yet this connection is not made. The first contribution of the brief sections below, then, is in bringing out the way in which, in Hugh's spirituality, reading and memorization are seen as participations in Christ's dying. Moreover, inasmuch as the basic scholarly work on these topics has already been accomplished by others, in my discussion of memorizing the literal sense of Scripture I move more explicitly beyond Hugh's context and into our own in order to make some 'Hugonian' theological connections.

5.4.1 The Labor of Study in the Spiritual Life: Discipline Seeking Integration

The heart of the receptive-constructive practice of theology in Hugh's thought takes place in meditation. Meditation is the 'second day' of the life of the intellect in Hugh's thought and is itself ordered toward its 'third day' or fulfillment in love. Yet the preconditions for these cognitive, meditative practices of theology are associated with the work or labor (*laborem*) of Good Friday. First among these labors is study.

Though Hugh does not treat it extensively in his *Didascalicon*, his treatise on the proper order of reading in human reformation, the most generally available forms of learning at the Abbey of St. Victor must have consisted in hearing others speak, read, preach, or teach, and in taking part in conversations. There is no substitute for drinking the water, so to speak, in a community or institution. Being present amidst the conversations, anxieties, and styles of argument present in a community, institution, or school impresses these on the memory and familiarizes one with them rapidly. Any novice undergoing the formation and community life at St. Victor would quickly develop a rich and refined sense of the goods in the pursuit of which the community was oriented. Just so, being present and ‘soaking it all in’ is, as it were, the least laborious method of study once available at the Abbey of St. Victor. Hugh even tells us that one such classroom conversation inspired his *Noah’s Ark* treatises:

When I was one day sitting with the assembled brethren, and replying to the questions which they asked, many matters came up for discussion. Finally, the conversation was so directed that we began with one accord to marvel at the instability and restlessness of the human heart, and to sigh over it.... (*Moral Ark*, 1.1)

That “many matters came up for discussion” shows, first of all, that a student present in Hugh’s class would have had his memory formed to some degree by all of these many matters, just by being there. An additional way to read what Hugh here tells us is to glean that a sense of ennui set in, or a sense of dis-integration assailed the participants in the conversation: the “many matters” were contributing to the fragmentation endemic to the fallen state. In their questioning, and in their separated inquiries, the students are like Martha, anxious over many things, rather than attending in the posture of discipleship to

the one thing needful (Lk. 10:42). This ennui or growing awareness of fragmentation, in turn, leads the conversation in the direction of sighing at the “instability and restlessness of the human heart”, and this in turn is what leads to what Hugh says next:

... And the brethren earnestly entreated that they might be shown the cause of these unstable movements in man’s heart, and further particularly begged to be taught if such a serious evil as this could be countered by any skill or by the practice of some discipline. (1.1)

The project of overcoming human disintegration through an ordered program in which spirituality and study are unified – the latter within and sharpening the former – could be seen as the project not only of Hugh’s *Ark* treatises, but of the *Didascalicon* and *On the Sacraments* as well. All of these serve the project of uniting human persons to God receptively-constructively. Hugh’s trinitarian doctrine is, in many ways, ordered toward helping Christians learn the skill of theology within the spiritual life as a means to construct themselves stably in receipt of divine form. Conversation, then, and presence in community, was a ubiquitous means of having one’s soul and memory impressed by the community’s pursuit of the goods intrinsic, ultimately, to the Triune God’s saving activity in the paschal mystery as the divine unification of history.

The kinds of intensive meditation and contemplation in which Hugh wants to train his pupils require much more intensive memory formation than that available through hearing scattered bits of conversation and various lectures. They require intensive forms of reading, reading for memory. An ordered formation in reading is what Hugh offers, and it is by these practices of memory formation that the student participates studiously in the labor of Good Friday, and so prepares for theological meditation. Reading and memorization are two of the most studied aspects of Hugh’s thought, yet they are seldom

treated in relation to the way in which Hugh sees them as spiritual participations in Christ's dying.¹⁶⁸ Reading and memorization is, indeed, a form of suffering, a way of displacing oneself with the thoughts of another, a way of dying to oneself. Coolman characterizes the style of reading Hugh would inculcate this way:

For Hugh, reading is much more than a means for acquiring information or a technique for amassing knowledge. Rather, *lectio* is a profoundly soul-forming activity, but not simply (*pace* much modern theorizing) the sheer act of reading itself. Rather, for him (like many medievals), to read is to be formed by the content of one's reading, to have it impressed upon oneself.... Hugh was concerned with reading, not merely for reading's or even for understanding's sake, but for memory's sake. "Indeed the whole usefulness of education consists only in the memory of it...." (149)

Coolman's internal quotation of Hugh comes from the *Chronicon*. The practice of reading for memory, in turn, serves one's ability to meditate and, ultimately, contemplate. One must pass through the death of having one's memory impressed by unfamiliar words as the Lord's hands were impressed by unfamiliar nails. One suffers this in order to be a living bearer of one's memory for the good of oneself and others, an educated and so transformed person. The labor of dying through memorization is, for Hugh, a way of orienting oneself properly and so eschatologically. It is a way of giving oneself a memory such that one can walk discerningly and effectively in the Spirit. One who has done the work of dying aright through study will have an agile and readily accessible memory. In the words of Mary Carruthers, "What Hugh describes here is a process of

¹⁶⁸ In only the most recent generation of Hugh literature, Coolman, Harkins, and Rorem all offer different, but generally complementary, explorations of the importance of reading and memory. The work of Mary Carruthers is foundational for these more recent appreciations of Hugh on memory, and for much in our appreciation of the arts of memory in premodern Western cultures besides.

completely internalizing what one has read ... and the agency by which this is accomplished is ... the process of memory-training, storage, and retrieval.”¹⁶⁹

5.4.2 Christians Practicing Philosophy: Reading the Liberal Arts

Hugh’s actual program of study in the *Didascalicon*, frequently studied, proceeds through two main phases.¹⁷⁰ The first is reading in the liberal arts, and the second is reading in Scripture. Both of these are studied, initially, for memory formation. Hugh can call the liberal arts “the foundation stones of all things.”¹⁷¹ Human restoration in the image of God begins in reading the liberal arts. “Hugh,” Harkins writes, “understands the liberal arts as roads along which the pilgrim-reader progresses toward the highest Wisdom” (130). To be sure, the liberal arts have only a “nascent restorative efficacy” (135) – the whole of human re-formation is not, after all, Good Friday – yet this nascent efficacy is significant. The studious pilgrim who participates in the labor of memorizing the liberal arts gains thinking skills and knowledge which will help her meditate on Scripture more successfully. Coolman summarizes Hugh’s ordered curriculum:

He lays out the comprehensive overview of all learning, comprised not only of the theoretical (including the quadrivium – arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy), practical (including ethics, economics, and politics), and logical arts (including the trivium – grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric), but also famously the so-called “adulterate” or mechanical arts (including textile fabrication, armament and construction, commerce, agriculture, culinary arts, medicine, and theatre). (150)

¹⁶⁹ Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 163. Quoted in Coolman, *Hugh of St. Victor*, 149.

¹⁷⁰ The deepest and most sustained such study, which is also the most illuminating in terms of Hugh’s own sources and inspirations, is that of Franklin Harkins in *Reading and the Work of Restoration*.

¹⁷¹ *Didascalicon* 3.4, quoted in Coolman, 150.

Hugh's program of reading for memory within and in furtherance of the Christian spiritual life is aimed at creating a person who is integrated, unified, even capable of further constructing herself and ordering her knowledge through meditation. Such meditation in the service of meditation and, ultimately, divine union, requires as universally stocked a memory as can be had. In studying all these things, Hugh's student seeks divine Wisdom. Coolman discusses the way in which:

Reading the liberal arts begins the pursuit of wisdom, *philosophia*, or, more precisely, a process of participation in divine Wisdom. This participation is in truth a re-formation. Initiated by reading and study, the soul's noetic encounter with all other things, which variously reflect divine Wisdom, gradually impresses the contours of Wisdom upon it, re-forming it by con-forming it to the primordial pattern of Wisdom, identified with the second Person of the Trinity. (Coolman, 152.)

And specifically, I argue, the practice of memorization brings one into contact with divine Wisdom, the Son of God, in con-forming participation in the Son's dying. The pagan philosophers one reads in the course of one's study of the liberal arts know nothing of the death of Wisdom in history – as Augustine discovered, remarking of the Platonists whose writings so helped him: “I read in them that God, the Word, was born not of blood nor of man's desire nor lust of the flesh, but of God; but that *the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us*, I did not read there.”¹⁷² At the Abbey of St. Victor, Christians' assimilating encounter with wise pagans takes place in the midst of the life of prayer, Christian communal discipline, and the ever present cycles of the liturgy, all guiding their practitioners repeatedly and ever anew into the paschal mystery. The wisdom the pagan philosophers gleaned from afar, and indeed all the liberal arts, “are taken up into the

¹⁷² *Confessions* 7.9.14, in Saint Augustine, *The Confessions*, Maria Boulding, OSB, trans. (New York: Vintage, 1998), 132.

service of scriptural reading” (Coolman, 152). Hugh the truly ‘universal teacher’¹⁷³ could eagerly exhort his students to “Read everything” because, as that avid Hugonian theologian, St. Bonaventure, could say a century later in a work inspired by Hugh’s *Didascalicon*, “Every cognition is theology’s slave.”¹⁷⁴ And so as the liberal arts become, for Hugh, a means of participation in Good Friday, Plato’s maxim about philosophy sounds anew in a surprising Christian key: “those who pursue philosophy aright study nothing but dying and being dead.”¹⁷⁵

5.4.3 The Wisdom of Christians: Memorizing the Literal Sense of Scripture

History, or the literal sense of Scripture, is the foundation. On and from this foundation, and from the foundation stones of Scripture, one constructs the edifice of faith – a topic to be explored in the next chapter. Yet the foundation is the literal sense, the biblical history, and it must be memorized. Hugh:

First you should learn history and diligently commit to memory the truth of things having been done, reviewing from beginning to end what was done, when it was done, where it was done, and by whom it was done. Indeed, these four things should especially be sought in history: the person, the deed, the time, and the place.

¹⁷³ e.g. Rorem writes, “In terms of pedagogical theory, Hugh’s breadth of learning is well known, and here he embodies his own advice to learn everything. This treatise [on geometry] is the most striking testament to his expansive view of the Victorine curriculum. The fact that geometry, with hypotenuse and astrolabe and all, should be taught at St. Victor in such detail is itself remarkable, perhaps stemming from Hugh’s earlier education, and anticipates the scientific agenda of an Albert the Great. R. Baron calls it typical of Hugh’s “immense curiosity.”” Rorem, *Hugh of St. Victor*, 44.

¹⁷⁴ *Omnes cognitiones famulantur theologiae*. The above translation comes, incidentally, from Paul J. Griffiths. Hayes translates the passage, “all divisions of knowledge are servants of theology”. St. Bonaventure, *On the Reduction of the Arts to Theology*, Zachary Hayes, OFM, trans., (St. Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute, 1996), 60-1.

¹⁷⁵ Plato, *Phaedo*, 64a. The whole quotation, on the lips of Socrates, runs: “Other people are likely not to be aware that those who pursue philosophy aright study nothing but dying and being dead. Now if this is true, it would be absurd to be eager for nothing but this all their lives, and then to be troubled when that came for which they had all along been eagerly practicing.”

And I do not think that you can be perfectly perspicacious with regard to allegory unless you have first been grounded in history. (*Didascalicon*, 6.3.)

The practice Hugh enjoins – diligently impressing into memory the whos, whats, whens, and wheres of the whole library of Scripture – is exhausting. As I emphasize, it is a labor, a death, a Good Friday. Yet deeper ‘Hugonian’ theological points are not to be overlooked. Jesus Christ manifests the Triune LORD in history in his dying, burial, and rising. In impressing on oneself, into the intimate recesses of one’s memory, the precise detail of the whole biblical history recapitulated in the paschal mystery, one impresses in oneself the possibility for a sharper and deeper vision into, scrutiny of, and ultimately spiritual Passover into the divine person of Jesus Christ. “Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.”¹⁷⁶ Further, in memorizing the historical sense of Scripture, one forms within oneself the normative context for all one’s thinking, and for one’s moral living. All that one learns – even extrabiblical history – fits into the story, the context, of Scripture’s history, which stretches from creation to eschaton, from the dim beginnings of the revelation of the Father to the full light of the self-manifestation of the Trinity in the universal resurrection, when all knees bow and all tongues confess the lordship of the Risen Christ. Unlike the pagan philosophers, Hugh’s students know the history in which they find themselves, and so are able to turn pagan insights to true spiritual profit. All of this is founded on, predicated upon, the labor of memorizing the literal sense of Scripture.

Pride in one’s reading is consequently as disastrous here as in any area of the spiritual life. So Hugh exhorts his readers:

¹⁷⁶ St. Jerome, *Commentariorum in Isaiam libri xviii* prol.:PL 24:17B.

Do not look down on what seem to be the least important things. The student who looks down on the least things slips down gradually. If you had scorned learning the alphabet at the beginning of your education, you would have barely been a student of grammar by now. I know that there are certain students who want to philosophize immediately. They say that stories should be left to pseudo-apostles. Their understanding is like that of an ass! Do not imitate students like this! (6.3)

Asinine pride puffs up, but humility lays the foundation of memory for the edifice, and edification, of the Temple – the wedding-chamber of love. The humility of Christ crucified is essential if one is to become a good theologian, and the humiliation of memorization is the foundational step. As Harkins emphasizes, order, *ordo*, is important in one's study of history: "All things [recounted in Scripture] have been done in order, so proceed with your reading in order" (6.3). The order of history – from creation to eschaton – is the order of love. As I argue on the basis of *On the Three Days*, it is in fact, and simultaneously, the order of the Triune God's self-manifestation in history and of the Spirit's perfection of redeemed creation in love through history. The possibility of the theologian or Christian having her loves ordered aright is thus a function of having herself contextualized aright, and that is to say, contextualized in the history of the world as God is acting in it to transform it. The "certain students" who sophistically want to "philosophize immediately" are disordered in their loves, and this is a function, at the most basic and foundational level, of their disorientation. In what direction ought one philosophize if one has no history? Such could only be a philosophy with no *prudentia*, no practical Wisdom. Knowing how to wisely pursue the Goodness that is before the world, and gives the world, and is after the world is, for Hugh, a matter of knowing the history of the world as a self-manifestation of that Goodness. The project of philosophical ascent for which the proud asses pant, in fact, requires a humbly universal

history. But these proud students “say that stories should be left to pseudo-apostles”, and so they remain disintegrated pseudo-philosophers. For Hugh, to become an integrated person – to have *integritas* – “a kind of wholeness (*sanitas*) and integrity (*integritas*) of the rational soul” – is achieved by meditatively constructing an edifice of Wisdom, in so doing meditatively constructing oneself on the basis of it, and living lovingly in accord with it. This all presupposes a deeply and comprehensively formed historical memory: one meditates only on the basis of one’s historical memory. Ignorance of history is insanity. For Hugh, it is literally lack of wholeness (*sanitas*), disintegration. Integrity, on the other hand, is achieved by meditating on the basis of the Triune God’s self-signifying and self-manifesting acts in history. Ignorant of history, one lacks both the signs on the basis of which one ought philosophize, and the narrative sense to judge how one ought move forward practically in goodness. “A person without a memory, if such a thing could be, would be a person without moral character and, in a basic sense, without humanity”, as Mary Carruthers observed.¹⁷⁷ There is no tropology, no authentic spirituality, without historical memory.

The importance Hugh places on knowing one’s place in history in order to become wise and good we see mirrored in the method by which Hugh encourages students to learn to understand specific biblical facts or historical episodes *themselves* within their larger literary and historical contexts. Encouraging his students to persevere in the labor of memorizing the literal biblical history, Hugh says, “Just as with the virtues, so too in the acquisition of knowledge there are certain stages through which the

¹⁷⁷ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 13.

student must ascend” (6.3). Hugh teaches his students that they will see better the importance of seemingly unimportant details in the history as they read those bits in the context of the greater histories of which they are a part. He gives this teaching as though responding to a student’s complaint – which he had perhaps heard many times:

But you say, “I find many things in the historical narratives that seem to be useless. Why should I spend my time studying these sorts of stories?” You make a good point. There are, in fact, many things in the Scriptures that seem to offer nothing worth seeking, but if you read them in light of the surrounding passages and begin to weigh them in their larger literary context, you will see that they are as indispensable as they are suitable. Some things should be learned for their own sakes, but other things, although for their own sakes they do not seem worthy of our effort, nevertheless should by no means be carelessly passed over because without them we cannot have a clear and simple understanding of the former. Learn all things, and subsequently you will see that nothing is superfluous. A meager knowledge is not a pleasant thing. (6.3)

When Hugh encourages students memorizing the biblical history to “learn all things” in order to thereby later “see that nothing is superfluous”, he encourages them to cultivate a sense of the complexity and interdependency of history as an intelligible whole.

Unimportant seeming facts or parts of the Bible – those most scorned by the proud pseudo-philosopher types – disclose their worth only through becoming intelligible within their larger contexts, and only yield their wisdom and worth through meditation in light of those larger and longer historical contexts. So, for Hugh, the way in which one’s life only becomes intelligible and wisely practicable through understanding history mirrors the way in which one only comes to understand the unimportant-seeming bits of Scripture in light of their greater literary and historical contexts. The same mirror relationship is pointed out by Alasdair MacIntyre in his now-classic work, *After Virtue*:

Once again the narrative phenomenon of embedding is crucial: the history of a practice in our time is generally and characteristically embedded in and made intelligible in terms of the larger and longer history of the tradition through which the practice in its present form was conveyed to us; the history of each of our own lives is generally and characteristically embedded in and made intelligible in terms of the larger and longer histories of a number of traditions. (222)

For MacIntyre as for Hugh, individual facts and individual lives become intelligible as they are embedded in larger and longer narratives, larger and longer histories. And an all-contextualizing sense of the history of the whole world, of what I have elsewhere called the ‘ultimate radical narrative’, of the world as it is itself embedded in a narrative or (dare we say) history *wider than the world* is, for Hugh, only achieved by memorizing the literal sense of Scripture. For Hugh, I am arguing on the basis of *On the Three Days* that this ultimate radical narrative or history is trinitarian doctrine itself. What is at stake is thus ‘metatemporal history’ or ‘metaphysical history’. Trinitarian doctrine, for Hugh, could be likened to a kind of trinitarian fulfillment or ‘in Christ’ transformation of a Neoplatonic style of metaphysical history. This does not exclude from the particular: it maintains the historically particular even as it transcends or initiates from a place prior to any particular. The God Hugh calls “unthinkable” is the beginning of the history: “In the beginning, God created....” Hugh is interested in history, both in the particularity of its forms, and is simultaneously interested in the triadic re-formation of history’s forms by divine Triune form. Maintaining and exploring this tension is the genius of Hugh’s theological thinking vis-à-vis eternity and time. The Christian claim, he thinks, is that the Trinity contextualizes the world, the Trinity manifests herself over the long course of history culminating in the eschaton, and the Trinity self-manifestingly recapitulates the

whole history of the world in the paschal mystery. For Hugh, the indispensable first step in becoming able to think this way is memorizing history.

This also leads us back, in Hugh's thought, to the insanity or unwholeness of philosophy itself when it is not practiced within the context of the biblical trinitarian history. Hugh begins Book One of the *Didascalicon* with this paean for Wisdom which is also a lament for our deep forgetfulness. He writes:

Of all things to be eagerly desired, the first is Wisdom, in which the form of the perfect good stands fixed. Wisdom illuminates the human person so that he might know himself, who was similar to the other animals in that he did not understand that he had been created higher than them. To be sure, though, his immortal mind, illuminated by Wisdom, looks back at its own beginning and realizes how unbecoming it is for it to seek anything outside itself when what it is can be sufficient in and of itself. It is written on the tripod of Apollo: *gnoti seauton*, that is, "know yourself," because without a doubt if the human person had not forgotten his own origin he would realize to what extent every mutable thing is nothing. (1.1)

What Hugh says here embraces the idiom of 'introverted' pagan Neoplatonism, yet in the context of his thought it is, perhaps deceptively, quite Christian. Much of what Hugh writes here is in dialogue with Boethius and the commentary on *The Consolation of Philosophy* which identifies God as the highest Good, and the "Form of the Good" with the Second Person of the Trinity, the formal and exemplary cause of creation.¹⁷⁸ The injunction *gnoti seauton*, "know thyself", is a labor because one has forgotten oneself. Hugh specifies this as the human person's having "forgotten his own origin" and consequent failure to see "to what extent every mutable thing is nothing." What does Hugh mean here? Does he mean we ought merely pursue philosophy aright by remembering ourselves as immortal emanations of divine Wisdom? Clearly, in the

¹⁷⁸ cf. *Didascalicon* 1.1, Harkins and van Liere, eds., p. 184 note 5.

context of the whole of the *Didascalicon*, especially the section on the biblical history to which we have been attending, this is not what Hugh wants his students to do. For Hugh, this is because remembering oneself merely as an emanation of eternal Wisdom is not sufficient for becoming wise, nor for knowing oneself. This pre-emptive interiority leaves unclear or unpolished the light-reflecting forms of self and world by which one approaches, one hopes, eternal Wisdom. Rather, for Hugh, one only comes to know oneself by knowing the history of the world as it is wholly, and so sanely, embedded in the Triune God, and so, yes, in divine Wisdom. It is in knowing divine Wisdom, the fixed form of the perfect Good, as that perfect Good is gradually unveiled *in the exteriority of history* and that one can know oneself, become wise, and embrace Wisdom in becoming united to the fixed form of the Good. Short of the eschaton, our access to the Good comes through the paschal mystery. This means that knowing oneself, for Hugh, is as it is for the late Herbert McCabe OP, who wrote that, “To discover your identity is to be able to tell yourself the story which forms your life, and the larger stories within which your life exists and has meaning.”¹⁷⁹ So when Hugh in his *Didascalicon* chapter on history shares his story of himself as a young learner, collecting and memorizing individual seemingly isolated facts or geometrical truths in flurries of activity which seemed to others nonsensical and silly, he is doing more than encouraging his own students in learning biblical trivia through personal testimony. He certainly is offering inspiring (and, to his admirers early and late, endearing) personal testimony. Yet he is showing that the way of healthy introversion or interiority, the way to divine

¹⁷⁹ Herbert McCabe, *God Still Matters* (New York: Continuum, 2005), 210.

Wisdom and of reformation in the form of the Good, is by the exteriority or extroversion of learning individual facts and particulars and constantly contextualizing these in a way that is, at length, historical. Cosmic history, in all its 14 billion year immensity, multiplicity, and magnitude, is enfolded within the biblical history and its sacramental economy.

So, for Hugh, one knows on the basis on Jesus Christ's resurrection, and by participating in the Holy Spirit, that one *will* know oneself. This is a divine disclosure, a divine promise. And one makes some real progress in knowing oneself, as through learning and meditation one synthesizes all that one knows and one's own story within history and so within trinitarian doctrine. And one learns, in a way partially constitutive of this progress, to tell one's story, as McCabe says, and as Hugh does. And one even achieves and is given (eschatological!) contemplation here and there, an intermittent cleaving to the eternal form of the Good in the Spirit. But knowing oneself, for Hugh, is ultimately and necessarily coincident with humbly knowing the whole history of the universe in its seemingly infinite detail, and with knowing that history, creation's history, in the light of, because embedded within, the Triune God who is fully disclosed in the Spirit at the eschaton.

All this means that, for Hugh, he and his students had better stay busy memorizing the biblical history, Good Friday though it be. History's stones are the foundation on which the self is built, and of which the knowledge of God is built. To know oneself is, unavoidably, to know the Scriptures, and the christological self-abnegation of humility is the doorway into the unified knowledge of everything.

Fittingly, Hugh closes his chapter on history with a summary of history, saying, “Read, therefore, and learn that *in the beginning God created heaven and earth.*” (6.3)

He ends it on this note:

The Son promised that at the end of time He would come again in judgment to repay each person according to his or her works, namely, eternal fire for sinners, but for the just eternal life and the kingdom of which there will be no end. Notice that from the beginning of the world until the end of time the mercies of the Lord never fail. (6.3)

For Hugh, to know history aright is to know all that one knows in light of divine judgment and, most decisively, mercy.

5.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have excavated the lexical field in Hugh’s theology which conduces to interior and spiritual participation in Jesus Christ’s dying, first summarizing this field, and then exploring the central associations and trajectories by which it offers a grammar for human re-formation. One participates in Good Friday by having one’s perception of divine power impressed with extremes: the immensity, multiplicity, and magnitude of the LORD’s works in creation, before which one small, and the humility of the LORD in Jesus Christ’s crucifixion – itself symbolized abroad in the Church’s sacraments from the beginning of history to the end – within which one is impressed with and conformed to Christ’s humility. Humility, including for theologians the humility of study of history and its texts, is thus the precondition, for Hugh, of authentic knowledge of Self as much as of World, and, too, of knowledge of God.

The participation in Good Friday begins, but does not exhaust, the human person's subjective participation in Christ's work and her correlative restoration in the divine image. Having been given the foundation of memory through the hard labor and death of Good Friday, which works to cut away one from sins and distractions, the would-be theologian is drawn, thence, into the world of Holy Saturday, and so into the harsh agon of increasing clarity about Truth made possible by divine Wisdom's incarnation, and our meditation on it. This meditation, the constructive intellectual work of spiritual participation in Christ, is the topic of the next chapter.

6.0 BURIED

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field...
-Matthew 13:44

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Having died with Christ, humans are buried with Christ. Participants already in the LORD's suffering and death, human persons remain in the paschal mystery as they participate in the mystery of Jesus Christ's burial in the tomb. This chapter explores the 'burial' by which human persons, and all creation, participate in the paschal mystery. This chapter is the second of the trio of chapters tracing the reformation of creation – and particularly of the human person in her subjective participation – through the three days of the paschal mystery. Its theme is Holy Saturday, and it is preceded by a chapter on Good Friday and followed by a chapter on Easter Sunday.

This chapter, like the other chapters in Part Two, works to highlight the practice of trinitarian doctrine or theology within the human participation in the paschal mystery described. Moreover, following the way in which Hugh's triads line up in *On the Three Days*, the second day of the paschal mystery corresponds, within Hugh's triadic

understanding of the soul, to intellect. Ergo, this chapter occupies the central place within our exploration of the practice of trinitarian doctrine. The intellect receives the gifts contained in memory, and the theologian constructs and probes thought structures through a variety of styles and forms of meditation, working to reproduce in the understanding the structure of truth itself, and the contours of divine Wisdom. The ultimate aim of theological practice lies, not only in knowing the truth, but in uniting the soul to uncreated goodness through love. The central theme of this chapter – and the signature intellectual and theological task of *meditation* – thus concerns the difficult passage from darkness to light, from sin’s ignorance to Christ’s illumination (cf. Mt. 11:25-27). The soul makes this passage ‘receptive-constructively’: by receiving the gifts of perception and study and from them constructing the self as a Temple of God.

6.2 THE INCARNATION’S ILLUMINATION AND THE TOIL OF MEDITATION

Holy Saturday, as Jesus Christ’s and our passage from and through death (Good Friday) and to resurrection (Easter Sunday), is a time of passage. For the subjective participant, this day of ‘burial’ names the time of struggle to apprehend the brightness of the salvation the LORD has worked in the Incarnation of the Son. This struggle of gradual enlightenment occurs both at the macro level of history and in the microcosm of the human person, and Hugh captures both of these aspects in *On the Three Days*. After describing the first ‘day’ of history – or the deep history of the world and of Israel in

which humans began to apprehend the LORD as caring Father and as righteous judge of sin – Hugh describes the subsequent “day of truth” and of “salvation”:

It was already day, but not yet bright, because it was still shadowed by the darkness of sin. Therefore, there came the day of truth, the day of salvation, which destroyed sin and illumined the brightness of the previous day. It did not take away fear, but turned it into something better.... (*On the Three Days*, III.27.1)

And so Hugh also writes, “The day of truth is the day of wisdom, the day of the Son” (III.27.3). One participates responsively in the day of the Son by coming to know the LORD’s truth and wisdom: “when the wisdom of God is examined and enlightens our heart with recognition of the truth, it is the day of the Son” (III.27.4). Each of the days of the paschal mystery, for Hugh, is an outward “sacrament” and “example” which we are to appropriate interiorly and spiritually, and this is true of Holy Saturday. As the LORD lies still and buried, so we must become still and quiet outwardly and inwardly in order to meditate on the divine Wisdom and, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, pass over into the rest of contemplation. “On the day of wisdom,” Hugh writes, “we are buried away from the clamor of this world by contemplation of the truth” (*ibid.*). The second day, constituted in part by our meditation, is characterized by an inward turn. As Jesus Christ lay buried in the tomb, the Triune LORD, ever active in the world, Church, and self through the paschal mystery, reforms us into the triadic triune likeness: “Therefore, Christ lay buried in the tomb on the seventh [day]... so that in a similar way... wisdom on his day may bury us within on the hidden place of contemplation” (*ibid.*).

Our own burial, like Christ’s burial, is directed – to the immortal life of the resurrection. The mysterious middle, the passage through hiddenness and suspense, the long toil in the search for light: each of these is as essential to our *transitus*, our

participation in Christ's Passover, as are the *visibilia* of Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Hugh writes, "we can attain His immortality only by passing through the toil of death (*non nisi per mortis laborem peruenire possumus*); it is by adoption that we, who are by nature subject to this latter end, are made heirs of eternity" (*Noah's Ark* 1.1.9, Sicard p. 13, *PL* 176:624B, *CSMV* p. 55). As mentioned, the signature activity of this day of gradual intellectual enlightenment is meditation. It is agonistic – at least frequently so – or like the gradual victory of fire and light as fire struggles to gain mastery over a piece of "green", living wood. In an important passage Hugh writes:

In meditation, a sort of wrestling-match goes on between ignorance and knowledge, and the light of truth somehow flickers in the midst of the darkness of error. It is then rather like fire in green wood, which gets a hold at first only with difficulty; but, when it is fanned by a stronger draught and begins to catch on more fiercely, then we see great billows of black smoke arise, and smother the flame, which so far is still only fairly bright and leaping out here and there, until at last, as the fire gradually grows, all the smoke clears, the darkness is dispelled, and a bright blaze appears. Then the conquering flame, spreading throughout the crackling pyre, gains ready mastery and, leaping round the fuel, with lightest touches of its glancing tongues consumes and penetrates it. Nor does it rest until, reaching the very centre, it has so to speak absorbed into itself everything that it had found outside itself. (*On the Soul's Three Ways of Seeing*)

The fire almost dies, drowned, as it were, in smoke, before obtaining mastery with a sudden resurgence. To the reader of *On the Three Days*, Hugh's very description of meditation in *On the Soul's Three Ways of Seeing* faintly evokes Jesus Christ's own death, hiddenness in burial, and subsequent victorious resurgence. "Nor", Hugh tells us, does the fire rest "until, reaching the very center, it has so to speak absorbed into itself everything it had found outside itself."¹⁸⁰ In something like the way that all creation is reformed through participation in the paschal mystery – all things pass over through

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

burial in Christ – so the fire of meditative mind is all consuming. “When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself” (Jn. 12:32).

Understood in the frame in which it is presented in *On the Three Days*, meditation is the work of thought responsive to the illumination of the world by divine Truth in the Incarnation. There is thus a sense in which all meditation is predicated upon the incarnation, seeking to grasp this surpassing and soteriological mystery of Christ’s person and work, even as all meditation inevitably falls short. It aims at the christocentric macrocosm; it achieves a microcosmic likeness of this macrocosm, constructing the christocentric macrocosm, at best, by the mandala symbol of the ark, or any other “house of God”.¹⁸¹ Yet the fruit of this thinking, this constructive labor of hidden, meditative thinking responsive to the Incarnation is *wisdom*. The practitioner of theology is re-formed in the image of God, and made wise like unto divine Wisdom.¹⁸² A consequence of this is that the whole project of meditation is predicated upon the project of memorization studied in the previous chapter as a participation in Christ’s dying.¹⁸³ One constructs the self as Temple of divine Wisdom or illumination (and, ultimately, decorates it by the divine presence of Love) on the basis of memory. Meditation *receives* the gifts of memory (including perception and study) and *constructs* the illuminated self in constructing a truthful and synthetic understanding of God, the divine works of restoration, and the world. The self, as redeemed, becomes a kind of microcosm of the whole, as redeemed.

¹⁸¹ *Noah’s Ark* 1.5, CSMV p. 51

¹⁸² This is, of course, well studied in Coolman, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor*.

¹⁸³ Coolman and Harkins both attend to this, though without making the connection to the paschal mystery.

Yet the meditative construction project, aspiring to “all truth” (Jn.16:13), remains unfinished – it is the Spirit that leads into all truth, just as Holy Saturday is completed in the love of Easter Sunday. Though Hugh does not use this language, there is thus an element of the biblical “already, but not yet” tension in Hugh’s understanding of Holy Saturday.

Following a subsection on the lexical field of Holy Saturday, the rest of this meditation-themed chapter is structured by the appropriately tense confluence of the themes of burial and intellectual and constructive ascent: ‘deep ascent’, I will style it. As the human person or soul increases in christocentrically ordered knowledge of God, World, and Self, the soul itself increases in ‘structural’ likeness to divine Wisdom and becomes capable of ascent. The ascent begun in knowledge, however, may only be completed in love. Love, for Hugh, is the completion of the Passover. Yet it is here, in this chapter on ‘burial’, in which we study the central *intellectual* practices of trinitarian doctrine.

6.2.1 The Lexical Field of Holy Saturday

As discussed in the previous chapter, a signature feature of Hugh’s spirituality and practice of theology as read through *On the Three Days* are his ‘lexical fields’. These are fields of associated terms and concepts, christologically normed, corresponding to the three days of Jesus Christ’s dying, burial, and rising. Here we examine the lexical field of Holy Saturday.

What I have heretofore described as ‘tension’ in the associations Hugh makes with Holy Saturday may in fact strike us as oddity. Yet, recall that the concern for Hugh is to root the saving intensity and comprehensive scope of the Triune LORD’s self-manifestation in the days of the paschal mystery. The second day of the paschal mystery, corresponding at once with the Second Person of the Trinity, and so with Word/Wisdom, as well as with ‘intellect’ within the memory-intellect-will triad of theological anthropology, must needs associate many of these with Holy Saturday. The resultant texture of Holy Saturday that emerges, for Hugh, is thus significantly different than that of some recent theologies of Holy Saturday which emphasize Jesus’ descent to hell as one or another type of existential radicalization of the brokenness and rupture of Good Friday.¹⁸⁴ For Hugh, I suggest, Holy Saturday is textured by the contrast of light and darkness in the present age between the blinding, saving light of the incarnation and the persisting, blind darknesses of ignorance and sin. The lexical field of Holy Saturday includes the following: Truth, Wisdom, day of truth, day of salvation, burial, tomb, philosophy, intellect, providence, observing, scrutinizing, deliberating, judging, meditation, contemplation (in a way), intellectual ascent (in a way), the incarnation, enlightenment, sacraments, the present, revelation, allegory, beauty, edifice, structure, motion, appearance, quality and the middle term in most or all of Hugh’s other triads. As discussed above, it is a transitional ‘day’, a day of the gradual reception and appropriation of the revealed light of the Godhead. It thus corresponds, for Hugh, to the theological

¹⁸⁴ These approaches tend to be derived from the mysticism of Adrienne von Speyr as received and theologically thematized by Hans Urs von Balthazar. For one example, consider Shelley Rambo’s theology of trauma in *Spirit and Trauma*.

virtue of hope.¹⁸⁵ If the most determinative affection of Good Friday was fear, the determinative affection of Holy Saturday seems to be wonder/admiration.¹⁸⁶

6.3 DEEP ASCENT

In this section on the human person, or soul, as participant in Holy Saturday we arrive at the heart of Hugh's vision of the practice of theology, or of the practice of trinitarian doctrine. And here we experience a tension, intrinsic to Holy Saturday in Hugh's thought. Holy Saturday is both to be 'buried away', still, silent in meditation, and yet the result of such meditation is intellectual 'ascent' – hence my characterization of the whole as 'deep ascent'.¹⁸⁷ The ascent, as here considered, is intellectual, even structural: buried away, one constructs upward.¹⁸⁸ The ascent is internal or interior, while the burial signifies external silence and, in a sense, passivity. The next chapter, "Rising", will deal again with the soul's ascent, as it becomes full-bodied, so to speak, and vivified affectively and in active love. The loving consummation, though, will have to wait; the intellectual ascent is, amorously speaking, the search (cf. Sg. 3:1).¹⁸⁹ What Hugh teaches

¹⁸⁵ *De Sac.* 2.5.1, Deferrari p. 279.

¹⁸⁶ Hugh's triads in *On the Three Days* do not always line up perfectly in this respect (cf. III.27.4), since wonder is also correlated with the first member of the triad, the implication being that fear is transformed into wonder. Yet, the wonder-struck pursuit of wisdom in response to creation's wisely structured natural beauties corresponds to our meditative burial, and so I also associate wonder, in Hugh's thought, with Holy Saturday.

¹⁸⁷ Of course, in Neoplatonic mysticism, there is always a way in which 'remaining' and 'returning' are the same objective migration of being, which the individual soul imitates subjectively.

¹⁸⁸ Coolman rightly directs attention to the way in which Hugh's project of re-formation mirrors the Paris-under-construction he lived and experienced.

¹⁸⁹ cf. *Noah's Ark* 1.1.4.

and offers – and what we track in this chapter – is re-construction of the soul through disciplined intellectual labor. The practice of trinitarian doctrine is, for Hugh, the intellectual path to understanding the union of all things, and all of history, with the LORD accomplished in the paschal mystery.

I below describe the practice of trinitarian doctrine as entailing various meditative practices, which themselves find their place within the spiritual life as a whole and in relation to Hugh's theological anthropology. Hence, this section progresses through some points I initially made in Part Two, Chapter 1. Yet here I offer a much expanded series of sections treating meditation. By far the most substantial part of this series on meditation is the sequence dealing with the three disciplines or styles of biblical exegesis: literal, allegorical – including the orientation in systematic theology Hugh calls the 'second foundation' – and tropological. Indeed, this biblical exegetical material is among the most famous and influential parts of Hugh's whole massive scholarly output, whether in his own time or today. St. Bonaventure's *On the Reduction of the Arts to Theology*, for one, displays a penetrating reception of Hugh's *Didascalicon*, as does the overall curriculum of the 13th century Parisian university itself. In the 20th century, giants Beryl Smalley and Henri de Lubac both proffered substantive and invested treatments of Hugh's exegetical thought in relation to their respective scholarly projects, and the early 21st century gives no evidence of diminishing interest in Hugh's exegesis: 2009-10 saw the publication of Franklin Harkins' *Reading and the Work of Restoration* and Boyd Taylor Coolman's *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor*, each of which engage and interpret this material. Moreover, Mary Carruthers, throughout the substantial erudition

she has displayed in her career, has shown an ongoing interest in Hugh's work on thinking and memory. My treatment below does not seek to supplant the relevance of these treatments and perspectives – though my appraisal of the contemporary relevance of Hugh's thought differs significantly from Smalley's – but this project does make the original contribution of interpreting Hugh's exegetical writings within the 'global' centrality of Trinity and paschal mystery to his thinking. This perspective, as it shapes and colors the material, is the principal original contribution this chapter makes to the study of Hugh's intellectual practice.

6.3.1 Knowledge, Divine Indwelling, and the Wisely Structured Soul

The divine union which comes to the human person through participation in the paschal mystery is, for Hugh, at once the Triune LORD's indwelling of the soul and the soul's responsive ascent to the height of divinity. The notion of structure – the structure of a soul patterned after divine Wisdom, and so whole and at one – is a signature feature of Hugh's thought about knowledge. "God dwells in the human heart after two modes – namely, by knowledge and by love" (*Noah's Ark* 1.1.5). He continues:

Yet these two are one abiding, for the double reason that everyone who knows Him loves Him, and that nobody can love Him without knowing Him. There seems, however, to be this difference between them, that knowledge erects the structure of faith by its knowing, whereas love like an adorning colour embellishes the building by its virtue. Each is thus seen to be essential to the other, for the building could not be glorious if it had never come to be, nor could it give delight were it not glorious. (ibid.)

Knowledge, here, is said to be a “builder”. In knowing the mysteries of faith, the theologian “erects the structure of faith”, which will be embellished by the wonderful colors of the virtues. One’s knowledge of the mysteries of faith is, for Hugh, a mode of the Triune LORD’s indwelling in the soul. This indwelling is *structural*: the soul increases in likeness to the structure of divine Wisdom, imitating and participating more and more by its increase in knowledge and structural similarity to the ineffable divine Wisdom.

Another significant theme in Hugh’s discussion above is the unity of knowing and loving God: everyone who truly knows God, everyone whose soul is patterned after divine Wisdom, loves God. Here we see the logical priority of knowledge to love in the human act of understanding: one cannot love what one does not know: one cannot love that of which there is no likeness in the human mind. At the same time, knowledge and love are each “essential to the other”: to know God is to love God and to love God is to know God.

The effect of knowledge of the LORD, for Hugh, is to structure the soul in the divine likeness. And yet, the one who increasingly bears such a structural similarity to the LORD longs, or, precisely, *hopes*, for something more. In *On the Sacraments*, Hugh “For the faithful soul is the true temple of God by the covenant of virtues which is built, as it were, by a kind of structure of spiritual stones, where faith makes the foundation, hope raises the building, charity imposes the finish” (*On the Sacraments* 2.5.1, Deferrari p. 279). For Hugh, one’s meditative work to understand truth structurally, we might say, and so to become oneself a temple of the LORD’s Wisdom, is in the hope of union with

God. Meditation, even here below, is ordered to contemplation. And this brings us to a consideration of the intellectual activities related to knowing: cogitation, meditation, and contemplation.

6.3.2 The Trinitarian-Paschal Triad of Intellectual Activity: Cogitation, Meditation, Contemplation

For Hugh there are, generally speaking, three degrees of intellectual activity or intensity by which one knows or pursues truth. These three correspond to the three days of the paschal mystery itself and also, though very imperfectly, reflect the Trinity. They are cogitation, meditation, and contemplation. These three were discussed at greater length in Part Two, Chapter 4. A brief recapitulation of them is adequate to our present purpose, which is first to point out that, as intellectual, this trio participates particularly in Holy Saturday, and second to lay the foundation for the in-depth discussion of meditation this chapter offers below.

To recapitulate, then: *cogitation*, of the three, is the least disciplined. Cogitation is the more or less free flow of thoughts and forms passing through one's mind. These originate in either sense perception or memory.¹⁹⁰ Cogitation refers to the state in which one observes, with minimal focus or reflective effort, the contents floating through one's stream of consciousness. *Meditation*, then, is more disciplined, more intentional thought which seeks to remove obscurities and penetrate to the truth. Meditation stands in a middle place between cogitation and contemplation. Meditation starts from the resources

¹⁹⁰ Coolman, *Hugh of St. Victor*, 166.

cogitation provides and pursues deeper truth through scrutiny, analysis, or other modes of thinking that seek to unravel it or get to the truth of it. Meditation also has other important functions – like structuring the self through systematic thinking, spiritual biblical interpretation, and helping the person ‘ascend’ to contemplative union with the LORD – and these will be discussed in greater detail below. *Contemplation* is the culminating, highest, and most intense and comprehensive kind of intellectual act of which humans are capable. It characterizes the life of humankind in Eden and, in an even better way, in the eschaton. Contemplation in the strict sense deals with a more unified intellectual sight or comprehension of the truth under consideration – ultimately, of the Triune LORD. Whereas meditation thrives in various styles of disciplined discursivity, contemplation transcends this discursivity toward a simple gaze at naked truth.

Of the three general types of intellectual activity, this chapter is most directly concerned with meditation. This is because most of the generative activities and practices of the theologian fall, for Hugh, within meditation. This is as true of writing a tract, teaching, preaching, imaginatively constructing a ‘mandala’ symbol which unifies self, world, and God, and of constructing a system of theology spanning from Trinity to eschaton as it is of silently reasoning toward the truth of some knotty problem in trinitarian theology. But meditation, for Hugh, is never for its own sake. Just as the *in se* life of the Trinity is fulfilled in the eternal procession of the Spirit, and as the paschal mystery culminates in the resurrection, and as history consequently culminates in the eschaton, so all meditation is ordered to its culmination in contemplation. Meditation, we

might say, makes one the sort of integrated person whose soul is thus disposed to contemplation.

6.3.3 Intellectual Life within Spirituality: Remembering, Meditating, and Loving God in All Things, Unto Contemplative Union

That all good intellectual activity, for Hugh, falls somewhere *within* spirituality, or within the human person's orientation to responsive and co-operative union with the Triune LORD, entails a comprehensive trinitarian and divine-unitive frame for the intellectual life. Intellectual activity is ordered to the actualization of contemplative union with the LORD. Contemplation is the state from which humankind, for Hugh, fell in the fall, and the eschatological state will be a state of contemplation of the divine goodness in excess of the goodness of Eden. The lot of fallen humans is to abusively love material things in ways that thwart our contemplative orientation, while the many sacraments patterned on the paschal mystery throughout history are the Trinity's medicine to nurture us back toward the level of virtue capable of sustained contemplation of the LORD. In this way, the LORD, for Hugh, makes all things serve the humankind's contemplative restoration and final salvation. He writes:

God is become everything to you, and God has made everything for you. He has made the dwelling, and is become your refuge. This one is all, and this all is one. It is the house of God, it is the city of the King, it is the body of Christ, it is the bride of the Lamb. It is the heaven, it is the sun, it is the moon, it is the morning star, the daybreak and the evening. It is the trumpet, it is the mountain, and the desert, and the promised land. It is the ship, it is the way across the sea. It is the net, the vine, the field. It is the ark, the barn, the stable, and the manger. It is the beast of burden, and it is the horse. It is the storehouse, the court, the wedding

chamber, the tower, the camp, the battle-front. It is the people, and the kingdom, and the priesthood. It is the flock and the shepherd, the sheep and the pastures. It is paradise, it is the garden, it is the palm, the rose, the lily. It is the fountain and the river; it is the door, it is the dove, it is the raiment, it is the pearl, it is the crown, it is the sceptre, and it is the throne. It is the table and the bread, it is the spouse, the mother, the daughter and the sister.

And, to sum it all up, it was for this, with a view to this, on account of this, that the whole of Scripture was made. For this, the Word was made flesh, God was made humble, man was made sublime. (*Noah's Ark* 1.1.6)

In this important passage, Hugh gives insight into the ways in which the divine indwelling of all things, the union of all things with God, the Scriptures with their wonderful imagery, and the Incarnation itself are theologically connected. Specifically, divine indwelling, the union of all things with God, and the Scriptures all follow upon the saving descent and ascent of the Incarnate Word – the culmination or nexus of which is the paschal mystery. Moreover, the act of creation itself seems to follow this incarnational logic and serve divine union, for “God is become everything to you, and God has made everything for you.” In ‘descending’ to the world – or assuming human nature into the person of the Word – the LORD inhabits a created nature in a way that can be symbolized by its various discernible likenesses with other created natures. Hence, particularly with the sending of the Spirit, all creation becomes in a drastically new way a polychromatic theater of divine self-manifestation. The Scriptures, from which Hugh culls a marvelous list of things allegorically manifesting the divine, are the key to reading the world sacramentally in relation to the incarnation and paschal mystery. With the assumption of human nature into the person of the Word, or the Passover of human nature into the Word made outwardly manifest in the paschal mystery, human nature is “made sublime” – and all creation is hence, for all who read the world aright, a self-

manifestation of the Triune LORD and an invitation to divine union, to ascent in and with Christ. That the symbols of Scripture can be allegorically interpreted means that the symbols of Scripture – and the things in the world – can all be of service in achieving divine union. Moreover, for the same reason all things can be helpful for structuring the soul in the likeness of divine Wisdom through knowledge. All things are subject to divine indwelling, and all are instruments of divine self-signification and self-manifestation, and all are created by the LORD according to the pattern of Wisdom which we are able, with their help, to recover. “God is become everything to you.... This One is all, and this all is One” (ibid.). For Hugh, Incarnation and paschal mystery are thus the ground of a doctrine of universal theophany, or something very like it. Hugh’s actual locution can even be heard as stronger than this, as affirming some sense in which God is all things and all things are God. Squaring this more literal hearing of Hugh’s locution with his overall theological perspective, while a prospect particularly suggestive in relation to the interpretation of the mandala symbols he constructs, yet relies on Neoplatonist inflected metaphysical outworkings which, if Hugh sees, he does not spell out.¹⁹¹ Yet at the very least what is suggested is a robust doctrine of the

¹⁹¹ Hugh’s claim, if heard in the stronger sense, would also have christological outworkings – or rather would be one. Stephen Clark quotes Hopkins (1981) after the latter’s engagement of Nicholas of Cusa: “Viewed as enfolded absolutely in God, each thing *is* God; for *there* it is not its finite self. Viewed as unfolded from God, no thing is God; for *here* it *is* its finite, contracted self and is said to participate in God rather than to be God” (Clark, 47). Clark then remarks, “That tension lies at the root of much religion...” (ibid.). Stephen R. L. Clark, *God, Religion & Reality* (Peterborough: Angelico, 2017). For a fascinating and sophisticated interpretation of the poet Dante along these lines – one which has provoked a movement toward a re-integration of literary, spiritual, metaphysical, and theological interpretations of the poet – see Chriantian Moevs, *The Metaphysics of Dante’s Comedy* (New York: Oxford, 2005). While Hugh does not have access to Maximus’ Logos-logoi theology, in which the Logos is identified with the creaturely logoi and vice versa, the way in which Hugh’s views, expressions, and unitive intuitions in this passage would cohere with Maximus’ is nonetheless interesting. Hugh can say, “This One is all, and this all is One” (*Hoc unum totum est, et totum hoc*

theophanic quality of all creation. And, in contrast to some modern and Reformed doctrines that privilege revelation and Scripture *against* any strong claim that the universe is theophanic as a whole and in each of its parts, for Hugh the universal theophany is itself biblically disclosed and interpreted. The privileging of Christian revelation in Christ and Scripture is precisely what makes the universe recognizably and universally theophanic to the spiritual interpreter of things. Finally, and relatedly, one must note that while creation is universally theophanic, for Hugh, it is so precisely because of the incarnation and paschal mystery: these name the universally relevant *enactment* of the Triune LORD opening a way for all things to pass over into God; and these name the master sacrament or mystery, the most intensive disclosure of divine form through created matter, through which all of the things created or “written” by the “finger of God” are re-cognized – that is, meditated – as sacramental (*On the Three Days* 1.4.3).

All the more, then, is God to be loved in and through all things. “God is become everything to you, and God has made everything for you.” The soul, for Hugh as for Augustine, is endowed with the triad of powers of memory, intellect, and will. For the person who remembers, understands, and loves all things as spiritually useful gifts and even self-manifestations of the Triune LORD who is unifying all things in the paschal mystery, all things – from mountains to donkeys, sunsets and seas to the morning star – are indeed invitations and roads to contemplative union with God. Moreover, the

unum est, Sicard p. 9), while Maximus writes in *Ambiguum* 7 that “the one Logos” is known “as many logoi” and “the many logoi are one Logos”. Maximus the Confessor, *On Difficulties in the Church Fathers: The Ambigua* vol. 1 ed., trans. Nicholas Constas (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2014), 95.

knowable structures of all these things, for Hugh, cannot but help one structure one's soul through knowledge as a temple of the divine indwelling. "Now, therefore," Hugh writes,

enter your own inmost heart, and make a dwelling-place for God. Make Him a temple, make Him a house, make Him a pavilion. Make Him an ark of the covenant, make Him an ark of the flood; no matter what you call it, it is all one house of God. (*Noah's Ark* 1.1.5)

The soul, remembering, meditating upon, and loving God through any of these structures, constructs itself through the knowledge of faith in such a way as to be indwelt by the One LORD as the "one house of God."

For Hugh, the whole spiritual life consists essentially in the actualization of the soul through this triad of remembering, meditating, and loving God in a way ordered to contemplative union. Moreover, the activity of remembering, meditating, and loving God actualizes the soul as a triadic likeness of the Triune LORD, yet one whose logical order unfolds in history rather than in eternity. Love, for Hugh, is the culmination of the actualization of the human soul in the way that the resurrection is the culmination of the enactment of the paschal mystery.

Now we pass, with greater specificity, into the intellectual life by beginning our analysis of meditation.

6.3.4 Meditating

Meditation, for Hugh, is the most typical style of theological thought-practice. It exists on the spectrum of intellectual intentionality above the more-or-less random level of cogitation, but below the fully unified intentionality of contemplation, which fixes its

loving gaze on the LORD by grace in imitation, like a returning ray of the LORD's own brightness. In its general and foundational contours, meditation was treated in Part Two, Chapter 4.

Meditation is “theological thinking.”¹⁹² It is probing, scrutinizing thought, extending light and pushing back the darkness. “Meditation is concentrated and judicious reconsideration of thought (*retractatio cogitationis*), that tries to unravel something complicated or scrutinizes something obscure to get at the truth of it” (*The Soul's Three Ways of Seeing*). It is thus concerned with “things that are obscure to the intelligence” (*ibid.*) – at least initially. These it tries to disentangle, dissolve, resolve, reduce. Meditation includes the activities of reflection and speculation, in which it seeks to fashion an idea in itself which accords with the structure of reality.¹⁹³ In this speculative or ‘constructive’ mode, which is to say in the mode in which it discerns the structure of reality within the Trinity, meditation includes a variety of styles of thought and engagement with God, self, world, and text – some of which receive further exposition below.

As a participation in Holy Saturday, meditation takes place as one is “buried” away from distractions and so practices a disciplined course of thinking, seeking to penetrate intellectually to the “buried” truth, and so to stand within the LORD's cascading illuminations. “Meditation”, Hugh writes, “is constant reflection with a purpose, which wisely searches out the cause and the origin, the mode [of being], and the

¹⁹² Lacoste, *From Theology to Theological Thinking*.

¹⁹³ cf. Dale M. Coulter, “Contemplation as ‘Speculation’: A Comparison of Boethius, Hugh of St. Victor, and Richard of St. Victor”, in E. Ann Matter & Lesley Smith, ed.s, *From Knowledge to Beatitude: St. Victor, Twelfth-Century Scholars, and Beyond: Essays in Honor of Grover A. Zinn, Jr.* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame, 2013), 204-28.

usefulness of each thing” (*Didascalicon* 3.10). And Hugh is not shy about extolling the pleasures of meditation. He writes:

If anyone learns to love it most intimately and to make time for it, meditation renders his life intensely pleasing and gives him the greatest comfort in times of tribulation. For it is especially meditation which removes the soul from the din of earthly activities and even in this life gives it a certain foretaste of the sweetness of eternal tranquility. And when, through the things that have been made, a person has learned to seek and understand Him who made them all, then he simultaneously instructs his mind with knowledge and drenches it with exuberant joy. For this reason there is the greatest delight in meditation. (*ibid.*)

Holy Saturday, for Hugh, is not the same as the joy of Easter Sunday or of the eschaton, and yet, even as it remains a time of waiting in darkness, of burial, as it were, Holy Saturday is a time both of intermittent tranquility and of growth in knowledge through the overcoming of ignorance. Meditation brings tranquility, as it seeks the Word as the Word lay in the tomb with the body of Christ, approximating and anticipating in some way the tranquility of eternity, of the Sabbath. Paradoxically, it seems, the intermittent tranquility discovered in meditation arrives in the course of the soul’s struggles for Truth and so for the eternally tranquil Sabbath. Meditation as a participation in Holy Saturday, then, is a practice of waiting, of intermittent struggle and tranquility, of the gradual overcoming of intellectual ignorance by intellectual light, and so of the foretaste of final victory.

Hugh teaches that the three objects of meditation are morals, commandments, and the divine works (*ibid.*). Through these it rises, or passes upward, toward contemplative union with the LORD.¹⁹⁴ The third category, the works of the LORD, is an all-inclusive category for Hugh, yet one weighted toward the trinitarian works of restoration: “The

¹⁹⁴ For Hugh’s use of passing upwards through death towards the life of divine union, see *Noah’s Ark* 1.1.9, CSMV p. 55.

work of God is what His power creates, what His wisdom governs, and what His grace accomplishes through cooperation [with humans]” (ibid.). And theological meditation is a habitual skill or discipline in which one can grow. “The more a person recognizes how worthy of admiration all these things are, the more diligently he habituates himself to meditating on the wonders of God” (ibid.). From meditation on the works of God, one rises to meditate on God.

Meditation is thus an intellectual activity which entails and enacts a kind of contemplative ascent to the LORD as Wisdom and as Beauty. We seek the LORD’s beauty in the beauties of created things, seek the LORD’s wisdom through the structure, movement, appearance, and qualities of finite created things, and so wisely put the LORD’s gifts to our own “spiritual use” (*On the Three Days* I.4.4). “Let us seek through the beauty of created things”, Hugh writes,

that beauty that is the most beautiful of all that is beautiful. It is so wonderful and ineffable that there can be no comparison between it and all transitory beauty even though the latter is a way to it. (I.4.5)

The *beauty* of creatures, for Hugh, is a “way” to the ineffable and infinite Beauty of the LORD, a path of ascent through meditation, which accords with the universal theophany of things discussed above in relation to the incarnation.¹⁹⁵

Having said even all of this, a still more precise theological analysis of the nature of meditation in Hugh’s theological practice is possible.

¹⁹⁵ cf. the third subheading of 6.3.6.2 titled “Beauty and Anagogy” below.

6.3.5 Meditation as the Receptive-Constructive Craft of Speculative Trinitarian Theology in History

This section is a brief but essential and precise elucidation of the nature of meditation in Hugh's theology. As mentioned above, one of the functions of meditation is 'speculation' or 'reflection' – both of which are English ways of naming the activity of meditation which emphasize the mind as ideally a kind of mirror of reality. The human works to clarify in her mind a structural likeness or reflection of the real. Coulter points this out and emphasizes the Boethian pedigree of Hugh's thinking in this regard.¹⁹⁶ Extending his insight in relation to the receptive-constructive character of Hugonian meditation yields a further rich line of insight. Moreover, the result is one which accords with St. Bonaventure's appreciation for Hugh as the paradigmatically *integrated* theologian. Hugh is a speculative theologian in such a way that speculation is not bifurcated against practicality. It is, for Hugh, by the intellectual construction of a *speculum* or mirror of the comprehensive trinitarian character of all reality that the soul, responsively loving the Triune LORD who indwells the soul by knowledge and love, is furthered in union with the LORD's own goodness.¹⁹⁷ Moreover, the *speculum* or mirror which the soul constructs – discussed above as the edifice of faith – has many names. As I have argued, the christocentric theophany is, for Hugh, ultimately universal in the books of creation and Scripture. All of the facts and forms of history, received and impressed

¹⁹⁶ Coulter, "Contemplation as "Speculation"", 210-17.

¹⁹⁷ cf. *On the Sacraments* 1.3.6, Deferrari p. 43.

into the memory, are at the service of the soul's structural edification in the likeness of Wisdom.¹⁹⁸

And so one builds the temple. Or the ark. Like a medieval craftsman practicing his craft, like a mason laying a foundation or an inkeeper brewing beer, one takes the contents of memory and fashions oneself, from them, into a house for the LORD's indwelling, and so actualizes oneself in the triadic Triune likeness. All of this to say, all of history, for Hugh, may be synthesized into the self in Hugh's theological practice. And, in this constructive synthesis, the self is synthesized into the unifying salvation the Triune LORD is enacting in the paschal mystery. And still history marches onward. And so the goodness of the available meditative synthesis continues to accumulate – the spires continue to go up – unto the all-exceeding eschatological likeness of the Triune LORD's full being, fulfilling the eternal goodness of God and the temporal goodness of mankind in the one infinity of the proceeding Spirit.

“If, then, we want to be saved, it behooves us to enter this ark. And, as I said before, we must build it within ourselves, so that we can live in it within ourselves” (*Noah's Ark* 1.1.11). “The form is one, though the matter is different, for that which is actualized in the wood is actualized also in the people, and that which is found in the heart is the same as that which is found in charity” (ibid.). For Hugh, the paschal mystery means that all things can be structural means of our Passover into the Word. This means that all things, and all of history, in all of its divisions and as a whole, furnish forms fitting for constructive theology, speculative theology, the practice of trinitarian doctrine

¹⁹⁸ In tandem with these reflections it is good to recall Zinn's important article on mandala symbolism.

in history. The practice of speculative theology, or of trinitarian doctrine, then, is a matter of cooperation with the grace of the LORD. Hugh seeks by this truth to inspire confidence in his students and readers, and give them courage in the great constructive, synthetic, and so speculative and contemplative endeavor. The LORD, he tells us, will be our teacher, our master craftsman:

You will build a house for the Lord your God *in and of yourself*. He will be the craftsman, your heart the site, your thoughts the materials. Do not take fright because of your own lack of skill; He who requires this of you is a skilful builder, and He chooses others to be builders too. We have learnt of many who were trained by Him from the testimony of Holy Scripture. He taught Noah to build the ark. He showed Moses the pattern on which he was to build the ark (of the covenant). He taught Bezaleel. He enlightened Solomon with wisdom, that he might build a temple to His name. Paul the apostle too became a builder, and many others whom it would take a long time to enumerate. And in any case no one was wise who had not learnt from Him, and no one remained unskilled who was fortunate enough to be His pupil. (*Noah's Ark* 1.4.1, p. 123)

The Triune LORD is the craftsman, who teaches pupils by the biblical pedagogy to be builders and workers, busy with meditation. As the Book of James exhorts us to ask the LORD for wisdom in confidence that it will be granted, so Hugh enjoins his apprentices to ask the LORD for instruction in the constructive and speculative endeavor. "Call upon Him, therefore, beg and beseech Him", Hugh writes, "that He may deign to teach you too. Call upon Him, love Him; for to call upon Him is to love Him. Love Him, therefore, and He Himself will come to you and teach you, as He has promised..." (*Noah's Ark* 1.4.1).

Our thoughts, as Hugh has said, will be our materials:

Let us therefore have right thoughts, let us have pure and profitable thoughts, for of such material we shall build our ark. These are the timbers that float when they are put into the water and burn when placed in the fire; for the tide of fleshly pleasures does not weigh down such thoughts, but the flame of charity enkindles them. Nor

should you fear to have this fire in your house – rather, woe betide you if your dwelling is not aflame with it. (*Noah's Ark* 1.2.1, pp. 73-4)

Right thoughts, Hugh teaches elsewhere, are like the dove which flies out of the ark and returns with the olive branch (*Noah's Ark* 1.2.6). Meditation, for Hugh, can fly freely over the receding flood, and can skillfully find the olive branch and return with it, and find in it, whatever it is, something in and through which to love the LORD ardently. In whatever it finds, it finds the reflection of God, whom it loves.

As shown in this section and those above, Scripture has an indispensable role within the trinitarian divine union project that is, for Hugh, the comprehensive content of theology. To the particular intellectual and, indeed, meditative disciplines that comprise biblical exegesis we now proceed.

6.3.6 History, Allegory, Tropology – Trinitarian Biblical Exegesis as a Paschal Triad¹⁹⁹

Hugh's exegetical theory is one of the best studied aspects of his thought, and yet the triad of senses of Scripture, or correlatively of biblical interpretive "disciplines" he identifies, has not been explored in relation to the Triune LORD's activity of re-forming humanity through participation in the three days of the paschal mystery. Accordingly, rather than offering an exhaustive treatment of his exegetical theory, which would in any case entail a much longer treatment in close engagement with the secondary literature, I will in this section canvas Hugh's teaching in order to show the way in which the

¹⁹⁹ *On the Sacraments* 1 Prologue 4, Deferrari p. 5.

intellectual activity of biblical interpretation is itself a participation in the paschal mystery, and so intrinsic to the activity of union with the Triune LORD.

Since an *intellectual* activity ordered to truth and resulting in the development of wisdom, biblical interpretation ‘fits’ within Holy Saturday. Broadly speaking, biblical exegesis, for Hugh, is a species of meditation by which the practitioner participates in the paschal mystery in light of the incarnation – it is an activity befitting the time after the Incarnation and Pentecost in the time prior to the eschaton. In its historical dimension exegesis is literal, and yet exegesis also contains two types of spiritual interpretation, styles of interpretation in a christologically normed and pneumatologically enabled key. The practice of theology through biblical interpretation is, for Hugh, one of the principal ways human persons responsively participate in the Triune LORD’s unifying acts in history. And, just as the transition from day to day, in *On the Three Days*, occasions a gradual increase in light which includes the light that has come before, so each of the successive disciplines of biblical interpretation, for Hugh, can be seen to increase light in a way that completes and fulfills the light shone by the previous discipline. Allegoresis, for Hugh, contains greater light than literal interpretation, yet it is the distinct light of literal interpretation that is increased, exceeded, and then included in allegoresis. This is equally true of the great love-light of tropology as respects the wise, structural, and transitional light of allegoresis. Thus, for Hugh, the progressing and ascending degrees of light in the three exegetical disciplines mirror, at once, the eternal triune perichoresis

and the three days of Christ's Passover.²⁰⁰ In this section, then, I will first show the way in which the three types of exegesis respectively 'fit' the three days of the paschal mystery. This is not something that Hugh anywhere says explicitly, yet it is entailed in the very center and fabric of his thought as explored through *On the Three Days*. Hence, my interpretations in this section often make connections about the texts I am interpreting which are not said at the literal level of Hugh's texts, but which are themselves rightly discerned by the, if I may put it this way, meditative activity of reading all things in relation to Trinity and paschal mystery as enjoined in *On the Three Days*. This is all to say, if my interpretations seem forced, it does not reflect (or at least does not only reflect) my inability to constrain myself to the actual words Hugh uses in the text immediately under consideration. It reflects rather my intention to bring into the stark light of day the implications of *On the Three Days* for our understanding of Hugh's exegetical and theological practice – a new contribution to the scholarship on Hugh which deserves to be made clearly and even starkly. The kinds of interpretations I make will seem obvious if one keeps the conclusion of *On the Three Days* in mind while reading all of the other texts I treat below.²⁰¹ In short, biblical interpretation, in this 'Hugonian' theological perspective, becomes a type of responsive human Passover in and with Jesus Christ.²⁰²

²⁰⁰ The effect of this is that Hugh, somewhat like his 13th century admirer St. Bonaventure, will offer a multiplication of threes within threes. Unlike Bonaventure's many triads, however, Hugh's 'threes within threes' continue to correlate not only with the three persons in God but also with the 'three days' of the paschal mystery.

²⁰¹ Conversely, my distinctively inflected exegesis of Hugh's triadic biblical interpretation is warranted because of the comprehensiveness of Coolman's and, especially, Harkins' treatment of Hugh's exegesis as normed by the *Didascalicon*.

²⁰² Calling exegesis a species of meditation indeed raises a textual difficulty, since Hugh in one place in the *Didascalicon* contrasts reading with meditation by saying that the *Didascalicon* is concerned with reading rather than with meditation. One could perhaps sustain this claim of the literal sense with regard to especially perspicuous passages, and maybe even with the allegorical and tropological

A glimpse of the way in which the three days of the paschal mystery correlate to the three senses of Scripture as well as to theological anthropology is possible through Hugh's *Noah's Ark*. Hugh here gives a dynamically integrated example of the way the literal sense of Scripture, when interpreted allegorically and tropologically, enlightens and sparks the love of the human person in his exegesis of Isa. 6:2's reference to "the Seraphim". He writes:

The two seraphim are the two covenants. And 'seraphim', which means 'burning', beautifully signifies Holy Scripture, which causes those whom it has first enlightened by knowledge afterward to burn mightily with love. For when it shows our heart what it should desire, it first enlightens it, and then makes it burn. It burns, therefore, because it causes burning, as it is elsewhere said to shine because it enlightens. (*Noah's Ark* 1.1.9, CSMV p. 54)

The interpretation of Holy Scripture, for Hugh, responds to the LORD's divine action and so reforms the human person in the triune likeness. Impressed upon the memory, the allegorical interpretation of Scripture enlightens the mind or heart, showing it "what it should desire". This spiritual vision is simultaneously a spark which causes the heart to catch fire and burn like the Seraphim themselves before the throne of God. Memory,

senses if one is offering interpretations of them that have been long passed into the tradition, and memorized, such that no intensive thought is required in order to offer them. Yet, to the extent that an intensely intentional activity of intellect is required in discovering a possible literal meaning of a passage, and all the more if one is involved in the discernment and scrutiny involved in offering prudent and elegant allegorical and tropological interpretations, these activities, for Hugh, should fall within meditation. (Coolman's monograph recognizes this by discussing allegoresis within his chapter on meditation practices. Coolman, *Hugh of St. Victor*, ch. 8 pp. 163-191.) A manifest example in Hugh's corpus of the way in which allegoresis rises into meditation is *On the Sacraments* itself: Hugh announces that this work is concerned to give the allegorical sense of Scripture, and yet in form it is an anticipation of the 13th century summa in comprehensive scope and meditative, scrutinizing, systematizing rigor. Hugh's work *On Meditation* is even clearer in establishing the intrinsic relationship of meditation and exegesis: "meditation on reading is a threefold examination according to history, allegory, and tropology" (2.3). Ergo, in treating exegesis as a particularly central gathering place for meditation practices within the practice of theology, I consider exegesis as including, but considerably transcending, mere reading. "Meditation", Hugh writes, "takes its beginning from reading, but is bound by none of its principles or precepts" (*Didascalicon* 3.10).

intellect, and will are thus unified in the seraphic act of “burning” with and for the LORD. Biblical interpretation, then, is part of our responsive passover into the Word within the incarnate Word’s own Passover. The literal sense of Scripture is impressed on our memory like the nails in Christ’s hands and the spear in his side, while the allegorical sense reveals how these memory-impressions are like *Christ’s* impressed hands and side. The discipline of allegoresis thus unveils to our intellects the trinitarian, christological, sacramental, and soteriological riches contained in the Scripture like the eternal life shining from the darkness of the tomb, in order that our will, aroused by the beauty of truth, may set the whole person afire with the love and joy of the Risen LORD. While love and knowledge are often closely interwoven in Hugh’s texts, I here will bring out especially the ‘knowledge’ aspects of the texts I treat, even while acknowledging the inner dynamism of meditation toward its fulfillment in love treated especially in the next chapter.

In the following subsections, then, I explore the three types of interpretation that constitute the Wisdom-begetting intellectual “Passover” of biblical interpretation. My primary source is Hugh’s own meditations in his *Didascalicon*. In the *Didascalicon*, Hugh speaks of biblical interpretation – and the way the soul is reformed *by* such interpretation – using the vivid metaphors or analogies of the construction of a building and musical performance on a lute.²⁰³ The metaphor of a building under construction connects with Hugh’s construction metaphors already described above: the self as temple, the self as ark, etc. Hugh’s own delineation of these three can serve as our transition:

²⁰³ Both of these have received deep treatments in Coolman, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor*, and Harkins, *Reading and the Work of Restoration*.

it is necessary that the reader of the divine writings carefully consider the order that is required in the disciplines – among history, allegory, and tropology – that is, which of these should precede the others in the order of reading. In doing so, it is not unprofitable to recall what we have seen in the construction of buildings, where the foundation is certainly laid first, then the superstructure is raised upon it, and finally, when this work has been completed, the house is painted with an exterior coat of color.²⁰⁴

We follow, then, Hugh's own suggested order in discussing the disciplines of exegesis.

6.3.6.1 Literal and Historical Interpretation

In the previous chapter (Chapter 5), on our responsive participation in Good Friday, I emphasized *memorization* of the literal sense of Scripture. The practitioner of trinitarian doctrine participates in the paschal mystery through the study of Scripture, initially, by the suffering labor of impressing on her memory the literal sense of Scripture, and so of the LORD's restoring acts and sacraments in history. This labor of impressing one's memory with the knowledge of history – akin to the nails pressed into the incarnate LORD's hands and feet – is a participation in Good Friday. Hugh's view that memorization of history is the beginning of participation in the paschal mystery also corresponds to his above quoted construction metaphor: just as the rough stones constitute the foundation which is the necessary precondition for the erection and decoration of a building, so the suffering of Good Friday is the entry into the paschal mystery. *Historia fundamentum est*, as Hugh says: memorization of history is fundamental or foundational for the subsequent acts of exegesis, and the corresponding construction or illumination of the soul through knowledge of truth.

²⁰⁴ *Didascalicon* 6.2, VTT 3 p. 164.

Exegesis, for Hugh, is receptive-constructive: Memory is (primarily) receptive, and intellect is constructive. Memorization of the literal sense is thus the act of receiving, of letting the LORD's mighty acts in the past be impressed upon one's soul through the LORD's scriptures, that is prerequisite for the constructive work of allegoresis, theological construction, doctrinal scrutiny, tropology, and other forms of constructive, synthetic, or comprehensive theological meditation.

Yet the value of the literal sense is not found exclusively in suffering its memorization. The literal sense also contains truth, as well as invitations and exhortations to love. The way in which love is taught in the literal sense will be addressed below, yet it is fitting to linger on the way in which the literal sense contains truth's illuminations, making wise the mind. In *Didascalicon* 3.8, Hugh is discussing the order of reading. He writes about the three levels of "the exposition of the text":

The exposition of a text takes place at three levels: the letter (*litteram*), the sense (*sensum*), and the meaning (*sententiam*). The letter is the suitable arrangement of words, which we also call grammatical construction. The sense is the simple and clear signification that the letter displays on the surface. The meaning is the deeper understanding that is discovered only through exposition and interpretation.²⁰⁵

The three levels of exposition here mentioned do not directly correspond to the three disciplines of interpretation (literal, allegorical, tropological). Yet, considering the three levels of exposition only with regard to literal or historical exegesis, we notice clearly that, insofar as the passage of Scripture is not one of the odd ones which can be given a suitable allegorical interpretation but no orthodox literal/historical interpretation, the literal/historical level of Scripture could contain all of these. For example, the "letter"

²⁰⁵ *Didascalicon* 3.8. cf. 6.8-11.

and “sense” of “God is love” (1 Jn. 4:8) are both relatively straightforward, and Christians receive that sense as true. The literal sense, then, is not only of value in forming the memory. Rather, the literal sense contains, for Hugh, the foundational truths and morals of the Christian faith. The literal sense too, in many places, illuminates the mind and draws one to love.²⁰⁶ What the literal sense does not do, however, is clarify all of the difficulties it raises or carefully arrange the truths it teaches into a comprehensive trinitarian synthesis of all reality. For such, some filing of the foundation stones, and arranging and building them into an elegant structure, is necessary. And this is the purview of meditation, and of allegoresis: the labor requisite to see truth.

One final note. Notice an implication of the above: at the literal level, the Scriptures do not show themselves to be perfectly unified. Hugh knows that his students see and feel this, just as have both Christian and pagan readers of the Bible throughout the centuries.²⁰⁷ The Triune LORD, who is unifying all things in the paschal mystery, discloses the intelligible unity of the Scriptures through the responsive human practice of trinitarian doctrine. The manifestation of the unity of the Scriptures within a trinitarian interpretation of reality is integral to the work of theology. This is to say that the Scriptures themselves become intelligible as a unified whole as their interpreters show how all of their constituent parts pass over into an interpretation of reality centered on the paschal mystery of the One who is the hypostatic unity of divine nature and created nature. For “[w]hat is more one than unity? What is one by unity is one to the highest degree” (*On the Sacraments*, 2.1.12). To recognize this fact is to recognize the unity of

²⁰⁶ *Noah's Ark* 1.1.9, CSMV p. 54

²⁰⁷ *Didascalicon* 6.3.

the Scriptures at their literal and historical level of interpretation is, in an important sense, hierarchically to transcend that level. The historical unity of Scripture is recognized through meditation and allegoresis. Hence, degree of divine light disclosed at the historical level pushes one upwards, as it were, to struggle for greater illumination at a level at which that greater illumination is possible.

Fittingly, then, we proceed to allegoresis.

6.3.6.2 Allegorical Interpretation

Allegory, for Hugh, is associated with the Second Person of the Trinity, with Truth, and with Wisdom. Allegory is thus an activity participant in the paschal mystery through Holy Saturday. Recall Hugh's aforementioned associations of Holy Saturday with meditation, contemplation, truth, and wisdom. Yet, one can tease out things still more suggestively: Holy Saturday, for Hugh, and as it is fulfilled by Easter Sunday, is a state of illumination in which one is illuminated by eschatological light, in hope, even as one sojourns in the tomb-like darkness of "this present evil age" (Gal. 1:4). Allegoresis depends on memory, which is foundational for allegory. Allegoresis, then, virtuosically constructs trinitarian theological interpretations of the literal sense of Scripture, and simultaneously re-constructs the exegete herself, upon and from the 'foundation stones' of the literal sense. "Scripture is clearly similar to a building because it too has a superstructure" (6.4), Hugh writes. Allegoresis is thus akin to meditation: when it goes right, it generates comprehensive trinitarian theological superstructures. These superstructures are the 'greater light' of Holy Saturday, completing and fulfilling the light

of the literal sense and Good Friday. These theological superstructures are the greater degree of illumination and perception of divine revelation for which one labors through meditation.

Yet the allegorizing exegete, having memorized the literal sense, does not start working on the highest peaks of the theological spires right away. The meditative ascent to the heights of wisdom is gradual. The initial step of allegoresis, which facilitates the transition from the literal sense to the heights of allegorical meditation, is a further intellectual formation of the exegete herself. Expanding on his construction metaphor, Hugh refers to this stage of theological formation as building the “second foundation.”

Forming the Capacity for Allegorical Exegesis – Constructing the “Second Foundation”

Hugh speaks of the “second foundation” in section 6.4 of his *Didascalicon*. The ‘second foundation’, for Hugh, refers to the principles of the major topics in theology – the first of which, of course, is the Trinity – as these are internalized by the exegete such that she is prepared to interpret Scripture and meditate on theological questions in an orthodox and coherent way. In short, the second foundation is basic systematic theological training. With a good theological formation, or ‘second foundation’, a theologian can craft a theological superstructure which can synthesize (in principle) any and all truth within itself. Here is how Hugh moves, from speaking of allegoresis in general, to introduce the necessity of the second foundation:

You remember, I think, that above I said that Sacred Scripture is like a building, wherein, after the foundation has been laid, the superstructure is raised upward.... I hope it will not be annoying, then, if we follow this analogy a little further. Consider the work of a mason. After laying the foundation, he extends a straight line in one direction, drops a plumbline, and then places his well-polished stones in a row (*in ordinem*). Next he searches for more and more stones, and if perhaps he finds ones that do not fit with the first row or course already laid, he takes his file,

cuts off the protrusions, smoothes the jagged edges, reduces them to a usable shape and size, and finally adds them to the other stones that he has already placed in rows or courses. If, however, the mason finds some stones that are so hard that they cannot be filed down and properly joined together, he does not use them lest, while trying to break or smooth the stones, he should accidentally break his file. (6.4)

As Hugh vividly describes the work of a mason who carefully builds on the foundation the very beginnings of the edifice, a kind of secure and carefully-fitted transition from foundation to superstructure, he has in mind the theological education of a biblical interpreter. “Pay attention!”, he writes:

The foundation is the ground, and it is not always constituted of smooth stones. The superstructure is built above the ground, and it requires level construction. So too the sacred page contains many things according to the literal sense that seem to be incompatible, sometimes even appearing to convey something nonsensical or impossible. But the spiritual sense admits no incompatibility; there can be many different spiritual meanings, but none can be opposed or contradictory. It is not without significance that the mason places the first rows or courses of stones to be established on the foundation along his extended straight line and that these stones support the remainder of the building and join it to the foundation. For this is, as it were, a certain second foundation and base of the entire superstructure. (ibid.)

One’s ‘second foundation’ is one’s theological education. If a theologian is to have speculative success, if she is to be gifted at meditating on the high spires of the mystery of the Trinity, she must have the core principles and axioms of trinitarian doctrine securely in place. These being securely fitted, she may be able to build her superstructure from the Scriptures, the fathers, and her own speculative acumen. But how does one acquire this theological education, and what is its content?

In terms of content, one’s theological formation, for Hugh, consists in the principles of the basic mysteries or sacraments (*sacramenta*) of the Christian faith. These run from Trinity to eschaton: the list Hugh gives emphasizes the historical texture of his

thought and includes the following: first, Trinity, because “God existed as three and one before every creature”; second, creation *ex nihilo*; third, sin and punishment; fourth, the sacraments of the natural law; fifth, the sacraments of the written law; sixth, the sacrament of the Incarnation of the Word; seventh, the sacraments of the New Testament; eighth and last, the sacrament of the resurrection of the human person. “Here is the whole of divinity” (ibid.), Hugh teaches. On Hugh’s construction analogy, each of these theological topics is a different “ordered course” of stones on which the educated theologian will be able to construct the heights of her “spiritual superstructure” (ibid.). As he tells his readers, “The foundations of history have already been established in you. Now it remains for you to secure the bases of the superstructure itself” (ibid.). To do this, the theologian-in-training, like a mason, must “extend [his] line, set it exactly, arrange the square stones in a row (*in ordinem*), and, moving around the perimeter of the foundation... establish the outline of the future walls. The extended line indicates the path of the orthodox faith. The very bases of the spiritual edifice are certain principles of faith by which you enter into its mysteries” (ibid.).

The theological education or “second foundation” of which Hugh speaks is ideally acquired, not only from the many books of the church fathers, but from wise and skilled practicing theologians. “You must seek to obtain this introduction”, Hugh writes, “from teachers and the wise, who can explain allegorical exegesis to you in a way that is useful by having recourse to the authority of the holy Fathers and to the testimonies of Scripture itself” (ibid.). With such a formation at the hands of a master theological craftsman or mason, the student then becomes herself at length a theological master, able

to erect from the Scriptures and tradition a spiritual-theological superstructure. The practice enjoined by Hugh is not simply an abstract *scientia*, but involves at every step also a kind of practical wisdom, a kind of judgment akin to *phronesis* or *prudentia*. He suggests that “allegorical reading requires not a slow and listless intelligence but rather a lively mental capacity, which comprehends subtlety and nuance when investigating to such a degree that it does not abandon sound judgment when making distinctions. This is solid food, and if it is not chewed thoroughly it cannot be swallowed” (ibid.). In the terms of the later scholastic debate, sacred doctrine, for Hugh, is most comprehensively a form of wisdom.

Theologically educated and formed, the practitioner of theology has gained three capacities which enable her to engage the Scriptures as well as the wisdom and opinions received in the tradition while making progress in her own theological construction. These correspond to the clear, the ambiguous, and the obscure in the received writings. When one encounters a clear statement or insight which fits easily within her superstructure atop the second foundation, one adds it in synthetically to one’s own edifice. When the theologian encounters an ambiguous statement in the received writings, she interprets it so that it fits. When she encounters an obscure statement, she explains it as best as she is able, or leaves it aside without prejudice against it. Hugh’s teaching thus suggests three virtues or capacities habituated in well-formed theologians: the capacity for synthesis, the capacity for subtle interpretation aimed at harmony, and the capacity for good judgment in what to interpret at all.

In sum, for Hugh, the second foundation is sound and systematic theological education, an immersion and formation at the hands of a master in the orthodox faith of the Church's fathers and mothers and doctors. The second foundation is thus transitional: part of the superstructure, within the allegorical discipline of exegesis as it hands on the essence of the Church's meditation on Scripture within her trinitarian interpretation of all reality, the second foundation is nonetheless seamlessly fitted to the rocky ground of the literal and historical sense of Scripture. And indeed, one's acquisition of the second foundation is simultaneously a participation in Good Friday and Holy Saturday, simultaneously the work (*laborem*) of memorization and the intellectual formation of judgment and interpretive capacity.

Last, the intrinsically educational and traditional – in the sense of receiving the wisdom that is handed on – function of the formation of the second foundation means that it also connects to the topic of doctrinal development, which will be taken up in passing in the next chapter.²⁰⁸ A formation such as Hugh desires will result in practitioners of trinitarian doctrine who are grounded and aspire upward toward “the whole of divinity” (*Didascalicon* 6.4).

²⁰⁸ Hugh's thought offers tantalizing vistas from which to ponder what a 'Hugonian' theology of doctrinal development might entail, yet constructively developing it in anything like the way it deserves is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Moreover, because doctrinal development involves not only the structural feature of doctrine, which Hugh would regard in relation to divine Wisdom, and which would fit into the purview of the present chapter, but also and inextricably involves consideration of the Church's *in melius* progress in goodness toward the eschaton, and the supervening guidance of the Holy Spirit, I find I am constrained to push even my passing treatment of this topic to the next chapter, which, in its 'cumulative' aspect, can retain attention to things 'structural.'

Allegorical Exegesis as Receptive-Constructive Interpretive Practice, Normed and Formed by the Paschal Mystery

Allegorical exegesis, for Hugh, is receptive-constructive. The way in which this is the case is most easily shown by commenting on an example. In *On Sacred Scripture and its Authors*, Hugh himself gives an example of allegorical exegesis, and with explanation. Taking the figure of Job as his example, Hugh writes, beginning with his biblical quotation:

There was a man in the land of Us named Job, who first was rich but came to such misery that, sitting on a dung heap, he scratched even his healthy body with a potsherd. The historical sense is clear. Let us now come to allegory, in which we consider by the things that are signified by the words other things to be signified, and by one fact another fact. Job, whose name means “mourning,” signifies Christ, who first was coequal with the Father in the richness of His glory, but descended to our misery and sat humbled on the dung heap of this world, sharing all the defects that we have on account of sin. (3)

The literal sense of this verse, for Hugh, points to the fact of there having once lived a man named Job who went from riches to rags. Allegoresis, for Hugh, is the way in which the fact of Job points forward to a different fact, a fact which is in fact one of the ordered courses of stones which comprise part of the second foundation and so a wall or spire of the theological superstructure, to wit, the Incarnation of the Word. By giving a vivid and subtle interpretation, Hugh discloses an elegant structural ‘fit’ between Job’s descent from riches to a dung heap and the LORD’s own compassionate descent from *forma dei* to the dung heap of our sinful world, a humble descent ordered to enfold, re-order, and redeem us. Through Hugh’s allegorical interpretation of Scripture, then, several things happen. First, Hugh shows the elegant continuity and so unity of the restoring work of the Triune LORD throughout history. Second, Hugh displays the unity of the Scriptures themselves. Taken on its own, Job appears within the series of biblical books as difficult

to coordinate historically, etc., yet Hugh is able through allegoresis to show the way in which a seemingly disconnected story in fact contains material of central importance “for us and for our salvation.” Third, relatedly, Hugh adds to his own superstructure of trinitarian doctrine. Fourth, Hugh is himself re-formed in some measure in the image of Triune Wisdom through his new understanding – doctrinal understanding, for Hugh, reforms and unifies the soul of the one who understands as an act responsive to and imitative of the eternal act of the Triune LORD. There is a measure of illumination, and a step of meditative ascent, implicit in every skillful act of allegorical exegesis, since one discerns the union of creation with the Triune LORD accomplished through the LORD’s historical acts.

And here is the key point: all four of these effects of Hugh’s allegoresis are rightly regarded as *constructive*. On the basis of a bit of historical narrative known through Scripture, i.e., Job, Hugh constructs a connection between Job and Christ, participates in his own re-construction, and shows how “all these things” can fit within the temple of the LORD. And, in all of this, one comes into greater contact with the unity of truth, with divine Wisdom, with the gathering of all history, Ark-like in the Flood of the mundane, within Christ’s embrace – an image Hugh would draw and describe. Moreover, it is significant to notice Hugh’s persistent emphasis on order as he discusses allegoresis.²⁰⁹ The second foundation is formed of “ordered courses” – and this has the effect of norming all allegorical exegesis by the “sacraments” or “mysteries” of the faith. As I have shown in relation to *On the Three Days*, the most normative of these

²⁰⁹ Hugh’s persistent attention to ‘order’ is one of the emphases of Franklin Harkins’ work on Hugh and is a significant exemplification of Hugh’s status as “second Augustine.”

mysteries are the Trinity and the Incarnate Son's Passover. It is the Triune LORD's unification of all things in the paschal mystery that is the *forma formans non normata*, and so the norm and deep pattern of all sacramentality and allegoresis is christological. Allegoresis is, in all of these ways, connected to the illumination and wisdom of Holy Saturday. Allegoresis participates in and discloses the light buried, hidden, inside the tomb.

Moreover, the increased degree of divine illumination perceived and received through allegoresis itself inclines one to still greater and more luminous interpretive beauties – those of tropology. But, before ascending to Hugh's tropological meditations, we consider briefly the way in which, through the discipline of Scripture, the interpreter becomes capable of interpreting the beauties of the world themselves as pathways up to God.

Beauty and Anagogy: Hugh's Wisdom-perceiving Exegesis of Creation's Forms as Heightened Christoformic Allegoresis

It has been established by Coolman that it is the pedagogy of Scripture, in Hugh's thought, which allows the world to be seen sacramentally, and so to be soteriologically useful for human re-formation in the divine likeness.²¹⁰ What I would like to offer in this section, then, is twofold. First, I would like to suggest a certain systematic understanding, along the line of sight I have been developing in this project, for understanding this feature of Hugh's theology. Second, I give a brief reading of some of the sections of the first part of *On the Three Days* which accords with the systematization I have offered by observing the ways in which the beauty of things, contemplatively

²¹⁰ Coolman, "Pulchrum Esse."

meditated, takes Hugh (and his reader) to God. To be precise, Hugh's exegesis of creation is anagogical.²¹¹ Anagogical meditation of the divine Wisdom is, for Hugh, the wonder-induced Christian response to the perception of beauty.

First, the systematic understanding. The systematic move I suggest is that Christ himself, in his own Passover and thence as the normative historical form of divine Wisdom, *is* the revelation of divine Wisdom in the world that allows all the other beautiful proportions and structures in the world to be disclosed in their true identities, as theophanic calls from and paths to God.²¹² While so far as I know this has not been previously argued, I take it as noncontroversial if one accepts my main claim about the paschal mystery and human re-formation. To recapitulate: Coolman has shown that salvation, in Hugh, happens by human re-formation in Wisdom, and also that Christ is the form of Wisdom in history. Moreover, as already noted, Coolman has shown that Scripture is the key to reading nature aright. I have argued, then, that *On the Three Days* shows us that re-formation in Christ is, and essentially entails, spiritual participation in the three days of the paschal mystery. Moreover, I have argued that the paschal mystery is the *forma formans non normata et non formata*, the central revelational and re-formational form for all the sacraments and in all the world. It follows rather directly from this cluster of claims that it is precisely the divine form revealed historically in the paschal mystery which makes all of the other forms of creation appear as manifestations of, invitations from, and roads to the Triune LORD. Indeed, this claim can even be seen

²¹¹ "Allegory is, as it were, "other-speech" because one thing is said and another is meant. It is divided into simple allegory and anagogy.... Anagogy is a certain leading upward, when an invisible fact is indicated by another invisible fact." *On Sacred Scripture and its Authors* 3, VTT 3 p. 215.

²¹² *Noah's Ark* 1.6, CSMV p. 51; *On the Three Days* I.

to be entailed in the literary structure of *On the Three Days* as a whole. If, as has been suggested and here endorsed, *On the Three Days* is a repeatable outline, exemplifying a spiritual exercise meant to be actually and personally engaged by Hugh's readers unto their own spiritual re-formation (see my Part II Chapter 4 above), then the anagogies from the beautiful contours of the world early in *On the Three Days* flow from the text's 'paschal mystery finale' as much as they lead to it. It is precisely participation in the paschal mystery – i.e., that human re-formation which Scripture makes available and facilitates – which re-orders the human person such that the beauty of the world is useful for divine union rather than an enslaving distraction and temptation.²¹³

And this leads to my second task: offering a reading of relevant portion of *On the Three Days*. Coolman has offered a deep and systematic exploration of the trinitarian theological aesthetics of this text as it relates to the text's soteriology.²¹⁴ After a brief characterization of the relevant section of text I will, rather than reproducing my agreements with Coolman, bring out some features of Hugh's text which Coolman does not emphasize in order to bring out in Hugh's texts the systematic point I have identified above: the paschal mystery, including the cross, as theophanic *forma formans non normata et non formata*, shapes the spiritual exercise by which Hugh sees creation anagogically as much as the experience of the world shapes Hugh's understanding of cross and paschal mystery.

²¹³ Contrast the beginning of *On the Three Days* with this quotation from *Noah's Ark* 4.17: "Therefore this world is cursed in Holy Scripture and called the enemy of God, not because the world is evil in itself, but because the beauty of the world leads souls astray." Beauty either drags down or lifts up, depending on the spiritual state and disposition with which one beholds it.

²¹⁴ Coolman, "'In Whom I Am Well Pleased': Hugh of St. Victor's Trinitarian Aesthetics", *Pro Ecclesia* 23 no. 3.

In *On the Three Days* I.4.1, Hugh commences discoursing on the ways in which the beauty of creatures manifests divine wisdom. He writes,

In extremely many and varied ways, the beauty (*pulchritudo*) of creatures is perfect, but there are four in which all their beauty (*decor*) principally consists; that is, in structure (*situ*), motion (*motu*), appearance (*specie*), and quality (*qualitate*). If anyone were up to investigating these, he would discover the wondrous (*mirabilem*) light of God's wisdom in them. (*On the Three Days* I.4.1)

The light of divine wisdom is reflected in the structures of things, shimmers in their motion, shines through their appearance or *species*, and discloses its texture in their various sensible qualities. The “wondrous” (*mirabilem*) light of divine wisdom in them elicits wonder/admiration (*admirationem*):

Would that I could examine these as subtly, and tell of their beauty as ably as I am able to love them ardently! I find it very delightful that it is so very pleasant (*dulce*) and agreeable to treat frequently of these matters where simultaneously sensation is instructed by reason and the mind (*animus*) delighted with sweetness, and feeling aroused to affection (*affectus*) so that stunned (*stupentes*) and admiring (*admirantes*) we shout with the psalmist: “*How magnificent are your works, O Lord! You have made everything in wisdom....*” (III.4.2)

What is here most relevant in the wonder or admiration that is the subjective *affectus* responsive to the manifestation of divine Wisdom in created beauty depends upon the beholder's “aesthetic literacy”, as Coolman aptly terms it.²¹⁵ That is, Coolman points out that the human person's ability to recognize divine wisdom in beauty – and so to follow it anagogically – depends on the person's own reformation in the divine Wisdom. Coolman attends to the way in which this reformation depends on the mediation of Christ, but not to the way in which the norming theophany of divine wisdom in the paschal mystery itself norms the sacramental quality subsequently disclosed in the world's beauty.

²¹⁵ Coolman, “In Whom I Am Well Pleased”, 348.

A few quotations serve to bring this out: in the first two, the discernment is, admittedly, a subtle one. Doxologically marveling at the structure of things, Hugh writes,

if you gaze at the structure of the universe, you will find that the composition of all things is perfect because of wonderful thought and wisdom. How apt, fitting, seemly, how complete in all its parts! In it not only do similar things (*similia*) serve (*seruant*) concord (concordiam), but also diverse (*diuersa*) and incompatible (*repugnantia*) things, which have come into existence by the Creator's power at the command of wisdom, come together (*conueniunt*) in some way in one (*unam*) friendship (*amiciciam*) and federation (*federationem*) (I.4.7, translation amended).

Here Hugh brings out the way in which, by the providences of divine Wisdom, diverse and repugnant things ultimately “serve concord” no less than similar things. Apparently repugnant opposites even serve the unity of the whole by a kind of friendship or confederation. Hugh's immediate examples are, first, fire and water, and second, the dissimilar parts of the human body. Yet Hugh's text is headed, ultimately, to the paschal mystery in which fear is made to serve love and sin is made to serve goodness, and it is right to bear this in mind when wondering at the world. Divine Wisdom is perfectly one and simple, and gives rise, within the world's overarching harmony, to great diversity and even things that seem incompatible, repugnant to each other.²¹⁶ All of these apparent

²¹⁶ Hugh's attention to the way in which even contrary and incompatible things both abide in the unity of a surpassing harmony is redolent of Eryximachus' ode to Eros in Plato's *Symposium*. Eryximachus, a doctor, takes for examples (1) the whole of nature (like Hugh), (2) the human body (like Hugh, and owing to Eryximachus' medical vocation), and (3) music – and this last in terms not all that dissimilar to Hugh's rich analogy between music and Sacred Scripture in *Didascalicon* 5.2. Notice, in connection with Hugh's interest in “wonder”, Eryximachus' claim that Eros in all nature is “awe inspiring” (*thaumastos*): “Eros... is found also in nature – in the physical life of all animals, in plants that grow in the ground, and in virtually all living organisms. My conclusion is that he is great and awe-inspiring, this god, and that his influence is unbounded, both in the human realm and in the divine.... The doctor... must be able to reconcile and harmonise the most disparate elements in the body. By ‘the most disparate’ I mean those most opposed to one another – cold and hot, bitter and sweet, dry and wet, and so forth. It was by knowing how to produce mutual desire and harmony among these that our forerunner Asclepius, as the poets say (and I believe) established this art of ours...”; and Eryximachus proceeds then into discussing music. Plato, *Symposium*, Tom Griffith, trans. (Berkeley: University of California), 186a-187. For Hugh, the greatest and normative harmonization

incompatibilities, made drastic and jagged by sin, are yet unified again, becoming one in the paschal mystery's unification and re-formation of all things in Christ – divine Wisdom incarnate, high and low. The result, in the world as eventually in the eschaton, is that divine Wisdom *in unum redactorum concordia unum in omnibus armoniam facit*.²¹⁷

The perceptible texture or form of the paschal mystery in the changing beauty of the world increases gradually when Hugh discusses “The Disposition of Times.”²¹⁸ He writes first of day and night and second of seasons. He writes:

Who can admire sufficiently the wondrous rationale (*mira ratione*) by which divine providence distinguishes the courses of time? Notice that after night comes day so that the movement of working (*laborem*) may exercise (*exerceat*) the drowsy (*torpentes*). After day comes night, so that rest may recue the exhausted to revivify them.... (I.6.1, translation amended)

The language of work, sleep, and revivification is intrinsic, for Hugh later in *On the Three Days* as for Scripture, to both the paschal mystery and our re-forming participation in it.

Moving to seasons, Hugh says:

just as the alternation of days and nights renews (*renouat*) living things, so the four seasons of the year, which succeed one another in order, change the face (*speciem*) of the whole world. First, through the gentle warming of spring the earth is reborn in a kind of renewal (*quadam innouatione mundus nascitur*). Then, through the heat of summer it receives youthful strength. After this, when autumn follows, it reaches maturity. Then, when winter follows, it turns toward decline. However, it

of contrary opposites is the paschal mystery. One could go on to claim, constructively, that Christ's Passover is the determinative and central theophany of divine Eros in the world. Of course, in Hugh's triadic scheme, Eros – our rising in desire of eternal things – is associated with the third and culminating day (the resurrection) rather than with the middle, structural day, and so adverting to Eryximachus and Eros in this chapter introduces a tension in Hugh's thought. Yet even this is not a contradiction, for Hugh holds that the third day reveals the LORD most fully, and so reveals the hidden actor in the whole process of history – and the individual's – re-formation in charity. Ergo, Eros, which Hugh would associate with the Holy Spirit, is equally the divine worker in the surpassing harmonies of nature. Love, as Hugh has said, is the reason for creation.

²¹⁷ *De trib.* I.4.7.

²¹⁸ *De trib.* I.6.1-3.

always declines so that it can always be renewed (*renouari*) after its decline, for unless old things first deteriorated from their condition (as if they were occupying a certain space), new things (*noua*) could not arise (*exurgere*). (I.6.2)

While observing the ‘life cycle of the seasons’ is by no means an exclusively Christian purview, it would be a mistake to think that Hugh would not relish the christological resonances of the seasons’ perpetual renewal of the face of the earth (cf. Vulgate Ps. 103:30). It is because of Christ, and their fit with him, that the seasonal changes become a path to divine Wisdom, invisibly above as theophanically below. “The seasons themselves, by the immutable law of their changeableness” (I.6.3), tell of the saving work of God in Christ.

The forming influence of the paschal mystery in Hugh’s anagogical meditation on creation comes fully into the open, finally, when he is discussing color. Appropriately enough for our eco-theological age, Hugh’s favorite color is green. His wonder and admiration at beholding the colors is tangible to his reader:

Behold the earth wreathed with flowers! What a pleasing show it puts on, how it delights the eyes; how it arouses feeling (*affectum prouocat*)! We see blushing roses (*rubentes rosas*), white lilies (*candida lilia*), purple violets (*purpureas uiolas*). Not only do they look wonderful, but their origin is also wonderful – how God’s wisdom produces such beauty from the dust of the earth. Finally, there is green, the most beautiful of all (*Postremo super omne pulcrum uiride*). How it enraptures (*rapit*) the minds (*animos*) of those who see it, when in a truly new way shoots come forth with new life and standing up in their stalks, which seemed to have been trodden down by death, bud forth together into the light (*in lucem*) in a symbol (*imaginem*) of the future resurrection (*futurae resurrectionis*).

Green dawns on Hugh’s mind as an eschatological foretaste with bright force of Christ’s resurrection. This is no merely Romantic or Hegelian-poetic nature mysticism. Hugh, like “[t]he man who bore the stigmata on Mount Alverno, in conformity with the cross of

Christ, was certainly not a distant precursor of Walt Whitman”.²¹⁹ The new life of spring is an image, symbol, icon (*imaginem*) of the future resurrection of all things participant in Christ – and the converse is not equally the case. The world as sacramental figures Christ, whose paschal mystery is the unveiling of the form that makes humanly perceptible the divine Wisdom which elicits anagogy-inducing rapture.

6.3.6.3 Moral or Tropological Interpretation

If allegoresis illuminates the mind in a way that participates in Holy Saturday, the soul-illuminating work of tropological exegesis bids the interpreter into the reality of Easter Sunday. This kind of interpretation summons the interpreter or hearer to *rise* and love God and neighbor. Pneumatologically driven, tropology seeks to *inspire* good works in cooperation with the Spirit of Love. As summons to love, tropology is in a way the terminus of the exegetical programme, in a way that reflects the way in which the Spirit is the eternal fulfillment of the Triune life.²²⁰ The one who interprets Scripture tropologically thus derives the fullness of *goodness* from Scripture, opening the sacred page to its full usefulness in uniting the soul to God and in uniting the human family through good works. More – the theologian who interprets tropologically an episode of past history glimpses the way in which that episode is a shadow of the consummate brightness of the eschaton. Indeed, the Spirit’s work in history, recorded in the Spirit’s inspiration of the record of that work in Scripture, is always ordered toward humankind’s

²¹⁹ Chrétien, *The Ark of Speech*, 140.

²²⁰ De Lubac noticed the way in which Hugh’s own exegetical interests are noticeably weighted towards tropology. This study corroborates De Lubac’s observation rather categorically: Hugh’s theology is systematically weighted toward the third and culminating term of each of his triads, and this is often (though not always) borne out in the way he divides his attention as a writer.

ordering toward the eschatological goodness that is history's goal. When a theologian interprets scripture tropologically, she taps into what Coolman calls the "pneumatic finality of goodness" – and so of Scripture and of history. Notice that in treating tropological interpretation, the hope and longing for consummation intrinsic, for Hugh, to all intellectual work and meditation comes to a fever pitch. One's interpretations of biblical phenomena here disclose a light which bids not only to be intellectually or structurally seen, but to be willfully enacted in works of love. The illumination of the intellect in allegoresis pulls one into the still-greater interpretive light of tropology, just as the meditative illumination of the intellect achieved in Holy Saturday causes one to hope and pant longingly *upwards* for divine union and eschatological union with God and draws one simultaneously *downwards* and *outwards* into acts of love toward one's neighbors. The higher one ascends intellectually, the more difficult (and artificial) it is to keep knowledge and love apart – and yet they are really still kept apart, in painful degree, as one longs for the luminous perception and loving fulfillment of oneself and all things in the all illuminating eschaton. Meditative exegesis ultimately accentuates, rather than dissolves, the tension of the 'already' and the 'not yet.'

The logic by which Hugh grounds tropology is, in the *Didascalicon*, succinct. He first writes, "By contemplating what God has done, we realize what we ought to do" (6.5). Hugh's emphasis on divine action is significant. The sacraments of the Triune LORD in history are, first of all, instances of and witnesses to the LORD's re-forming, restoring, unifying work in creation. Moreover, just as the procession of the Spirit in God is not a supersession of the logically prior generation of the Word, so the

‘pneumatological’ moment of tropology does not supersede, but rather completes and fulfills, the ‘christological’ and ‘structural’ moment of allegoresis. To use Hugh’s own favored analogy, tropological interpretation is the colorful and tasteful decoration of the theological superstructure.

Hugh continues, “Every nature speaks of God, every nature teaches the human person, every nature reproduces reason, and nothing in the universe is unfruitful” (ibid.). Here, as Harkins observes, Hugh goes back behind Scripture to nature itself, the book of creation.²²¹ As seen in *On the Three Days* (and the immediately preceding subsection of this chapter, “Beauty and Anagogy”), created natures themselves point to their Creator, and so are provided for our spiritual utility, that we might know the Wisdom of the LORD. As Coolman argues, it is Scripture that is the ‘lens’ through which fallen persons are trained (or re-ordered) to read creation aright and discover it as a path to the LORD. Hugh’s point, then, is that the whole created world, once one has learned to read it through Scripture, gives itself as a source of mental illumination, a call to rise into the joy of the LORD. And this call is not only, as discussed above, an anagogical summons, but is always ever a moral summons in the present. Tropological exegesis of text and world is the summons to continue and persevere in love.

A fantastic example of Hugonian tropology, where this emphasis on love and persistence is brought out, is Hugh’s exegesis of the dimensions of Noah’s ark. He writes:

But to speak now of tropology, whoever makes it his endeavor to cut himself off from the enjoyment of this world and cultivate the virtues, must with the assistance

²²¹ *Interpretation of Scripture: Theory*, p. 199 n 322.

of God's grace erect within himself a building of virtues three hundred cubits long in faith of Holy Trinity, fifty cubits wide in charity, and thirty cubits high in the hope that is in Christ, a building long in good works and wide in love and lofty in desire, so that his heart may be where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Wherefore He also had His head placed high upon the cross when He was crucified, but His hands were stretched across its width, that our hearts' love might reach even to include our enemies. The body of the Crucified was placed lengthways upon the cross, that our actions may not be half-hearted but fervent and persistent to the end. (*Noah's Ark* 1.1.18)

The dimensions of the ark are, initially, a summons to cultivate the virtues of faith, hope, and love, to shape ourselves inwardly according to the spiritual dimensions of virtue which unite the soul to God, come what may in the flood outside. The result of faith, hope, and love is that our "heart" is in Christ's presence at the right hand of God – in short, that we are within the life of the Trinity as the life of the Trinity is within our hearts. The virtues facilitate the divine indwelling. In the middle of his tropology, however, Hugh virtuosically modulates into another set of height-width-length dimensions, this time with respect to Christ's crucifixion. The first series, on the ark, went length, width, height – and here Hugh takes these in reverse, beginning with the height of Christ's head upon the cross. 'Height' thus forms the hinge or pivot by which Hugh moves from the life of the Trinity *in se* in which we spiritually participate, hearts raised high, to the height of Christ's head on the cross. This tropology, in miniature, matches the whole movement of *On the Three Days*: from the world up into the inner life of the Trinity, and from Trinity downward into paschal mystery. Hugh interprets the width of Christ's arms on the cross as a summons to include our enemies in our love – to be, like the crucified LORD, all-embracing. Christ's fixation on the cross "lengthways" becomes an exhortation that we persist in goodness to the end.

6.3.6.4 The Spiritual Music of Scripture

Hugh's tropological interpretation is at once remarkably free and theologically ordered in discernible ways. The ordered courses of Trinity and christology are the norming structures through which Hugh, starting from the dimensions of the ark, invites us to divine union. Music is a discipline which, like ballet and other performance arts, rewards relentlessly disciplined practice with the ability to improvise with excellence and spontaneity. As with many of the most gifted medieval exegetes and rhetoricians – again, Hugh's imitator St. Bonaventure comes to mind – Hugh's well-stocked memory and disciplined mind make the comparison to musical performance an apt one. Coolman's discussion of Hugh's analogy in *Didascalicon* 5.2 of the strings and box of the zither captures the rich suggestiveness of Hugh's exegetical theory and practice.²²² One can discern Hugh's divine unitive concern through his analogy. The box of the zither, which represents the literal sense, and the strings, which represent the spiritual senses, all make music, resonating sonorously together. The instrument, a composite thing, yet makes music as one thing, producing in its composition a harmony of song. He writes:

in an extraordinary way all of Sacred Scripture has been so suitably prepared and arranged in all its parts through the wisdom of God that everything that is contained in it either, in the manner of strings, resounds with the sweetness of spiritual understanding, or – containing signs of sacred mysteries scattered throughout historical narratives and passages that seem entirely literal, and joining them together as one, in the same way that the hollowed-out wooden soundbox of the zither unites the strings that are stretched over it – it receives the sound of the strings into itself and returns it sweeter still to the ears of its hearers.... (5.2)

Hugh attributes the unified diversity of Scripture's arrangement to the Wisdom of God, just as *On the Three Days* emphasizes the divine Wisdom as the source of the same in the

²²² Coolman, "Pulchrum Esse", 186-89.

whole creation. Playing as one, the scriptures illumine with the music of “spiritual understanding”. The type of illumination Scripture provides, for Hugh, culminates pneumatologically in divine goodness in such a way that responsive love of the LORD is elicited. Hugh repeatedly describes the spiritual music of the zither-like Scriptures as in terms of its ‘sweetness’ – the music is not just heard, but tasted, actualizing its hearer’s spiritual sensorium that, like the audience member at Handel’s *Messiah*, or like the deer pants for flowing streams, the spiritual music of Scripture creates in one’s mind a greater desire for the LORD.

6.3.7 Hugonian Biblical Interpretation as Responsive Participation, through the Paschal Mystery, in the Triune LORD’s Unification of All Things.

To sum up: in the preceding sections I have shown the way in which, for Hugh, the three types of biblical interpretation correlate to the ‘three days’ of the paschal mystery and to the triadic structure of the human soul as memory, intellect, and will. Precisely, the three types of biblical interpretation are modes of participation in the three days of the paschal mystery, such that biblical interpretation is an intellectual and spiritual practice of responsive ‘passing over’ into the Triune LORD through loving wisdom and wise love. The Spirit-inspired Scriptures elicit in the soul its own actualization as burning seraphic love-and-knowledge. The human person is thus united to the LORD by a love like unto, and participant within, the LORD’s own super-seraphic loving-knowing. Self-actualizing union with the LORD through biblical interpretation is,

for Hugh, an essential and vibrant part of the pedagogy of biblical trinitarian faith. The way in which even tropological interpretations remain meditations, not themselves the union one seeks, but signs, promises, and symbolic summons' from the LORD to such union, only increase the tension of Holy Saturday, the tension of burial in which one longs for the full light of resurrection and the full love of spiritual union. The familiar quotation from *Ecclesiastes* captures the predicament nicely: "For in much wisdom is much vexation, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow."²²³

Hugh shows his readers the way in which meditation on Scripture is an ascent opening and beckoning toward contemplative union with the LORD in *Noah's Ark* 1.1.9. He writes,

whenever the human mind, enlightened by the knowledge of Holy Scripture, is raised to the contemplation of heavenly things, it does indeed mount to the throne, if it also climbs above the choirs of angels and attains to the presence of its Creator. Once there, however, it does not sit, it stands. For it has come by toil to a point at which it has no natural power to stay. Thus standing is a posture of one who works, sitting of Him who rests. And so we stand on the throne and God sits on it, for we are by grace beginning to be where He is by nature.

Biblical interpretation responsively unites the soul to the Triune LORD through acts of meditation and contemplation, yet the soul does not, in this life, pass over fully into the LORD's rest. Ordinarily, which is to say, apart from the nuptial and divine unitive considerations explored in the next chapter, the contemplative "stands" attentively and labors to remain with the LORD as long as she may, while the LORD in whose presence she basks "sits" and "rests". Scripture is, as Augustine says, the face of God for now,²²⁴ yet the full stretch of the ecstatic peace for which we sigh is still to come. Even so, the

²²³ Eccl. 1:18, RSV

²²⁴ Robert Louis Wilken, *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought* (New Haven: Yale, 2003), 50.

heights are striking to which Hugh says a contemplative may ascend through biblical interpretation: past all spiritual creatures, past the choirs of angels, and mounting even the very throne of God, the contemplative ascends, in standing attentiveness, the throne on which the LORD sits. At that height, she participates in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4), beginning to be by grace what the LORD is by nature. At the same time, having attained the heights of divinity, there, still, she stands and waits. Hugh continues:

In the same way, if we take the throne as meaning God's eternity, we understand ourselves as standing on it, because we can attain His immortality only by passing through the toil of death (*non nisi per mortis laborem peruenire possumus*); it is by adoption that we, who are by nature subject to this latter end, are made heirs of eternity.²²⁵

The contemplative soul, standing on eternity (!), still awaits her eternal rest, and her eternal rest only comes by the fulfillment of her participation in Jesus Christ's Passover: through the toil of the death buried on Holy Saturday, and only thence into eternal life.

In the final analysis, it is not only, for Hugh, the tropological sense whose meaning and summons is 'love'. The third day of the paschal mystery, as it were, fulfills each of the senses with its pneumatic and eschatological plenitude, such that Hugh can write:

If... the seraphim denote Holy Scripture, the three pairs of wings are the three senses of this selfsame Scripture, history, allegory, and tropology, each of which is therefore twofold, since it enkindles the souls of those who read with the love of God and of their neighbor. (*Noah's Ark* 1.1.10, p. 56)

As the Triune "God is Love" (1 Jn. 4:8) in the structure of biblical trinitarian doctrine, so the ultimate meaning of the completed exegetical edifice, and so of all its constituent parts, is likewise love, and the summons to love. The meditative light of Holy Saturday,

²²⁵ *Noah's Ark* 1.1.9, Sicard p. 13, *PL* 176:624B, CSMV p. 55

the height of which is tropology, beckons onward and upward to the pleromatic light of actual works of love, and of union with God.

Hence the core and ultimate wisdom contained in the Scriptures – i.e., love – is present at each level of the Scriptures, including the foundational level of history, because even the central narrative of the rocky historical sense discloses the LORD's saving sacraments in history. This means that each sense of the Scriptures, via love and love's sacraments, has a unifying and integrative utility when viewed from on high.

Hugh writes:

We have now, I think, shown sufficiently clearly the origin of the infinite distraction of our thoughts from which we suffer – that is, from the world and from the lust of it, from the works of creation. Again, we have shown by what means our thoughts can be reintegrated – that is, by the works of restoration. (*Noah's Ark* 1.4.17, p. 146)

History, for Hugh, integrates our thoughts, or reintegrates them, around the history specifically of the Triune LORD's acts in history which are ordered to our unification. The thoughts of pagan philosophers dissipate into diversity or cluster in ways that do not disclose the Triune LORD's project of union with creatures. The point, then, is not that pagans produce many diverse thoughts and Christians do not. The point is that the numberless thoughts of Christians are reintegrated around the LORD's self-symbolizing and self-manifesting acts in history – most decisively the paschal mystery – such that the thoughts of Christians begin, imitate, and end with the Triune LORD who manifests his saving, unifying power with particular intensity in particular places in history, in such a

way that all of history is, at least potentially, integrated.²²⁶ The biblical trinitarian intellectual project, in fact, extends in aspiration – and works to extend in actuality – to the knowledge of all history. Entering, through historical study and memory, into the paschal mystery, “extra-biblical” history is integrated into the salvation the Triune LORD is working in the theologian and in the whole world. The practice of trinitarian theology is an intellectual site in which knowledge distantly removed from the cultures and peoples of the Biblical authors enters, in the interpreter, into the paschal mystery, and so passes over intellectually into the LORD’s uniting all things. If it is true, as St. Bonaventure maintains, that “every cognition is theology’s handmaid,”²²⁷ it is also true that theology raises all thoughts, all truths, historical and otherwise, to queenly dignity. In the individual human person, the fruit of biblical interpretation that is participant in the Triune LORD’s work in the darkness of Jesus Christ’s tomb is a triadic mind, vivified, shining in darkness, and waiting longingly in hope.

²²⁶ Apt is Hugh’s exhortation by way of lament in *Noah’s Ark* 4.14, in which he asks, “how many educated people do we see nowadays, who would like to be called Christians, come to church with the rest of the faithful, and receive the sacraments of Christ, while in their heart they are more often thinking of Saturn and of Jupiter, of Hercules or Mars, or of Achillies and Hector, Pollux and Castor, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, than of Christ and his saints. They love the poets’ trifles, and either neglect the truth of Holy Scripture or – what is worse – laugh at it or despise it. Let such as these see what good it will do them to come to church outwardly, while in their hearts they are committing fornication against the faith....”

²²⁷ *On the Reduction of the Arts to Theology* 26.

6.4 THE ALL-CONSUMING FIRE OF MEDITATIVE MIND – THE UNIVERSAL AND UNIFYING SCOPE OF MEDITATION RISING UNTO CONTEMPLATIVE DIVINE UNION

Having in the course of this chapter studied, in ascending fashion, many of the forms of Hugonian meditation, it is fitting to conclude with a reflection on the unlimited assimilative aspiration of the project of meditation for Hugh, as well as the rest toward which such meditation always inclines. For Hugh, meditation's aspiration is utterly universal and comprehensively trinitarian. It is the desire to understand everything in its union with God. Meditation wants to understand the whole world, all of history, and oneself at one with the Triune LORD the source, indweller, and goal of all things. Meditation strives for an act of knowing that is grounded in, imitates, and aspires unto the triune LORD's own wise eternal act of knowing. Most fittingly, then, does Hugh describe meditation as a relentless, all-consuming fire. In an important passage with which we began, but which we can now appreciate more fully, Hugh writes vividly:

In meditation, a sort of wrestling-match goes on between ignorance and knowledge, and the light of truth somehow flickers in the midst of the darkness of error. It is then rather like fire in green wood, which gets a hold at first only with difficulty; but, when it is fanned by a stronger draught and begins to catch on more fiercely, then we see great billows of black smoke arise, and smother the flame, which so far is still only fairly bright and leaping out here and there, until at last, as the fire gradually grows, all the smoke clears, the darkness is dispelled, and a bright blaze appears. Then the conquering flame, spreading throughout the crackling pyre, gains ready mastery and, leaping round the fuel, with lightest touches of its glancing tongues consumes and penetrates it. Nor does it rest until, reaching the very centre, it has so to speak absorbed into itself everything that it had found outside itself. (*On the Soul's Three Ways of Seeing*)

The mind, first slow to catch flame on its material, at length consumes it universally, assimilates it into mind, and only then reaches the rest of contemplation – as Hugh goes on to describe. Hugh is well aware that our finite act of knowing, while it imitates the eternal act of wise love who is the Trinity, remains of itself incomplete. We are not even able to comprehend creation exhaustively, let alone the Triune Creator. He writes:

the works of God so far transcend assessment that no creature has the power to understand them perfectly. The contemplation of them fills our heart, but our heart cannot compass their immensity. How, then, shall we comprehend the Maker of the works, when we cannot fully take in the works of the Maker? (*Noah's Ark* I.I.8, p. 53)

Yet, and nevertheless, the all-consuming fire of meditation burns toward macrocosmic comprehension – and so toward ontologically divine understanding from an historically eschatological, or eternal, standpoint. That is to say, meditation is aimed at contemplation, and knowledge of God, for Hugh, stands in continuity with the contemplative union with God, or cleaving to God, which is itself a foretaste of our eschatological knowing.

Meditation, in sum, as an all-consuming fire is aimed at macrocosmic comprehension, but achieves, ideally repeatedly, microcosmic comprehensions of the whole through one unified part or another. When meditation's fire burns itself to rest, at length, in contemplation, it has ideally achieved a microcosmic comprehension of the whole, a limited comprehension of the whole from this or that spatiotemporal location. This is a microcosmic comprehension which participates in the macrocosmic knowledge of God, or in the divine Wisdom. The understood object, assimilated into the fire of mind, is a mirror reflecting, in reflecting that which is understood, at once (and at one)

world, self, and God. The human act of meditation-unto-comprehension imitates, in a restricted way, the infinite generation of divine Wisdom in the Triune LORD's unrestricted and eternal actuality. "For our God", the epistle to the Hebrews teaches, "is a consuming fire" (12:29).

And so here, with Hugh's description of a meditating mind as an all-consuming fire, we reflectively long for the super-seraphic divine flames of love which we are powerless to control – waiting at the peak of meditation for the gift of contemplation as if at the peak of the mountain of Purgatory and longing for Paradise – and at this meditative peak of understanding we reach out toward the Love of Easter Sunday, the eschatological and pneumatological disclosure of the resurrection – into which doctrinal meditation calls us at length to pass over.

6.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have studied the gradual and ascending passage from darkness to light that characterizes the particularly intellectual and theological participation of human persons in the middle day of Christ's Passover, Holy Saturday. Hugh's intellectual practice of Trinitarian doctrine resides here. This 'day' is a day of buried meditation, 'deep ascent', a day of passage through death, awaiting in hope a light it cannot see fully and cannot as yet fully experience. Yet, this process of buried waiting is intrinsic, for Hugh, to the re-formation of the human soul, for it both disposes the soul to contemplative union with God and to works of love. Meditations biblical, doctrinal,

metaphysical, and comprehensively trinitarian reform one 'structurally' in the pattern of divine Wisdom, so as to prepare the soul for, ultimately, the pneumatic finale of divine goodness and resurrection. It is to this finale, to which intellectual wisdom orders one but which remains ever beyond the control of the human intellect, that we proceed in passing now to the brightest day, and plenary illumination, of Easter Sunday.

7.0 RISING

Therefore, Christ... rose on the eighth day, so that in a similar way... kindness on its day may cause us to rise revived through desire (desiderium) of divine love.

-Hugh of St. Victor, *De Tribus Diebus*, III.27.4

For 'sharp' signifies an onrushing of love, the vehemence of burning desire (desiderii ardentis)... that the sharpness might pass over (transeat) into that one.... [L]ove wishes to make itself one (unum) with the beloved....

-Hugh of St. Victor, *In Hierarchiam*, 1037C-1038A

This is the third of a trio of chapters dedicated to exploring Hugh of St. Victor's theology as a comprehensive trinitarianism in which the creation is reformed and revived in the triune likeness through participation in the three days of the paschal mystery. Having explored Christ's dying and burial, we here explore Christ's rising – “in us” – because we in him.²²⁸ This chapter investigates, spiritually and in the subjective polarity, the ‘day’ of the manifestation of the completed Passover. As participants in Christ's dying and burial, so too, by the work of the Spirit, are human persons given the possibility to participate, with all creation, in the LORD's eschatological and joyful resurrected life.

²²⁸ *De Trib.* III.27.2.

7.1 CUMULATIVE UNIFICATION IN THE RISEN LORD

Hugh's concluding paragraph of *On the Three Days*, the paragraph which has been the basis of this project, shows a number of triads stacked, integrated, unified: the Trinity in God, the three ages of history, the triadic human soul in the process of moral, intellectual, and affective re-formation – all of these are united within the supremely theophanic and salvific triduum of Jesus Christ's dying, burial, and rising. And yet, in Hugh's thought, there is an order to all of these triads: all of them are in a certain way weighted towards the third member. Hugh has already given us the key to this 'cumulative' character: the triads are all symbolized as a trio of 'days', which are all "one day in the brightness of the Godhead"²²⁹: a sequence of three which is really, in history and in our perception, a single and gradual process of enlightenment, a single passage from the first ray of dawn to the full brightness of noonday. All are ordered to the final 'day' of history and of human re-formation, such that "the day of charity brings light to the day of fear and to the day of truth, until charity is perfect and all truth completely manifest, and the fear of punishment will pass over into reverent fear."²³⁰ The ages of history and the re-formation of the human person are both ordered to a pneumatic consummation in charity, whose objective and subjective polarities are both contained in Jesus Christ's own rising: "just as we have risen in Him as He rose on the third day, so, too, let us, rising on the third day for Him and through Him, make Him rise in us."²³¹

And yet, the weight toward the third day does not mean that the third day of each triad

²²⁹ *ibid.*, III.27.3.

²³⁰ *ibid.*, III.27.1.

²³¹ *ibid.*, III.27.2.

supersedes the goods shared by the previous two: these days are cumulative. The third day gathers into itself, almost pulls forward into itself by its own consummate fullness, the previous two days, unifying them in its single brightness. The third ‘days’ of the triads, then, are each almost like a final cause with respect to the previous two: they are only disclosed as the culmination of the process, but they are thereby that which has been hiddenly revealing itself all along, guiding the whole process. With this in mind, let us listen again to the conclusion to *On the Three Days*, paying particular attention to the third ‘day’ of each triad:

When, therefore, the omnipotence of God is considered and arouses our heart to wonder, it is the day of the Father; when the wisdom of God is examined and enlightens our heart with recognition of the truth, it is the day of the Son; when the kindness (*benignitas*) of God is observed and enflames our hearts to love (*ad amorem cor nostrum inflamat*), it is the day of the Holy Spirit. Power arouses fear; wisdom enlightens; kindness brings joy (*benignitas letificat*). On the day of power, we die through fear. On the day of wisdom, we are buried away from the clamor of this world by contemplation of the truth. On the day of kindness, we rise (*resurgimus*) through love (*amorem*) and desire (*desiderium*) of eternal goods (*aeternorum bonorum*). Therefore, Christ died on the sixth day, lay buried in the tomb on the seventh, and rose on the eighth day, so that in a similar way through fear the power of God on its day may first cut us away from carnal desires outside, and then wisdom on his day may bury us within in the hidden place of contemplation; and finally, kindness on its day may cause us to rise revived (*uiuificatos exurgere faciat*) through desire of divine love (*desiderium diuini amoris*). For the sixth day is for work; the seventh, for rest; the eighth, for resurrection. (III.27.4, Poirel pp. 69-70)

The distinctiveness of the third day comes to the fore: the kindness (*benignitas*) of God – God’s actively diffused goodness and love – is finally on full display in Jesus Christ’s resurrection as the Spirit draws all history unto its eschatological perfection in charity. God’s kindness brings the receptive soul *joy*– the soul reformed already through fear and enlightened by wisdom is made cumulatively joyful at the LORD’s deliverance. Having

cut away sin and impressed on her memory the LORD's works in history, and having buried herself in the 'tomb' of meditation, the soul now, Christ-like, *rises*, in resurgent desire for the LORD's eternal goodness. In her joy, the soul makes Christ rise in herself subjectively, in whom she has already objectively risen. Heart afire, she desires union with God: her fear has passed over into reverent fear, and her desire is for divine love. In short, the process of human reformation and unification in the paschal mystery investigated in the two previous chapters culminates cumulatively here, in rising with Christ.

For Hugh's theology, the cumulative gathering of what has come before into the desirous flame of charity entails that the 'structural' moment of knowledge, as meditation fashions the self in the pattern of divine Wisdom, is retained. The finished building is the building adorned in love, and, decorated fabulously, it retains its structure:

God dwells in the human heart after two modes – namely, by knowledge and by love. Yet these two are one abiding, for the double reason that everyone who knows Him loves Him, and that nobody can love Him without knowing Him. There seems, however, to be this difference between them, that knowledge erects the structure of faith by its knowing, whereas love like an adorning colour embellishes the building by its virtue. Each is thus seen to be essential to the other, for the building could not be glorious if it had never come to be, nor could it give delight were it not glorious. (*Noah's Ark* 1.1.5, CSMV p. 50)

The building – of the self and of doctrinal understanding – first built by knowledge is made beautiful, even delightfully glorious, by charity. Moreover, the whole process of the LORD's work in the soul has been accomplished by the unified working of the whole Trinity, and that is to say that it is the Spirit, unrecognized in history's early days, who has initiated the whole process of human re-formation and unification:

The Spirit will come to you to make his dwelling in you. For when the Spirit comes, he will not discover a dwelling, but he will come to make it. First the Spirit will build, later he will dwell. First the Spirit will heal, later he will illuminate. The first is done for health, the later for joy.²³²

The Spirit oversees the whole reformation of the self: first discovering no dwelling, then building a dwelling, then indwelling it: the Spirit heals, illuminates (structurally), and last indwells in the cumulative culmination of its work. This indwelling, which, in light of the other passages examined above, indicates an intimacy with Christ in his resurrection, is aptly characterized by “joy.”

In Hugh’s theology, the divine love and goodness indwelling the person ‘rising’ forms in her a holistic orientation to the eschaton: revived in the midst of history, her principal desire is for the consummation of divine love. Her quest for divine perfection entails, here below, both an ‘*in melius*’ growth in good works and a burning contemplative quest for union with God. The first of these is witnessed in this passage from *Noah’s Ark*: “For by no means can we ever reach perfection, unless we strive unceasingly to grow in the good things we do.”²³³ The second, mystical, quest of her eschatological longing, expressed in *On the Three Days* in relation to the language of ‘inflamed hearts’ and “desire of divine love”, while finding expression in many of Hugh’s works, finds superlative erotic expression in Hugh’s commentary on Eriugena’s translation of Dionysius’ *Celestial Hierarchy*. Hugh writes,

For ‘sharp’ signifies an onrushing of love, the vehemence of burning desire, of bearing itself into the beloved, of entering of penetrating, in order that it might be there, where that which is loved itself is, with that very one, and in that very one, in order that it might not only be fiery from that very one, but that the sharpness might

²³² *On the Seven Gifts*, I.

²³³ *Noah’s Ark*, 1.2.10.

pass over (*transeat*) into that one. For it was able to be fire, even to become fiery as though from afar: this would be enough for someone [*cui*] to love one who is thus absent, and not to see the one who is present, or even to possess the one who is most present. But this was not the perfect love of the hierarchy, nor of the very lovable, unless it should make itself sharp, and pass over all things (*et transiret omnia*), and penetrate, until it arrive at love, or rather, go into the beloved. For if you do not go into the beloved, you still love at a distance, and you do not have the sharpness of love. But you have [the following]: being torpid, you remain separated and outside such that you are not made one with the beloved. But love wishes to make itself one with the beloved: and therefore it penetrates all things, and approaches as much as it can to one with the beloved. (1037C-1038A)

The desire of the theologian-mystic for union with God is here expressed with a heated rhetoric and erotic vividness only hinted at in Hugh's other works, and the distinctiveness of Hugh's language in this commentary has generated no small amount of scholarly perplexity.²³⁴ In this chapter I will offer at least one theory about the interpretation of Hugh's 'love beyond knowledge' paradigm here espoused, which seems *prima facie* different than the 'cumulative' 'wisdom structuring love' paradigm of *On the Three Days* as well as a bit different than what the Dionysian writer himself said.²³⁵ It will be argued that Hugh's perspective in this commentary coheres with that of his other writings in a way that is visible if we take *On the Three Days* as normative. To wit, the mystic's experience of 'love beyond knowledge' is a result of the fact that the Spirit dispenses the gift of divine union here below as a, quite literal, 'foretaste' of the eschaton. The mystic experiences something for which there is, as yet, neither language nor adequate cognition: the 'day' of the Triune LORD's theophany in history is not yet pleromatic, and so the mystic's taste of God is experienced under the cover(s) of intellectual darkness.

²³⁴ Rorem, *Hugh of Saint Victor*, 167-76.

²³⁵ *ibid.*, 170-71.

This systematic theory also helps unveil coherence between Hugh's Dionysian commentary and one of Hugh's most interesting and underappreciated eschatological remarks. In *Noah's Ark*, Hugh writes, initially quoting St. Paul,

When, therefore, 'this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality', then we, being spiritual in mind and body equally, will after our small measure understand everything through the illumination of our minds, and have power to be everywhere through the lightness of our incorruptible bodies. Our minds will fly by contemplation, our bodies will fly on account of incorruption. We shall perceive with our mind, and in a manner of speaking we shall perceive with our bodies too; for, when our bodily senses are themselves converted into reason, and reason into understanding, then understanding will pass over (*transibit*) into God, to whom we shall be united through the one Mediator between God and men, the Lord Jesus Christ.²³⁶

The first noteworthy aspect of this eschatological passage is perhaps Hugh's remark that, in the resurrection, body and mind will be equally "spiritual", equally drawn into the pneumatic finale of all things. Not only will we be 'risen', we will be able to fly. Hugh understands this to entail a sort of 'simplification' of the material/sensual into the intellectual and the intellectual thence into God. Here there is no hint of 'love beyond knowledge': all is light, all is knowledge. The Passover, the erotic union of creation with God, here takes place in the full light of day. It is the wedding feast of the Lamb. Indeed, there is even a hint here that the hypostatic union by which Christ is "Mediator" is what makes this all possible. Again, the 'cumulative' rather than 'supersessionist' orientation of *On the Three Days* allows us, if we will, to discover coherence amid Hugh's varied locutions. In the end, love will not be beyond knowledge, nor knowledge beyond love, for these will be, in the height of creaturely perfection and simplification, convertible in human persons in something like the way in which they are convertible in

²³⁶ *Noah's Ark* 1.1.15, CSMV p. 69, Sicard p. 29

God. In the end, it is the very structure of the soul that is itself made beautiful by love, and the colorfully love-bedecked structure that fully discloses divine Wisdom. Hugh has, recall, called Wisdom incarnate “the most beautiful of all.”²³⁷ So too, when the Spirit has perfected the children of God in perfect charity through Jesus Christ’s own resurrection and ascension, all things will be one with God, and God all in all.

7.1.1 The Lexical Field of Easter Sunday

The lexical field of Easter Sunday, beginning from the argument sketched above, includes, for Hugh, the following: Christ’s resurrection, rising/ascent, the Holy Spirit, joy, desire, divine kindness (*benignitas*) and goodness (*bonitas*), revivification, renewal, divine love, charity, the heart on fire or inflamed, and so fiery love. In relation to mystical union, it includes the sharpening of the soul or affect, and the ecstasy of love beyond knowledge, and the Spirit’s indwelling the temple of the soul. In terms of history, it is associated with the third age of history, stretching from Christ’s resurrection and Pentecost to its own illuminative culmination in the Eschaton.

Extending from these, this ‘rising’ lexical field is associated with the third member of many or most of Hugh’s triads: encountering one of these, Hugh’s reader should pause and ask: Does this triad map in some way onto both Trinity and Triduum? and, if so, how? This question brings us to some of the associations explored below, as well as others: contemplation (within the triad of intellectual acts or intensities), moving (as in intentional causation), the tropological sense of Scripture, utility (especially the

²³⁷ *Soliloquy* 14, VTT 2:208

material and spiritual utility of the world), gentleness, mildness, compassion, completion, fulfillment, perfection, unification, sweetness, spiritual sensation, virtue, strength, boldness, the Trinity's acts *ad extra* (i.e. creation and restoration), and sacraments in dispensation. Again, many of these associations have to be thought through and made in the context in which Hugh's reader encounters them.

As the lexical field corresponding to unfallen creation, to Christ's resurrection, and to the eschaton, this lexical field is the most perfect and normative for human speculation and contemplation of God. In the lexical field of Easter, human language penetrates and passes over into the mystery of divinity in the most perfect ways of which it is capable – which is to say, in the least unsatisfactory.²³⁸ “[N]o one ever says enough, who speaks of love, unless perhaps he speaks of a little love” (*In Hierarchiam*, PL 175:1037A).

7.1.2 The Order of this Chapter: World, Catholic Church, Person

Like the previous chapter “Dying”, but unlike “Buried”, this chapter will discuss creation's various participations in, here, “Rising”, beginning with the goodness in the created *world*, proceeding to the goodness and love developing in the *Catholic Church*

²³⁸ “[T]heological reflection... is not a quest for words or concepts that are fully adequate to their subject matter, but rather an attempt to speak in the least inadequate way possible.” Frederick C. Bauerschmidt and James J. Buckley, *Catholic Theology: An Introduction* (Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 44.

throughout history, and finally ascending to the pinnacle of charity in the individual human *soul*.²³⁹

7.2 CREATION RISING

7.2.1 Creation as Trinitarian Act from Plenitudinous Goodness and “Love Alone”

The temporal history of love, for Hugh, expressed initially as creation, rests on an eternal logical order Hugh finds in the inner life of the Triune LORD. This logical ordering is as follows. In the LORD’s *ad extra* activity, power is manifest first, wisdom succeeds, and goodness completes. These three in God are tethered, as appropriations, to the Father, Son, and Spirit, respectively. Yet, in the *in se* divine life, the last member of the triad – *goodness* – is the most plenary and perfectly descriptive of the divine life as a whole. The LORD, for Hugh, is, first and foremost, plenitudinous goodness. “God was perfect and full of complete good” (*On the Sacraments* 1.2.1), he writes. Ergo, though the LORD’s *ad extra* works (in individual things and in history as a whole) manifest, initially, the working of divine *power* which is only at length fulfilled in creaturely goodness, yet *divine goodness* is the infinite ground and ultimate source of all of those *ad extra* acts. In terms of logical priority, the LORD’s infinite wisdom and power subsist

²³⁹ *Noah’s Ark* 1.1.4

thus within the infinite sea of his goodness. Further, emerging from that abyssal goodness, the LORD's *ad extra* activities are all motivated by love.

Hugh shows this in *On the Sacraments*. He writes, "For the divine will would not have been perfect through goodness alone, unless power had equally been present, since that which it willed through antecedent goodness it fulfilled through subsequent power" (1.2.5). Though he will soon speak analogically of these antecedent and subsequent divine attributes in temporal terms, he is getting at logical order, rather than chronological: these three are eternal, and these three, in God, are "equally full", and are "one" (1.2.6). Now hear how these ordered attributes issue forth in creation:

Thus these two were in the Creator equally – goodness and wisdom, and these were eternal, and likewise there was present coeternal power; He willed by goodness, He disposed by wisdom, He made by power. There seems to be a kind of distinction in time and succession; goodness presents itself first to our consideration, because through it God willed; then wisdom, because through it He disposed; lastly power, because through it He made. For there seems to be an order; and the will seems to have been first; after it disposition, and lastly operation seems to have followed. For unless He had willed, He would not have disposed, and if He had not disposed, He would not have made. A great reason for this offers itself, because among men the will always precedes plan, and work follows plan. But what are we doing? Shall we dare to introduce time into eternity? For if these things are in God as in men, something in Him was prior, something posterior, and not all God is eternal. But to confess this is abominable. (1.2.10).

At the risk of anachronistically employing a set of Aristotelian causal distinctions to what Hugh is saying, if divine power is the efficient cause of creation, and divine wisdom the exemplary cause, yet the LORD's exemplary and efficient causality emerge from the at once *in se* and *ad extra* final causality: divine goodness. Of course, to speak of an *in se* final cause of the LORD's life – connoting by appropriation the Holy Spirit – is to gesture analogically at an eternal, completely actual, and purely logical ordering. Yet the

‘mirror’ of history as a whole, and in each of the microcosmic persons who are activated in the divine likeness through the paschal mystery, reflects at its consummation the divine goodness which is the final cause – the secret goodness and Love of Father and Son – which is the ultimate source of all things both within God and without. Hugh succinctly captures this logic like this: “So by eternal goodness He always willed, and by eternal wisdom He always disposed what He sometimes makes by coeternal power” (1.2.11). As the only source is goodness, so the only motive is love. The LORD, as Hugh often repeats, makes the material world to serve the rational creature, and “created the rational spirit by no necessity but out of love alone” (*On the Nature of Love*).²⁴⁰

In view of the above, we can see faintly in Hugh’s thought, and through these associations, a way in which creation, for Hugh, inasmuch as it is not falling, is being given and unfolding as ‘rising’: surpassingly intended in the LORD’s goodness to mirror all the more excellently the Triune LORD’s own goodness. Creation is rising, then, ‘ontochronologically’, to employ a term discussed in Chapter 4 above. That is to say, creation is a logical and moral order that expresses the Triune LORD’s goodness as much by its historical unfolding as by its being, and these, inseparably.

²⁴⁰ This all has further implications for the systematic understanding of Hugh’s trinitarian theology. When we pair the power, wisdom, goodness triad with the psychological analogy of the Trinity. The Triune life is eternally from the unbegotten Father, and yet its fulfillment as uncircumscribable goodness, or love, is manifest in its pneumatic completion. Of course, the *goodness* that is appropriated to the Spirit is thus and nothing other than the disclosure of the goodness which characterizes the fontal fullness of the Father, a goodness or love which eternally proceeds as the Spirit. And yet, as characterized, most decisively, by goodness, and as motivated by love alone, the Triune LORD’s *ad extra* acts, mirroring the *ad intra* logic of the divine life, are all pneumatically grounded and fulfilled. In short, *ad extra*, the efficient cause of creation is defined by the final cause: the LORD’s goodness.

7.2.2 The Goodness and Kindness of God Manifest in Creation's Usefulness

For Hugh, the usefulness of creation manifests particularly the kindness of the LORD. He writes, “The invisible things of God are three: power, wisdom and kindness (*benignitas*). From these proceed all things. In these three all things subsist. By these three all things are governed. Power creates; wisdom governs; and kindness conserves” (*On the Three Days* I.1.2). Whereas creaturely immensity, as mentioned above, manifests power, and beauty wisdom, “their utility manifests kindness” (I.1.3). Hugh expands on utility thus:

The usefulness of things consists in what makes them attractive, apt, beneficial, and necessary. The attractive is that which pleases; the apt is what is suitable; the beneficial is that which is advantageous; and what is necessary is that without which something cannot be. (ibid.)

In terms of utility, Hugh has in mind all the ways in which the things of the world serve humankind's bodily needs and virtuous enjoyments, whether bread and wine, animal skins to wear, a glass of wine, meat to eat, cotton and silk clothes, colorful dyes and precious stones, and even merely delightful things like “certain kinds of plants, animals, birds, and fish, and the like” (I.14.1). Yet these material goods, because of their bodily usefulness or pleasing quality, function in that utility as “transcendentals of the divine economy”²⁴¹ of the LORD's goodness, and so lift the human spirit to its transcendent good who is goal and source of creation, and in a special way of the human creature. Even the parts of creation which are of no apparent use to humans are turned to our spiritual benefit. Hugh writes:

²⁴¹ Boyd Taylor Coolman, “General Introduction” in VTT I:33.

It is worthwhile to inquire why God wished to create these things that He foresaw would not be necessary for the use of humankind, for whom He created all things. But this will be quickly understood if one examines the cause and manner of the creation of humankind. God made humankind for Himself; God created all other things for human beings. He made humankind for Himself, not because He needed humankind, but so that humankind could enjoy Him, for He could give nothing better. The rest of creation was so made that it would both be subject to humankind from its creation and would serve the use of humankind. Therefore, humankind, as though situated in a kind of middle place, has God above itself and the world below.... It was necessary that the creation of visible things be so arranged that human beings would recognize in them exteriorly what the invisible goods they were to seek within was like; that is, that human beings would see beneath them what they were to desire above them. (I.14.2)

The whole vast and stunning array of the material creation, then, is “instituted above all to announce the inconceivable profuseness of eternal goods” (I.14.3). Hugh’s description of the goodness of the material creation, then, ultimately points forward to the end of the treatise in which we “rise through love and desire of eternal goods.”²⁴² In seeing the activity of the Triune LORD’s kindness – and so the LORD’s own goodness – enacted in the bodily and ultimately soteriological usefulness of the created order, our spirits rise in imitative participation in Christ’s own resurrection, and so share in the eschatological goodness that is the goal – and the divine goodness that is the final source – of all creation. Thus, as Hugh elsewhere says, the good things of creation are to be loved “as gifts, as the betrothal-gift of a spouse” (*Soliloquy* 17).

7.2.3 The World’s Finale in Pneumatic Goodness

As discussed above with anachronism of Aristotle’s causes, the efficient cause of creation is determined by the divine goodness which is its final cause, and so the

²⁴² *On the Three Days* III.27.4

culmination and finale of the world is pneumatic goodness – a note I make here as a placeholder for the discussion of Hugh’s eschatology which will come near the end of this chapter.²⁴³ Yet the Holy Spirit’s temporal instrument in impressing the divine *forma* made visible through the paschal mystery, and in constructing sacraments on the basis of that *forma*, is the Catholic Church, to which we now proceed.

7.3 CATHOLIC CHURCH RISING

7.3.1 Reforming Church

The Catholic Church, for Hugh, is a body united in faith and liturgical practice, spanning history, through which human persons participate in the life of the Holy Spirit as it reforms them in the divine likeness through participation in the paschal mystery. As the site of participation in Christ through the grace of the Spirit, the Church, for Hugh, is ordered to the perfection of creation in divine goodness and charity. Each of these terms – perfection, goodness, charity – is predicated upon the Church’s unity and entails the increasing unification of the Church’s members with their Head and LORD. The Church, as such, is most outwardly and noticeably itself in the long Holy Spirit-driven aftermath of Christ’s resurrection, a time which stretches unto the eschaton. Hence, a direct if concise treatment of the Catholic Church belongs to this chapter. The Church, most

²⁴³ The underappreciated eschatological current in *On the Three Days* has been discussed already in Chapter 4.

visibly and self-consciously itself in the third ‘day’ of history, which Hugh also calls the “time of grace,” is sacramentally ordered to invite the participation in the paschal mystery by which humans participate in the atoning work of Christ, discover the illuminations of divine truth and wisdom, and are at length raised into the perfection of charity which is at once joy and divine goodness. Coolman helpfully characterizes Hugh’s ecclesiology as exemplifying “a reformer’s church” in the wake of the “late eleventh-century Investiture Controversy and the Gregorian reform” (103). Coolman draws the phrase “a reformer’s church” from Margot Fassler, and works to theologically expand and deepen the notion of ‘reform’. Coolman writes:

Within this context... [Hugh’s] conception of the church reflects the emerging Gregorian ideals about how the church is to be reformed and what a reformed church should look like. He envisions a church unified both temporally and institutionally or hierarchically, purified from secular influence, and led by virtuous, well-educated, and faithful clerics. Less commonly noted is the fact that for Hugh the church is also a *re-forming* entity. Its fundamental purpose is to re-form all the faithful through its clergy, liturgy, and sacraments. The institutional church must be reformed because it is the locus and means of the re-form of history, accomplished through the re-form of the individual members of the body of Christ. (104)

Moving from Coolman’s argument to the argument of the present project, the human re-formation worked in history by the Triune LORD through the Church’s cooperation, a re-formation which happens through a plethora of sacramental means, is centered and enabled by the paschal mystery. All sacraments, for Hugh, receive their sanctifying power from the paschal mystery. To put it triadically so as to bring out the way in which the unifying and sanctifying effects of the sacraments are an unfolding of the three days of the paschal mystery, we can say this: all the sacraments work to purge their participants of sin, all illuminatingly disclose in some way the saving truth of the

incarnation, and all are ordered to the LORD's goodness in its unitive pneumatic fullness.

Hugh explicitly tethers the operation of the sacraments at whatever time in history to the paschal mystery and, particularly, to Christ's passion. He writes,

the passion of the Saviour, which in the first place sanctifies sacraments of grace to effect salvation, through the medium of these sanctified also those sacraments of earlier time so that salvation was the same both for those who by right faith venerated the signs of the future in the earlier sacraments and for those who receive the effect of salvation in these. (*On the Sacraments* 1.11.2)

The paschal mystery, for Hugh, is the center of the Church's liturgical and spiritual life.

That this is so means that the Church is, at every level, imitative of the Triune LORD's most intense and plenitudinous self-manifestation and saving enactment in history. As the *forma formans non formata* of all the sacraments – as I initially suggested in Chapter 4 – the paschal mystery is the inner divine act in history in which the Spirit enables Christ's members to participate ecclesially. Immediately after the long christological section in *On the Sacraments* 2.1, which I treated in Chapters 2 and 3, Hugh establishes the following strong and clear connection between Christ as Head and Christians as members of Christ through the Spirit and the principal sacraments. Hugh writes:

just as the spirit of man through the medium of the head descends to vivify the members, so the Holy Spirit comes through Christ to Christians. For Christ is the head, the Christian the member. One head, many members, and one body consists of head and members and in one body is one spirit whose fullness in the head is, indeed, participation in the members. If then the body is one and the spirit one, which is not in the body itself, it cannot be vivified by the Spirit, as it is written: "He who has not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his," (cf. Rom. 8,9). For he who has not the Spirit of Christ is not a member of Christ. In body is one spirit. Nothing dead in the body, nothing alive outside the body. Through faith we are made members, through love we are vivified. Through faith we receive union, through charity we receive vivification. Now in the sacrament through baptism we are united; through the body and blood of Christ we are vivified. Through baptism we are made members of the body, but through the body of Christ we are made participants in vivification. (2.2.1)

In light of the thick presence of a certain hierarchical, Neoplatonically-inflected theological anthropology in Hugh's immediately-preceding christological sections of *On the Sacraments*, Hugh's reader might not be faulted for hearing the present discussion in its lingering light. In the way that the spirit transcends the body but is therefore – through the head – omnipresent throughout the body, so the perichoresis of the divine persons of Son and Spirit entails that all human persons who are infused and indwelt by the Spirit are thereby participant in the person and work of the Son, whose members they in fact are.

Hugh's point here deserves systematic extension. That which the indwelling of the Spirit accomplishes is a connection to Jesus Christ through which the paschal mystery – operating in Christ's members through faith, hope, and love and also through the sacraments – works a 'unification' and 'vivification' that is at once individual and corporate or external in history. To put it simply, the sacraments unite their practitioners to Christ and bring their participants to life with Christ. Both of these themes, note – union and rising to new life – have a particular fit with the theme of 'rising', the terminus and telos of the three 'days' in resurrection and the one Spirit. The members of Christ thus in turn spiritually become, by their sacramental participation, extensions of the sacramentality of the paschal mystery itself, making visible Christ's sacrifice more ubiquitously in the world. This, in turn, outwardly manifests the deep unity of history as

unified in the paschal mystery and ordered to resurrection life, ordered to the life of the LORD. For Hugh, the Catholic Church is the name for this spiritual and visible unity.²⁴⁴

While Hugh mentions above principally the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist as having a kind of primacy, Hugh writes before the Western standardization of the seven sacraments. Thus he discusses many other things as sacraments as well, some of which surprise the contemporary reader. Some of these include curtains, salt, palm branches and foliage, the paschal candle, and some sacraments which consist in words alone (*On the Sacraments* 2.9). For our present purposes, the central thing to keep in mind is that each of these is interpreted allegorically in relation, ultimately, to the paschal mystery, the *forma formans non formata*, from which all sacraments derive their sanctifying and re-forming power.

The sections in this part of the present chapter are not intended as a comprehensive treatment of Hugh's ecclesiology and sacramentology: such would be a subject worth, and necessitating, a much longer study. Rather, striving for concision and attention to the essential, in the following I try to point to some elements of Hugh's ecclesiology which are most germane to the present Chapter's themes: resurrection, the Spirit, eschatology, love/charity, and divine goodness.

²⁴⁴ On the importance of the Church's oneness throughout history for Hugh, consider *On the Sacraments* 1.12.1.

7.3.2 Sacramental Development into Goodness and Love

Using Scripture and his knowledge of Church history, Hugh traces the developments in the outward forms of the sacraments through time. What is most significant in this for the present study is the way in which the sacraments, through time, manifest more and more the truth of the paschal mystery which is their inner form, and so manifest more and more the divine goodness. This corresponds, prior to the coming of Christ, to gradual increases in the explicit knowledge in faith of the Savior. Hugh writes:

the order and plan of the divine dispensation demanded... that just as from the beginning with the progress of time the coming of the Saviour approached nearer and nearer, so always the effect of salvation and the knowledge of truth increased more and more, because the signs themselves of salvation had to be changed one after the other through the succession of times in order that when the effect of divine grace increased unto salvation, at the same time sanctification might appear more evident in the visible signs themselves. (1.11.8)

The nearer the time of the incarnation drew, and the greater faith's knowledge of the shape of his salvation, so too the more the form of the sacraments conformed, outwardly and in human allegorical intellection, to the form of the paschal mystery. The time of grace, and of the Spirit, then, for Hugh, is the time in which the sacraments, in both outward form and inward intelligibility, conform most nearly to the unifying goodness and love they disclose and enact.

7.3.3 Receptive-Constructive Development, in the Spirit, in the Church's Sacramental Life

[O]n the paschal day in the Roman Church waxen lambs are blessed and distributed to the people.

-Hugh, *On the Sacraments* 2.9.5

Analogous to the way in which, for Hugh, the individual practitioner of trinitarian doctrine in history *receives* intellectually and spiritually the form of the paschal mystery mediated through Scripture, tradition, sacrament, cosmos, etc., and meditatively *constructs* a doctrinal edifice ordered to divine union and love of neighbor, so Hugh seems cognizant – at least implicitly – that the same happens in the liturgical life of the whole Church through time. Hugh's unembarrassed awareness of the Church's sacramental development is apparent in the way in which, in *On the Sacraments*, he mentions the invention of new sacraments by various Popes and spiritual leaders in the history of the Church. Yet, note, his allegorical interpretation of each of these minor, late-coming sacraments is connected to the Triune LORD's unifying and vivifying activity in history, and thus, at whatever allegorical length, to the paschal mystery. There is rich documentation for these claims throughout *On the Sacraments* 2.9.1-9. For example, Hugh writes:

Alexander, the fifth Pope after blessed Peter, established that salt and water should be blessed for sprinkling the people and their habitations, following the example indeed of Eliseus, the prophet, who, we read, had put salt into the water, so that the bitter springs might be turned into sweetness by this condiment.... Now the significance of this sacrament is the following: that water signifies penitence for past acts, salt discretion and caution regarding future acts, and, if these two are mixed together, bitter conscience is turned into sweetness and the illusions and the

disturbances of the demons no longer dominate it. Thus following the above mentioned institution, every Sunday we bless salt and water mixing them together, that by this sprinkling we may fortify the faithful and the abodes of the faithful against spiritual iniquities. (2.9.2)

This sacrament of sprinkling with saltwater is justified, to Hugh, not because of any claim that Jesus, in his ministry, confected and sprinkled the crowds with saltwater. Rather, the sacrament is warranted because a Pope has taken signs, interpreted them spiritually in an appropriate way, and confected a sacrament that helps people repent of their sins and, by signification and assent, ward off evil influences in their homes. Yet a deeper Hugonian analysis of this sacramental development Hugh attributes to Pope Alexander is possible, one which shows the receptive-constructive character of the Church's sacramental life through time and illuminates the possibility of a Hugonian theological account of that development. Notice the three elements or stages in the saltwater confection and the significance of each. First, water, recalling the bitter water of the biblical springs made sweet by the prophet Elisha (2 Kings 2). This bitterness corresponds spiritually to penitence for past sins: repentance is a drinking of the bitter waters. Second, the salt the prophet mixes with the water, and this signifies a cautious awareness going forward, a resolve in good conscience to "go and sin no more" (Jn. 8:11). Third, the confected saltwater, signifying by its sweetness the sweetness of the spring Elisha made sweet, which is sprinkled on the faithful and their homes. This, in turn, is interpreted as the sweetness of conscience of those who have repented and are resolved in their inclination to goodness. Hugh thus offers, in the example of this sacrament, a three stage transition from bitterness to sweetness. Bitterness, in its association with repentance, is clearly purgative, whereas the salt is associated with a cautious awareness, or illuminated

caution, regarding one's future conduct. These two are mixed together – one might even note, cumulatively gathered – into a third state in which they have the sweet perfection of a good conscience. The three stage transition or passage from bitterness to sweetness proffered in this sacrament may thus be heard as evocative of and in a way containing, in nuce, the re-forming truth of the three days of the paschal mystery. Once we make this systematic connection and see the form of the three days hidden in even this late-developed sacrament, we can theorize. For Hugh, the warrant for a sacrament is not in rigidly copying exact historical acts of Jesus Christ in his earthly life. Rather, a sacrament is warranted, for Hugh, if it is a sign which, through spiritual interpretation, aids the faithful in participation in the paschal mystery, uniting them to the LORD and vivifying them with the eternal life of the same. A sacrament should be analyzable in terms of a triadic structure which reflects, at once, the divine Trinity and the saving and reforming work of Christ in the Triduum.

One other Hugonian sacrament, still in use at the Easter Vigil, bears mentioning.

Hugh writes that:

Pope Zozimus established that a large candle be blessed on the Holy Sabbath of the Pasch, which the deacon blesses after benediction has been received from the priest. This candle designates Christ: in the wax humanity, in the fire divinity; and as it illuminates it precedes the catechumens to baptism, just as once a column of fire preceded the children of Israel as they crossed the Red Sea, illuminating by fire and shading by a cloud (cf. Ex. 14, 19, 20, 24, etc.). (2.9.5)

“Lead, kindly light....”

7.3.4 Vivification In Melius: Living in the Risen One as the Church's Transcendent Orientation Toward Eden-Exceeding Goodness

The horizon of goodness to which the Church is ultimately directed in its continuous growth is the mystery of Jesus Christ himself, the mystery of the hypostatic union. The way in which *On the Three Days* is, as I have argued in chapter 4, a repeatable spiritual exercise suggests this. The Church is ever anew entering the three days of her reformation, and so ever anew being directed to her Head who, as *On the Praise of Charity* has it, unites all opposites.²⁴⁵ This christological and paschal center applies, I have argued, both to the Church's sacramental development and, in a way mostly left implicit for Hugh, to its doctrinal development. As is the case with the individual theologian's constructive work, the whole Church's receptive-constructive pursuit of divine Truth is inextricable from her rise in divine Goodness. The former is gathered into, that it might better disclose, the latter.

The form of the Good in which the Church is re-formed, as Coolman points out, exceeds the goodness of Eden. He writes:

Hugh's notion of "reform for the better" does not imply a return to a prior pristine state of nature, nor a reinstatement of a sacred cosmos, nor a reification of immutable essences read off the face of original creation, but a Christologically governed, ecclesially enacted transformation into something new. The original *forma* of creation is sin-ravaged; its *reformatio* is not a return to an original creation, but a reaching forward to a new coherence, a new configuration, a new beauty. (28)

²⁴⁵ PL 176:974B.

Coolman's claim about the *newness* that is the orienting horizon of creation's reformation, the "new coherence", "new configuration", and "new beauty" toward which the "sin-ravaged" forms of the world are "Christologically governed", is best explored further, in Hugh's theology, in relation to creation's "ecclesially enacted" participation in Jesus Christ's resurrection. This is a systematic and 'Hugonian' extension of Hugh's thought. The resurrection – an eschatological appearance in the midst of history of a perfect human nature that has passed over through our sin and death and into the manifestation of an unprecedented, ineffable, incomprehensible union with the eternal Good to which it was already hypostatically united – *this*, I suggest, is the ever "better", the *in melius*, the *magis*, into which the whole Church is transcendently oriented, in Hugh's theology. The hypostatically united One is the risen Head whose unshakeable life the Church shares in the Spirit. She, like the Apostle, participates in his suffering in order to participate in his glory (Phil. 3:10). And the goodness of the risen LORD, the goodness of the hypostatically united Son, is in drastic excess of the goodness of Eden. In the hypostatic union, the goodness of the divine nature exceeds the goodness of the human nature as the infinite exceeds the finite, and this itself ineffably exceeds the way in which the goodness of the Triune LORD exceeds the goodness of Eden – not as adding to God but as dignifying creation – for in Jesus Christ the perfection of created nature is *joined* to the goodness of God *in the Son's personal identity*. Accordingly, the Goodness, the *magis*, the *melius* into which Christians are passing over and in whom Christians are being re-formed, united, vivified is none other than the risen LORD. Further, the *vivification* which Christians receive through sacramental participation should be understood, not only according to nature in its sin-ravaged state, and

not only according to its Edenic innocence, but according to the drastic and excessive vivification of personal participation, through the one Spirit, in the resurrection of the risen LORD. The sacramental life, for Hugh, is Christ's eschatological life here below, and Hugh's every reference to "spiritual" – as in spiritual exegesis, etc. – should ultimately be read in this eschatological light, as implying a sharing in the charity and fullness of the Last Day, which is itself a hypostatically-mediated baptism in the unfathomable and uncircumscribable Goodness of the LORD.

7.4 THE RISING PERSON

In this final section of the present chapter, and having treated in turn the world and the Catholic Church, we rise to an exploration of the individual human soul as participant in Christ's resurrection in the theology of Hugh of St. Victor. This exploration has four subsections. In the first, I discuss the cumulative work of the Holy Spirit in the human soul. The second concerns love of neighbor. The third concerns contemplative ecstasy or 'passing over'. The final characterizes creation's culminating participation in Christ's Passover: Hugh's eschatology of simplification.

7.4.1 The Goodness Life: The Cumulative Work of the Holy Spirit in the Soul

In Hugh's theology, the Triune LORD's reformation of the human soul in the triune likeness is cumulative in a way that moves toward the glory of a pneumatic finale.²⁴⁶ This same pattern is discernible in Hugh's works as he defines two modes of the divine indwelling. Hugh writes:

God dwells in the human heart after two modes – namely, by knowledge and by love. Yet these two are one abiding, for the double reason that everyone who knows Him loves Him, and that nobody can love Him without knowing Him. There seems, however, to be this difference between them, that knowledge erects the structure of faith by its knowing, whereas love like an adorning colour embellishes the building by its virtue. Each is thus seen to be essential to the other, for the building could not be glorious if it had never come to be, nor could it give delight were it not glorious. (*Noah's Ark* 1.1.5)

The Triune LORD's economic indwelling of the human person, appropriated to the Son as revealer of Truth (through the Spirit of Truth) and appropriated to the Spirit as outpourer of grace and charity, makes the re-formed human soul "glorious" and able to "give delight", beautiful in myriad desirable hue. In *On the Three Days*, Hugh associates this beautiful embellishment and perfection of the soul in charity with joy and the full light of day. Elsewhere, he associates spiritual participation in the resurrection with sweetness, and with the vivification of spiritual sense in general. All of these, in the terms of *On the Three Days*, are associated with the Holy Spirit and with the soul's 'rising' unto perfection. Yet a particularly clear line of sight into the ultimately

²⁴⁶ *On the Three Days* III

pneumatic quality of the human soul's whole re-formation can be gleaned from Hugh's short treatise *On the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit*.²⁴⁷

In *On the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, Hugh offers an overview of the process of human reformation in the paschal mystery in such a way that the cumulative work of the Holy Spirit in the soul is manifest. Indeed, the human participations in the paschal mystery which in *On the Three Days* correspond to the revelations of Father and Son are shown, in *On the Seven Gifts*, to accord with the deep structure both of *On the Three Days* and of Hugh's trinitarian soteriology as a whole: all human reformation, like all of the LORD's *ad extra* acts, proceed ultimately from divine Goodness or love, both appropriated to the Holy Spirit as reflections, through the psychological analogy, of the Spirit as the culmination and *telos* in the logical structure of the eternal divine life. This, at any rate, is how I suggest that Hugh's theology bids us systematically conceive it.

Early in *On the Seven Gifts*, Hugh speaks of the Spirit's cumulative operation in the whole process of human reformation. He writes:

The Spirit will come to you to make his dwelling in you. For when the Spirit comes, he will not discover a dwelling, but he will come to make it. First the Spirit will build, later he will dwell. First the Spirit will heal, later he will illuminate. The first is done for health, the later for joy. (I)

In this passage Hugh, first, considers the whole process of the Triune LORD's vivifying and unifying work in the human person as appropriated, throughout, to the operation of the Spirit. In addition to considering human reformation in terms of construction and illumination – both of which have received significant discussion in this project²⁴⁸ –

²⁴⁷ VTT IV:375-79.

²⁴⁸ cf. Chapter 6

Hugh also speaks of sickness and health, a soteriological metaphor which Hugh also frequently employs. Initially, the Spirit comes and does not discover a dwelling: the memory and intellect are not formed and structured according to wisdom, much less are they colorfully decorated by charity. Yet the Spirit builds, forming an edifice of Wisdom in the soul through the person's cooperative participation in the paschal mystery. As *Noah's Ark* 1.1.5 makes clear above, true knowledge and love of God are not really separable: though they correspond to distinct powers of soul, these must ordinarily²⁴⁹ work in tandem, as the person participates in the 'days' of the paschal mystery not only discretely but as the single, unified act by which the Triune LORD brings eternal life to the world. And so, as the Spirit decorates the dwelling, cooperating with the human's responsive knowledge and love, the Spirit also indwells the human soul. This indwelling, Hugh makes clear, is both "illumination" and "joy": it is the full light of the resurrection as the LORD rises interiorly in the soul, and it is the corresponding joy of the same.²⁵⁰ The whole objective process of human reformation is here attributed to the Holy Spirit's cumulative restoring work, spiritually connecting the human person to the LORD's Passover, and actively reconstructing and vivifying the person through the same.

Hugh proceeds to discuss the process of the Spirit's cumulative work in relation to the affective transformation – here, a movement from fear to love as it relates to the LORD's activity of illumination and the human soul's cooperative participations in the paschal mystery. The passage is rich, yet offers insight into the nexus of pneumatology

²⁴⁹ The qualification to this rule is in mystical union with God in this life, discussed in section 7.4..3 below; yet this tension itself seems overcome eschatologically, as discussed below in section 7.4.4.

²⁵⁰ cf. *On the Three Days* III.27.2 and III.27.4

and theological anthropology in the coherent perspective of Hugh's doctrine this project has been developing in relation to *On the Three Days*. Hugh writes,

He who is always one and the same in himself is multiplied in you. For he who is your love is himself your fear. *Jacob swore to Laban by the fear of his father Isaac*. For he who completes is the one who also begins. First he comes to you to make you fearful; but he comes in the end to make you loving. The light is the same that pricks bleary eyes and delights clear eyes: it does different things because it finds different things. Yet the Spirit is one in himself. He would also be one in you if he found you one. (III)

The first aspect of this passage to point out is that the Spirit both “begins” and “completes” the work of human reformation. It is the Holy Spirit throughout. This is a coherent claim within Hugh's overall trinitarian doctrine because (a), as emphasized above in relation to Hugh's theology of the sacraments, it is the Holy Spirit shared by Jesus Christ and his members that connects the members to Christ, and so allows their unifying and vivifying participation in the paschal mystery. Further, (b), there is therefore no ‘competition’ or contradiction between the claim that the Spirit works all human reformation and the claim that all human restoration is effected by the paschal mystery, for the Triune LORD works in history with a unity of operation: one would not be doing trinitarian doctrine were one to claim that the Spirit restores humans ‘separately’ from the paschal mystery: the only Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit shared by the Father and the Son: and the only salvation and union is to be unified with the Father through the visible ‘works’ of the Son and Spirit in history. Human participation in the paschal mystery is spiritual, is in the Spirit.

The second aspect of the above passage to point out is the human affective transformation – the movement from fear to love – Hugh points out. We have seen this

before, in *On the Three Days* III: Hugh says there that “fear” passes over into “reverent fear” or “wonder”. Here, Hugh traces the Spirit’s cumulative transformation of the soul which starts with awakening the soul to its guilt, and so to fear, and culminates in a fear that is itself transfigured by the LORD’s light and the presence of the virtue of charity. Fear, fulfilled and completed in the Spirit’s gift of charity, has itself become a fear formed by charity – suggesting the distinction in some medieval authors between servile fear and filial fear.²⁵¹

Third, notice Hugh’s attention to the unity of the Spirit, and also the unity of the “light” or grace by which the Spirit illumines the soul, and the way in which the soul perceives that light and that Spirit. For Hugh, the divided, disintegrated self can neither perceive straightforwardly the unity of the Spirit, nor the unity of the Spirit’s operations. The Holy Spirit, in a sense, seems like many spirits, perhaps like the many spirits of the different disordered affections and emotions that lord over the soul’s interiority. Yet, I suggest, as the self is unified in the paschal mystery through the operation of the One Spirit, the soul begins to perceive the unity of the Spirit’s illuminating activity, and the unity of the Spirit himself, and to enjoy and rejoice in that single and total brightness.

Hugh ends *On the Seven Gifts* with a pithy statement of the comprehensive soteriological unity of the Spirit’s operations through both pain and sweetness, bad and good. Hugh writes:

He who is your true good accomplishes your good out of what is not your good. A different good will be achieved for you later that comes not only through him but from him. For first he accomplishes your freedom from your pain, later he accomplishes your joy from his own sweetness. Nevertheless He is one and the

²⁵¹ e.g. Bernard of Clairvaux, *De Diligendo Deo* 14.38, Winkler I:140; cf. Aquinas *ST* 2-2 q 2 a 2

same in both works. In the first work he is the one who acts; in the other he is both the one who acts and the source from which he acts. (IV)

This passage begs to be interpreted in relation to *On the Three Days*. The Spirit is total goodness, the true good of humankind. Accordingly, the Spirit is joy, and the taste of the Spirit is sweet, and to partake of the Spirit's delight is to partake of the victory of the risen LORD, and to taste the Spirit's sweetness is to know the sweetness of the eschatological resurrection, and to know the Spirit's joy is to rise interiorly with Christ in the way one will, in the end, rejoice in rising totally with Christ. The Spirit makes use of the fear, pain, and irritation caused in disintegrated sinners by divine illumination. Yet the Spirit makes use of these as the beginnings of the cumulatively restoring, reforming trajectory of all the Spirit's works, working pain, fear, and irritation through light in order to draw the human person into a full participation in the paschal mystery. The Spirit, working one and the same divine light in the soul, works a myriad of unpleasant and pleasant works in order to unify the soul in goodness. The soul unified in its true good, in divine goodness, is integrated in God, and so partakes of the stability of eternity, formed by charity.

7.4.2 Good Works: Charity in Act

The fourth ascent is from the heat of the east, when we have gone on from good to better. For by no means can we ever reach perfection, unless we strive unceasingly to grow in the good things we do.

-Hugh, *Noah's Ark* 1.2.10

The cumulative work of the Holy Spirit in the soul, I have argued, forms charity in the soul through the soul's participation in Christ's resurrection. This charity is ordered at once to God and neighbor. In this subsection, I explore the way in which it is ordered to neighbor.

Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the person participates in the paschal mystery in such a way that she comes increasingly to love the Triune LORD as the highest Good, and to act out of that love. The soul, to the extent of its conversion or reformation, thus comes to mirror, in her own acts, the goodness which grounds the LORD's acts. As discussed above, all of the LORD's *ad extra* acts proceed, ultimately, from the LORD's goodness.²⁵² Hugh's theology invites us to make a correlative subjective connection. The soul, a triadic likeness of the Triune LORD, in the process of her own perfection in charity, comes, like the LORD, to act out of goodness, a good will, a sharing in the LORD's will. The more intensely a soul is unified in transcendent ordering to the Good who is God, the more diffusely her diverse acts here below proceed from, and manifest, love of neighbor.

Good works, for Hugh, are predicated on an intellectual understanding of the shapes, or forms, love takes in the world. In the order of the soul's actualization, will, and so intention, follows intellection. A particularly clear vantage from which to see this order – and to see the way in which, for Hugh, intellection of a form of love precedes one's imitation of or participation in that form – can be had by considering the way in which good works follow upon tropological interpretation of Scripture. In the preceding

²⁵² Section 7.2.1.

chapter, Chapter 6, I explored tropology, along with history and allegory, as intellectual practices of meditation. Tropology offers a ‘spiritual’ interpretation of Scripture – with the emphasis on *spirit*. Since inspired by the Holy Spirit, Scripture is normed in all its forms by the innermost form of charity it contains, the most intense disclosure of divine form in creaturely form, the paschal mystery. This entails that tropology itself follows on the structural and christological discipline of allegoresis. Tropological interpretation of Scripture interprets the various sacraments in history, and the various historical episodes recorded in Scripture, in signifying and symbolic terms as disclosures of divine Love and diffusions of divine Goodness which refract through the whole of the Scriptures and the whole of the world for our imitation and participation. That imitation and participation, as directed toward neighbor, is ‘good works.’ If doctrinal meditation and allegoresis, for Hugh, correspond loosely to speculative reason, the construction of a mirror in the mind of the Triune LORD from the whole of the LORD’s works, then tropological interpretation corresponds especially to practical reason: tropology holds up worldly forms of cooperative divine-human action in historical context, to form and free one’s imagination for similar historical action.

Harkins titles his chapter on tropology, “Living the Love Signified in Scripture.” One’s loves can be given proper order (*ordo*) – as both Augustine and Hugh have it – by imitating the biblical exemplars of love. Tropology offers the soteriological pedagogy of right moral action. Harkins interestingly suggests, in relation to Hans Robert Jauss’ elucidation of Stanley Fish’s axiomatic claim that ‘the reader’s response is the text’s meaning’, that Hugonian tropology, in a sense, shares this view of the text as finding its

full meaning as it is forged in the reader and so assumes “a contemporary existence” (290-1). While Hugh certainly does not share Fish’s metaphysical skepticism, yet there is a certain sympathy and resonance between Fish’s theory and Hugh’s tropological sense that the biblical text, internalized, is morally *useful* in guiding us to good acts. “Like a beautiful coat of paint or decoration on the exterior of a building,” Harkins writes, “the reader’s moral life is to be visible to the world” (256). The visibility of the reader’s good life, like the sacramental and exemplary visibility of the paschal mystery itself, makes the reader’s life a kind of sacrament ultimately of the same. The tropological biblical interpreter who cooperates with the divine light disclosed through textual interpretation herself assumes the shining form of divine goodness in the world.

At the end of the day, Hugh is interested in educating people for goodness rather than intelligence, or bookish acumen, alone. Good works, for Hugh, are the proper culmination and fulfilling of education. Education of only the intellect is not fully education: the person is not *led* to goodness, and hence no leading, no education, is ultimately happening. “If I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal”, St. Paul writes (1 Cor. 13:1). As Coolman observes:

Hugh himself often stressed the importance of the moral life, as of overweaning value among the various pursuits and occupations of the Victorine canon: To those already well educated... and pressing forward to perfection, he insisted that it is better “to be just than to be wise” – if they could not be both! In the legitimate pursuit of intellectual learning, they should seek to be “edified” not “preoccupied,” not to “make a business” out of study, nor to pursue the infinite number of books, “lest mere study take such a hold” that one “is forced to give up good works.” In those so directed, he warns, “God cannot dwell.” The ultimate objective, then, should always be “the pursuit of virtues” so as to be an abode for God. (192-3)

Coolman's orientation of his discussion of the importance of moral practices for Hugh toward divine indwelling is instructive. As we above quoted Hugh saying, the LORD ultimately dwells in the soul both by knowledge and by love, and these are inseparable. We moderns – like the medievals a scant century after Hugh – are inclined to balk: can't one know some really true things about God and Scripture without loving God, without theological faith? The questions are valid, and the subtle interrelations of knowledge and love in Hugh's thought perhaps give him more resources to engage the later questions than we here explore. Yet, seen within the framework of Hugh's christocentric trinitarian doctrine as a whole, and in its correlative theological anthropology, his overarching concern makes perfect sense. The inner life of the Triune LORD, following Hugh's suggestively sapiential take on the psychological analogy as explored in Chapter 1, is reflected in the unified cognitional act of knowing-loving. This implies the interrelated actualization of each of the soul's triadic powers: memory, intellect, and will, as a kind of unified, and so integrated, 'remembering contemplating loving.' The weight of the triad, as we have repeatedly seen, falls on the last member of the triad, on the 'loving' as it fulfills and collects the previous members in itself. This pattern, as we have seen, is mirrored in history as a whole, and we have tried to trace a hint of something analogous in the eternal Triune life. Now we come to our point. For a thinker like Hugh, whose thinking is structured at every level by the triadic likeness and trace of the Triune Creator, a likeness entailing the possibility of participation in the paschal mystery, what must be said of an intellectual who attenuates 'works of love' from her *forma vivendi* or *curriculum vitae*? Much, it turns out, and none of it good. To fail to practice works of

love is to fail even to think rightly about one's knowledge, for it is to fail to act out of the tropological implication of all knowing. More, to lock oneself away from works of love, to obsess only over reading and writing, is to thwart the formation of the likeness of the Triune LORD in oneself. It is to disorder oneself, and one's life – one's *forma vivendi*, to take up again one of Hugh's phrases – away from participation in the paschal mystery, and so away from contemplative union with the Triune LORD. To attempt to know, while resisting the call of love, is to thwart the full triadic actualization of one's soul: it is to attempt to be a fragmented soul, and in knowing the many apart from their unification unto God in the virtue of charity to become a dissipated and utterly fragmented self, legion, because many (Mk. 5:9). If Jesus Christ dies and is buried but does not rise, there is no *good* news, and no cause for rejoicing. The one who does not love does not mirror in himself the divine goodness out of which his self proceeds: to be so is to be tragically less than oneself, less than one, rather than becoming one.

7.4.3 Passover in the Dark: Affective Contemplative Ecstasy as Eschatological Foretaste in Intellectual Darkness

The cumulative work of the Holy Spirit in the soul increases the human person not only in good works of love for neighbor, but also, as the unified trajectory of all of the soul's loves, in love for God. Love for the LORD is expressed, for Hugh, in many ways, the highest and most unified of which is contemplation. Contemplation, for Hugh, and as I showed in chapter 4, is at once 'upward' and 'forward-eschatological'. If

memory is retentive, and intellect is synthetic (or speculative, receiving from memory and constructing), then will/affect, at least prior to the eschaton, is ecstatic. The contemplative ecstasies of love explored in this subsection, drawing both from Hugh's 'tropological love songs' and from his Dionysian commentary, concern the intellect, operating at the highest pitch or point of focused intensity, and gathered into love as cumulation and culmination. Love completes and fulfills intellect, adorning and beautifying its structure as much as it may be here below even as, and exactly as, decoratively exceeding it. If intellect aims at a structural imitation of the eternal divine Wisdom, the integrity and beauty of that structure alike come from the virtue of charity. Contemplation of the divine eternity stabilizes the soul. At the highest mundane levels of human cooperation with the Spirit's agency in the soul, the soul, aflame with love, passes over into union with God in a way that participatively reflects both the fact of the Incarnation itself – recall Chapter 2's discussion of the Incarnation as assumption and passover – and especially the fact of the Incarnation as it culminates in the paschal mystery's resurrectional finale.

While these points could be demonstrated at great length owing to the plethora of material, I here strive to demonstrate them with concision and, it is hoped, a measure of elegance. It will be argued that Hugh's perspective in this commentary coheres with that of his other writings in a way that is visible if we take *On the Three Days* as normative. That is, the historical vision of *On the Three Days* can be used to locate the mystic's ecstasies as given by the Spirit in a way that is both shy of, but really associated with, the eschaton. Moreover, Hugh's view that the human person's rising in joy and desire for

eternal goods, heart aflame, from desire of divine love is a participation in Christ's rising can be brought to bear on the passage. To be more precise and systematic, I will argue that the mystic's experience of 'love beyond knowledge' is a result of the fact that the Spirit dispenses the gift of divine union with God here below as a 'foretaste' of the eschaton. The mystic experiences something for which there is, as yet, neither language nor adequate cognition. St. Paul's mystical ascent comes to mind.²⁵³ The eschaton has also been 'seen' in the appearances of the risen Christ, but in the course of history – including in the mystic's own spatiotemporal locale – the theophany of the Trinity is not yet complete. The children of the Father are not yet risen bodily with Christ in pneumatic splendor, charity is not yet perfect in all the earth, and so the taste of God is experienced under the cover(s) of darkness, since the world's enlightenment is not yet full. And notice, correlative to this argument, that mystical union as a 'momentary' ascent, or passover, connects with a text we examined briefly in chapter 2 with respect to the motive for the incarnation: Hugh's argument in *On the Praise of Charity* that it is only through charity that God may pass over to man and man to God.²⁵⁴ The incarnation is God's passing over to man, while the ecstatic passover of divine union – which for Hugh manifests charity in the pitch of eros – is at once predicated on the incarnation (as the uniting of all opposites and overcoming of sin) and responds to the incarnation by participating in its resurrectional self-opening. *Mystical union is a name for that ineffable passover by which the human experiences risen contact with the LORD prior to the eschaton.*

²⁵³ 2 Cor. 12:1-5

²⁵⁴ PL 176:974B.

In exploring Hugh's mysticism, we study first some of his tropological 'love songs' before opening the Dionysian commentary.

7.4.3.1 Love Songs

In *The Praise of the Bridegroom*, Hugh offers the allegorical key – drawing on the spiritual interpretation of the *Song of Songs* so long perfected in the Christian mystical tradition – which sets the dramatic stage for much of Hugh's nuptially-inflected writing on contemplation. He writes:

The Bridegroom is God; the bride is the soul. The bridegroom is home when he fills the mind with interior joy; he goes away when he takes away the sweetness of contemplation. By what likeness is the soul called the bride of God? She is a bride because she is dowered with gifts of graces. She is also a bride because she is united (*sociata*) with him in a chaste love. She is a bride, because by the inspiration (*aspirationem*) of the Holy Spirit she is to be made fruitful with virtues, her offspring. (1)

Within the Spirit-driven framework of growth in the virtues, Hugh gestures at the relational dynamics between God and the soul in the amorous life of divine contemplation: disclosure and concealment, presence and absence, as the soul is alternately caressed and forlorn. Notice that the 'joy' the mind feels when flooded with God and the 'sweetness' of contemplation both are associated within *On the Three Days* with Christ's resurrection and eschatological fulfillment. To contemplate is always to participatively *rise* or ascend in and with Christ. Yet, sometimes the joy and sweetness of Easter are given the desirous contemplative, sometimes not. In *Noah's Ark*, Hugh shows that this dynamic serves to expand the soul and grow the soul's desire for God. He writes:

For He arouses our desire that He may increase it, quickening the love of Him in us by speaking, and goading us to follow Him by running away. For such is the heart of man, that if it cannot gain possession of the thing it loves, it burns the more with longing.... He offers himself, therefore, though He is not sought, that He may kindle us with love towards Himself. When He is sought, He flees, so as to lead us to run after Him. (*Noah's Ark* 1.4.9)

The spiritual dynamic of the contemplative ascent, then, is one in which the LORD discloses sweetness and delight to arouse the contemplative's love and woo her soul; when pursued, the LORD retreats so as to be pursued with even greater longing, stoking the heart's fire.²⁵⁵ This process serves to increase the contemplative's desire, increase the resolve of her pursuit, and so give birth to virtues in her soul, charity foremost of all. The pursuit of the Bridegroom, then, which is simultaneously an ascent to the eternal and a racing forward in desire to the eschaton – “Come, Lord Jesus!” – *stabilizes* the soul in charity and the other virtues by the supreme stability of divinity (cf. *Noah's Ark* 1.4.6).

To the degree that the soul is stable, integrated, and virtuous, the soul will cleave to the LORD all the more mightily. Moreover, such cleaving, for Hugh, is enabled and furthered by the spiritual senses of the soul, which are thematized in Hugh's thought in relation to the lexical field of Easter Sunday, particularly in relation to contemplation, love, joy, desire, fire, ascent. Hugh writes that, in order that the soul might be capable of enjoying the LORD in “bliss, He put love in it, a certain spiritual sense of taste, as it were, to relish inward sweetness, so that through that very love it might savour the happiness of its true joy and cleave to it with unwearying desire” (*On the Nature of Love*). Hugh strikingly describes the spiritual senses developed by the contemplative as the LORD's putting love *in* the soul, a locution made all the more interesting given that

²⁵⁵ *On the Three Days* III.27.4.

he has just described the creation of the “rational spirit by no necessity but out of love alone” (ibid.). Creation itself, for Hugh, is motivated by love, and rational creatures seem to have a kind of magnetic orientation toward, or spiritual taste for, the spiritual Love that created them. Hugh continues:

By love, then, God has joined the rational creature to Himself, so that by ever holding fast to Him it might as it were by its affection suck, by its desire drink, and by its joy possess in Him the good that would make it happy. Suck, little bee, suck and drink the sweetness of thy Sweet that passes telling! Plunge in and take thy fill, for He can never fail unless you first grow weary. So cleave to Him, abide in Him, receive Him and have joy of Him. If appetite be everlasting, everlasting too shall be the blessedness. (ibid.)

The growth in the contemplative’s virtues, spiritual senses, and overall appetite for the LORD is part and parcel of the way in which the LORD is forming humans in the paschal mystery *in melius* toward an everlasting Goodness that may be enjoyed freely and fully by an everlasting desire. Charity, which Hugh describes as both strengthening and inebriating, is key: “Charity is like wine. For wine makes those whom it inebriates sprightly, bold, brave, forgetful, and in a certain way insensible...” (*Noah’s Ark* 1.3.8). The soul consolidated in charity, integrated in charity, made strong, brave, bold, and lion-like (ibid.), is also in a sense *inebriated* in charity, forgetful of all but the LORD, an enthusiast, drunkenly attentive to the LORD in all things.

As the soul increases through contemplation in charity and the other virtues, and so increases in the Triune LORD’s likeness, the soul-bride, becomes, like her Bridegroom, beautiful. For Hugh, Jesus Christ the Bridegroom is “the most beautiful of all” (*Soliloquy* 14), and those who are near to him are made accordingly beautiful in their affection. “She who is nearest is utterly beautiful” (*The Praise of the Bridegroom* 8).

Hugh concludes *On the Praise of Charity* with a richly trinitarian summation of the LORD's operation to raise human persons in Christ to contemplative union. He writes:

Flow into us, therefore, O sweet and pleasant charity. Enlarge our heart, expand our desire, unfold the inmost part of our mind, [and] amplify the dwelling place of our heart so that it can receive God as its guest and inhabitant. May our only Redeemer and Savior Jesus Christ the Son of God pour and lavishly distribute you in our hearts through His Holy Spirit so that He Himself with the Father might deign to come to us and make a dwelling in us, [Christ the Son] who with the same Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, [one] God forever and ever. Amen.

The infusion of charity in the heart is, for Hugh, the unified and unifying work of the whole Trinity. The amorous, nuptial, and 'inebriation' qualities of Hugh's doctrine of divine union are explored further in his Dionysian commentary.

7.4.3.2 The Dionysian Commentary

The section of Hugh's very long Dionysian commentary I here explore has been explored numerous times in the last century – by Roques, Poirel, Zinn – and most recently by Paul Rorem. Rorem affirms the judgment of previous scholars (Poirel, Roques) that Hugh is a fair and faithful interpreter of Dionysius, with the exception of importing his own 'love over knowledge' paradigm, which exercises a great influence in the middle ages and beyond, starting with the Victorine-Franciscan stream. Rorem's interest lies – in contrast to Poirel's judgment – in denying that Hugh's own theology is influenced by that of Dionysius in any significant respect. Rorem passes over in near silence, for example, Grover Zinn's discernment at times of an hierarchical 'purgation, illumination, perfection' scheme in *Noah's Ark* (Rorem, 172) – a conclusion the present project suggests deserves to be explored further if only because *On the Three Days* can

be read exactly as a mystical ‘purgation, illumination, perfection’ scheme, centered in the (evidently quite revised and now ‘ontochronological’) ‘hierarchy’ of the three day paschal mystery.²⁵⁶ Yet, of course, ‘purgation, illumination, perfection’ schemes are in the water by the 12th century. The question is what sort of Dionysian influence helpfully or demonstrably requires or earns one the designation ‘Dionysian’. For Rorem, Hugh rather remains “Augustinian” or, better, “his own Victorine” (172).²⁵⁷ Discussing Hugh’s nuptial ‘love above knowledge’ interpretation of Dionysius, and intermittently quoting Hugh’s commentary, Rorem writes:

It is in this context of the bridal chamber that Hugh says: “This is not ... a great love, unless it go through as far as the bridal chamber, and enter the room, and penetrate as far as the interior things, and rest in your innermost [spaces].” Then comes the well-known passage quoted earlier: “Love [*dilectio*] surpasses knowledge, and is greater than intelligence. He [the beloved of the *Song*] is loved more than understood, and love enters and approaches where knowledge stays outside.” Hugh was rarely that interested in the apophatic, but the image of a threshold here is the end of knowledge and thus the beginning of *unknowing*. These angels “surround by desire what they do not penetrate by intellect.” The bridal chamber of love is beyond the realm of knowing, and thus later authors can associate it with the darkness of unknowing, whether the cloud of Mt. Sinai or the dark night of the lovers’ embrace. Bonaventure, of course, became the master of these poetic associations, but it is Hugh of Saint Victor’s excursus that opened the way for this influential turn of the Dionysian apophatic toward the Franciscan affective. (175)

²⁵⁶ Grover A. Zinn, Jr., “*De Gradibus Ascensionum*: The Stages of Contemplative Ascent in Two Treatises on Noah’s Ark by Hugh of St. Victor” in John R. Sommerfeldt, Larry Syndergaard, and E. Rozanne Elder, ed.s, *Studies in Medieval Culture V* (The Medieval Institute, Western Michigan University, 1975), 61-79.

²⁵⁷ Poirel suggests that Hugh read and assimilated Dionysius early, such that the fact that lexical traces of Dionysian influence are largely missing is because Hugh has integrated Dionysianism seamlessly into his own theological thinking before he starts writing. Rorem’s argument is that, all the same, there is inadequate evidence that Hugh has integrated Dionysianism to any meaningful degree; hence Rorem’s discussion emphasizes the straightforward way Hugh expositis Dionysius, with general plodding faithfulness, and with the notable exception of Hugh’s famed and influential ‘love beyond knowledge’ section.

Rorem's discussion here is exact in naming Hugh as fontal source for the development of the initially Victorine-Franciscan *affective* Dionysian mystical tradition.²⁵⁸ Yet what Rorem does not explore is the way in which Hugh's nuptial imagery is also, at times, expressed in the key of 'passing over', of *transitus*, an important part of the lexicon both for his christology and, as will be explored in the next section, for his eschatology. This language is also, just possibly for Hugh, paschal imagery, imagery of the Passover – a poetic association which Bonaventure will clearly find, and in relation to which I have systematically structured this project.²⁵⁹ Yet the term retains its suggestive and structural interest even if we're a bit agnostic about whether Hugh intended it as Bonaventure would later. Moreover, mystical ascent is, for Hugh, 'rising', a participation in Christ's *resurrection* – a feature which places Hugh's Dionysian commentary more-or-less harmoniously within the present project's reading of Hugh as a whole. Hugh writes:

For 'sharp' signifies an onrushing of love, the vehemence of burning desire, of bearing itself into the beloved, of entering of penetrating, in order that it might be there, where that which is loved itself is, with that very one, and in that very one, in order that it might not only be fiery from that very one, but that the sharpness might pass over (*transeat*) into that one. For it was able to be fire, even to become fiery as though from afar: this would be enough for someone [*cui*] to love one who is thus absent, and not to see the one who is present, or even to possess the one who is most present. But this was not the perfect love of the hierarchy, nor of the very lovable, unless it should make itself sharp, and pass over/through all things (*et transiret omnia*), and penetrate, until it arrives at love, or rather, goes into the beloved. For if you do not go into the beloved, you still love at a distance, and you do not have the sharpness of love. But you have [the following]: being torpid, you remain separated and outside such that you are not made one with the beloved. But love wishes to make itself one with the beloved: and therefore it penetrates all things, and approaches as much as it can to one with the beloved. (1037C-1038A)

²⁵⁸ Boyd Taylor Coolman, "The Medieval Affective Dionysian Tradition" in *Re-Thinking Dionysius*, eds., Sarah Coakley and Charles M. Stang, *Modern Theology* 24.4 (2008): 615-32.

²⁵⁹ *Itinerarium* 7, Cousins pp. 110-16.

Hugh's lexicon here twice instantiates 'passover' language, familiar language from Hugh's christology: "God assumed man; man passed over (*transiuit*) into God."²⁶⁰ For one to hear a structural connection in Hugh's thought here is not eccentric; the human nature assumed is, first of all, Jesus Christ's, who is also the Bridegroom betrothed to the soul in Hugh's mystical literature. If this is a correct interpretive intuition, then it is right to hear, or look for, a systematic connection between Hugh's doctrine of the mystic's responsive penetration of, or passover into, Christ in eschatological splendor and Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union. This interpretive hunch will receive a vindication in a quotation employed in the next (eschatological) section. Moreover, the historical orientation provided by *On the Three Days* provides a clue as to how Hugh's 'love above/beyond knowledge' doctrine in *In Hierarchiam* might be understood systematically. Notice the fiery, and so 'rising', lexical coding in the above passage – which is, truth be told, nearly ubiquitous in this part of the Dionysian commentary. Yet there is a riddle. In *On the Three Days*, the 'rising' and fiery ascent in desire of divine love presupposes knowledge. The wisdom of the second 'day' integrally structures charity. How can Hugh, then, speak of love proceeding without knowledge in his Dionysian commentary? My speculation is that we ought understand the mystic's love exceeding knowledge inasmuch as the nuptial union in intellectual darkness enjoyed by the mystic is, quite precisely, an eschatological foretaste. In the light of the eschaton – as we will see in the next section – love and knowledge are again mutually entailing, maybe even convertible. Yet the Spirit, it seems, grants mystical ecstasies in which the

²⁶⁰ *On the Sacraments* 2.1.4; Berndt p. 294.

contemplative's affect exceeds her intellectual level of illumination, which is bound, conceptually and otherwise, to her historied spatiotemporal location. "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world", as Wittgenstein remarked.²⁶¹ Yet the Spirit takes the mystic, at times, beyond her language and so beyond her ability to speak of that which she encounters. It is thus coded as intellectual darkness. This argument that, for Hugh, erotic mystical union delivers an eschatological foretaste finds support in the *Soliloquy*. Hugh writes:

It truly is your Beloved who visits you, but he comes invisibly, in a hidden way, and incomprehensibly. He comes to touch (*tangat*) you, not to be seen by you; he comes to move you, not to be grasped by you; he comes not to pour himself out completely into you, but to offer you a taste (*gustandum*); not to fulfill your desire, but to elicit your affection (*affectum*). He is extending to you the first fruits (*primitias*) of his love; he does not offer full and perfect union (*non plenitudinem exhibet perfectae satietatis*). This is the core of his betrothal-gift to you: he, who in the future will give himself to you to see and to possess unendingly, now sometimes offers himself to you as a foretaste (*gustandum*) so that you may recognize how sweet he is. At the same time, you are consoled meanwhile for his absence, when you are unceasingly refreshed by his visitation so you will not grow faint.²⁶²

Here, affective visits and gifts from the Bridegroom are a foretaste (*gustandum*) of what is to come in the eschaton. Hugh's 'love beyond knowledge' mystical doctrine is hence sensibly interpreted as trading on the Spirit's arousing solicitations given to human persons bound, so far as their knowing extends, to their place in the third 'day' of history in which the final illumination and revelation of the Triune LORD is not yet pleromatic. The children of God are not yet raised and revealed, and, hence, the mystic's secret love is accompanied by intellectual darkness.

²⁶¹ "Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt." Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* 5.6

²⁶² *Soliloquy* 70, VTT 2:228, PL 176:970C.

Notice, further, the way in which the above passage from *Soliloquy* speaks of the Bridegroom's desire to "elicit... affection" (*trahat affectum*). The LORD's caress and foretaste is offered in hope of a response. The Bridegroom elicits this response – preserving an Augustinian rather than Pelagian structure to the relationship. And yet, the shape of the divinely desired Eros seems reciprocal. In a passage which plays up the reciprocal Eros of the divine encounter, he writes:

And for this reason too it was necessary that it be incessant, that she might enter, and penetrate and that she might say: *I held him: and I will not let him go, till I bring him into the house of my mother, and into the chamber of her that bore me.* "I bring him, into the house of my mother, and into the chamber of her that bore me." Therefore he himself will enter you, so that you may go into him. For then you will enter to him, when he himself comes into you. When his love (*amor*) enters your heart, and penetrates, and his love (*dilectio*) reaches to most intimate part of your heart; then he himself enters into you, and you also enter yourself, so that you may go into him. (1038B-1038C)

The structure of divine-human relationship, perhaps distantly evocative of the Dionysian 'reciprocal ecstasy,' begins with divine indwelling or penetration of the self, which itself invites responsive indwelling or penetration of the divine. The strong reciprocity of this mutual *transitus*, penetration and indwelling of the other is striking in light of the reciprocity entailed in Hugh's Gennadian christological axiom, the importance of which I have repeatedly underscored, as well as an intriguing and illuminating eschatological remark Hugh makes in *Noah's Ark*.

7.4.4 Eschatological Simplification in Triune Love: Creation One with God in and through the Paschal Mystery

Hugh's eschatology, as it stands in the received texts, is notoriously underdeveloped. The eschatological sections of *On the Sacraments*, in particular, seem unfinished. They seem to be little more than the patristic citations of largely Augustinian provenance upon which Hugh intended to meditate in writing out his eschatological doctrine.

Nevertheless, Hugh makes a fascinating claim in *Noah's Ark* that allows us to offer a brief interpretation of Hugh's eschatology in elegant concord with the centrality of the paschal mystery in the overall interpretation of his doctrine here on offer. Doing so allows us to then gather a few other quotations to fill out our interpretation concisely. The key quotation from *Noah's Ark*, as Hugh allegorically interprets the inhabitants of the 'storeys' of the ark, is as follows:

Man occupies the fifth storey, together with the birds. The vigour of reason and intelligence is denoted by man, and the mobility of incorruptible nature by the birds. When, therefore, 'this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality', then we, being spiritual in mind and body equally, will after our small measure understand everything through the illumination of our minds, and have power to be everywhere through the lightness of our incorruptible bodies. Our minds will fly by contemplation, our bodies will fly on account of incorruption. We shall perceive with our mind, and in a manner of speaking we shall perceive with our bodies too; for, when our bodily senses are themselves converted into reason, and reason into understanding, then understanding will pass over (*transibit*) into God, to whom we shall be united through the one Mediator between God and men, the Lord Jesus Christ. (*Noah's Ark* 1.1.15, CSMV p. 69)

There is much of systematic interest in Hugh's reflection here: the birdlike mobility Hugh associates with incorruptibility; the body becoming as spiritual as the mind; the plenary illumination of the human intellect; the ability to fly; perception by means of our spiritualized bodies, themselves converted into reason, and reason into understanding, and understanding passing over into God. It is a picture of glorified creation in the pleromatic intellectual brightness of divine light²⁶³: in short, of the eschatological 'daylight' of divine union, the fulfillment of the mystic's 'nocturnal' present and fleeting experience of divine union in intellectual darkness. Yet I suggest that the most important part of this passage is its conclusion, in which Hugh speaks of human understanding passing over (*transibit*) into God, and immediately speaks of the indispensable mediation of Christ, and so of the hypostatic union, in accomplishing this union.²⁶⁴ Hugh's eschatological lexicon for the passover of human creatures into God here mirrors his fundamental Gennadian christological axiom: "*deus hominem assumpsit; Homo in deum transiuit.*" "God assumed man; man passed over into God."²⁶⁵ The hypostatic union accomplished by the passover of Christ's human nature into hierarchical identity with the divine person of the Word, motivated by love,²⁶⁶ ordered to union,²⁶⁷ manifested to the apostles through the Spirit in Jesus Christ's resurrection,²⁶⁸ accomplishes its goal when human persons pass over fully into God on the basis of the Word's assumption of human

²⁶³ Like doctors before and since, Hugh has a doctrine of the beatific vision. e.g. *Noah's Ark* 1.10, CSMV p. 57

²⁶⁴ *Discernemus mente et, ut ita dicam, discernemus et corpore, quando ipsi sensus nostri corporei uertentur in rationem, ratio in intellectum, intellectus transibit in Deum, cui nos coniungimur per unum mediatorem Dei et hominum, Dominum Iesum Christum.* De Archa Noe, PL 176:633A, Sicard p. 29.

²⁶⁵ *On the Sacraments* 2.1.4.

²⁶⁶ Section 2.1.1

²⁶⁷ Section 2.1.1

²⁶⁸ cf. Chapter 3 Excursus

nature. There is an upward ‘simplification’ of humans in Hugh’s eschatology as the lower is rolled up into the higher, yet not in such a way that the lower is annihilated. The body, made spiritual and intellectual, is not destroyed, but rather filled with divine Spirit, human spirit, and illumined human intellect, such that the body becomes not only the instrument of mind but, in an important way, itself mind. The human body passes over into mind in a way that is at least analogous to the way in which Christ’s human nature has passed over into the Word. In Hugh’s eschatology of spiritualization and simplification, soul and body are brought to a greater integration, a greater unity – in the culmination the spiritual brings the accumulation of worldly materiality into itself – such that in its upward simplification and assumption the bodies of humans, like Christ’s resurrection body, receive a redoubled plenitude of majesty and dignity.²⁶⁹ Risen bodies fly, like mind in God.

7.5 CONCLUSION: ONE

In this chapter, and following Hugh’s theology, we have ascended to the heights, to union with God, following the subjective polarity to its fulfillment in union with the

²⁶⁹ Part of what impresses Hugh about the human person in the eschatological state is her surpassing harmony and integration. He writes in *On the Sacraments* that:

Now in so far as pertains to substance, even then there will be flesh. Therefore, after the resurrection the body of Christ was called flesh. Thus the Apostle says: “It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body,” (1 Cor. 15:44), because so great will be the harmony of flesh and spirit that, while the spirit vivifies the subject flesh without the support of any insatiable desire, nothing from ourselves will oppose ourselves but, just as we shall suffer no enemy outwardly, so we shall not suffer ourselves as enemies within. (*On the Sacraments* 2.17.17)

objective polarity of divine action. In this chapter I first traced the way in which the world itself, created by the pleromatic goodwill and kindness of the Triune LORD, becomes itself, in its lovely and diverse array, useful for our ascent to God. Second, I studied the way in which the Catholic Church, in its *in melius* passage through the world toward the eschaton, is continually renewed, in its sacramental practice and development, by the divine form disclosed in the paschal mystery. Third, I traced the Spirit's cumulative re-forming work in the individual person or soul, issuing in good works and contemplative prayer oriented toward mystical union. Finally, we came to rest in an intriguing and suggestive eschatological passage in *Noah's Ark*, in which Hugh argues that the human person, risen in Christ, is eschatologically 'simplified upward': bodies are converted into reason, reason into understanding, and understanding passes over into God. The itinerary this chapter has followed, as a whole, can be remembered in relation to Hugh's exhortation in *On the Three Days*: "[J]ust as we have risen in Him as He rose on the third day, so, too, let us, rising on the third day for Him and through Him, make Him rise in us."²⁷⁰

This chapter brings to a conclusion the second part of the present project, completing a trio of chapters exploring the subjective polarity of our participation in Christ and reformation through the days of the paschal mystery. Across Part Two we have seen that Hugh's practice of trinitarian theology is comprehensive, grounded in a christocentric trinitarian spirituality which transforms the human person through a gradual process of enlightenment. This reformation starts with the first apprehension of

²⁷⁰ *On the Three Days* III.27.2.

God as Father and Judge, at length passes through meditation and illuminative acquaintance with the Savior as Wisdom and Truth, and is consummated in charity by that same Spirit who – it is then seen more clearly – has been the one working in the person all along. In the Spirit's spiritual delights we rise in Christ who rises in us and brings us into the eternal unity of the Trinity. This state, tasted darkly and intermittently here below, will obtain for eternity when, in and through his resurrection, Christ's beloveds pass over luminously into God. And the two shall become...

PART THREE

8.0 ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION IN THE PASCHAL MYSTERY: ECO-CHRISTOLOGIES, SPIRITUALITY, AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF *LAUDATO*

SI'

*Finally, there is green, the most beautiful of all.
How it enraptures the minds of those who see it,
when in a truly new way shoots come forth with new life
and standing up in their stalks,
which seemed to have been trodden down by death,
bud forth together into the light
in a symbol of the future resurrection.
-Hugh of St. Victor, On the Three Days, 1.12.2*

The encyclical *Laudato Si'*, translated “Praise Be!” suggests a close relationship between our own individual and communal care for “our common home” and our ability to praise the Creator.²⁷¹ Pope Francis issues a call for an “ecological conversion” which, in view of the real threat to human and environmental well-being, needs to be global. As *Laudato Si'* (hereafter often *LS*) states starkly:

Doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or disdain. We may well be leaving to coming generations debris, desolation and filth. The pace of consumption, waste and environmental change has so stretched the planet’s capacity that our contemporary lifestyle, unsustainable as it is, can only precipitate catastrophes, such as those which even now periodically occur in different areas of the world. The effects of the present imbalance can only be reduced by our decisive

²⁷¹ Pope Francis, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015).

action, here and now. We need to reflect on our accountability before those who will have to endure the dire consequences. (*LS* 4.161)

In short, the situation is rather bleak. We stand in need of ecological conversion, teaches the Pope, and sooner rather than later. I will more fully define and describe what Francis means by ‘ecological conversion’ below. Suffice for the moment to say that there is a relationship between our level of ecological conversion and our ability to freely and fully praise the Creator, at the very least at the level of logical consistency. Pope Francis takes St. Francis of Assisi as an icon at once for ‘ecological conversion’ and for the praise of God, an iconic status exemplified in the *Canticle of Creatures* by which, indeed, the title *Laudato Si*’ is inspired.

Yet a tension, ultimately fruitful, can here be indicated. On the one hand, Pope Francis wants to address “every person living on this planet” (*LS* 3) – and indeed St. Francis has demonstrated a wide appeal beyond the visible bounds of the Roman Catholic Church and even beyond Christianity. On the other hand, St. Francis, often in our time associated with ecological concern, is in fact as a theologian resolutely traditional, resolutely trinitarian and christocentric, resolutely focused on the Eucharist.²⁷² St. Francis is, in a word, as specifically and particularly *Christian* in his theological convictions as one can imagine. In the midst of this tension between the generally human and the specifically Christian, Pope Francis wishes to speak to all humanity, but not to leave all humans unchanged in their theological, philosophical, or spiritual

²⁷² This characterization accords with Augustine Thompson’s recent historical study of Francis. Augustine Thompson OP, *Francis of Assisi: A New Biography* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012).

convictions.²⁷³ Pope Francis' viewpoint, I suggest, coheres if we regard the people on planet Earth as in different places in a progressive biblical trinitarian pedagogy ordered to uniting creatures with the LORD. These are my terms, but I think them apt.²⁷⁴ Lacking even the rudiments of a healthy spirituality, those who deny a Creator will have exacerbated intellectual and perhaps practical problems interacting with the world in a way not subject to the *libido dominandi*.²⁷⁵ Among those who acknowledge the Creator, the human family is spread out along a spectrum: all religions and cultural and spiritual traditions presumably have much wisdom to offer, and at this level those who are of whatever religion implicitly stand in reception of at least the beginning of the Triune God's self-manifestation and self-signification in the biblical trinitarian pedagogy by their implicit agreement with the initial claims of Genesis, however loosely construed. At the same time, Pope Francis, in making St. Francis our icon of the ecologically converted soul, draws or invites all of his readers both to a fresh analysis of our present situation and into the deeper waters of the Christian faith – into reception of and reflection on the basis of the Holy Bible's witness to the progressive and cumulative historical revelations of Son and Spirit.²⁷⁶ Pope Francis offers two prayers at the

²⁷³ So he both corrects misinterpretations of the biblical witness regarding humans "dominion" in creation (2.67) and, while affirming the Church's dialogues with the philosophies, including atheistic philosophies, of various cultures and the syntheses of faith and reason which they bear forth into the light (2.62-3) also candidly states, "A spirituality which forgets God as all-powerful and Creator is not acceptable" (2.75). Forgetting the omnipotence of the Creator, he worries, creates a conceptual vacuum in which humans can assert absolute dominion. Notice that the religiously atheist and religious fundamentalist versions of the destructive human assertion of absolute dominion over the earth appear as two sides of the same coin, inscribed on both sides with the image of Caesar.

²⁷⁴ I think them also 'Hugonian' – *historia fundamentum est* is the pedagogical beginning of Hugh's spiritual project which terminates in divine union. Salvation history is foundational to Christian mysticism.

²⁷⁵ Anna Rowlands, "Laudato si': Rethinking Politics", *Political Theology* 16 no. 5 (2015): 418.

²⁷⁶ cf. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio theol.*, 5.26 (= Oratio 31.26): PG 36, 161-163.

conclusion of *LS*, the first of which can be prayed by all who acknowledge the Creator, while the second is explicitly Trinitarian – and it is this second prayer which ends as the encyclical begins, “Praise be to you!” The full praise of God, and so the fullness of ecological conversion, is, for Pope Francis as for St. Francis, a matter ultimately trinitarian, and ultimately christological with respect to the Triune God’s reconciling act in history. A quotation from Jean-Louis Chrétien makes the crucial connection between praise, the paschal mystery, and the unification of all things in Christ in a way evocative of the thought of Hugh of St. Victor and relevant to the trajectory of this chapter. He writes:

For the Christian faith, this song [of the world that offers the world to God] is possible only by an *event* that precedes our own possibilities, and springs from the loving divine freedom alone. The only song that irreversibly says *Yes* is the Paschal song: it takes place only in the passion and resurrection of the incarnate Word.... No one participates in resurrection unless they have truly participated in death.... The recapitulation or bringing together (*anakephalaiôsis*), ‘under Christ as head’ of ‘everything in the heavens and everything on earth’ spoken of in the Letter to the Ephesians is the very event, the very advent, of the offering of the world to God, the site from which the song of the world becomes possible.²⁷⁷

In short, in a way implied in *Laudato Si’* and stated more directly by Chrétien, “Praise Be!” depends upon the recapitulation or unification of all things in the paschal mystery.²⁷⁸ The culmination of the human doxological response to God awaits upon the Son of God’s dying, burial, and rising. Our praise of God and our ecological conversion are ultimately included within and so find their source in Jesus Christ’s passover. For the programme of *LS* to be carried out in the Church, then, implies a more total mystical

²⁷⁷ Jean-Louis Chrétien, *The Ark of Speech*, trans. Andrew Brown (New York: Routledge, 2004), 146.

²⁷⁸ For an important study of Chrétien in relation to prayer, see Andrew Prevot, *Thinking Prayer: Theology and Spirituality Amid the Crises of Modernity* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015), 140-61.

participation in the paschal mystery, and of the Church's Eucharistic life in which our bodies and voices become Jesus Christ's.

The programme of *LS* is also helped by, and implicitly dependent on, a robust enough christology to render its moral and spiritual summons theologically coherent and compelling. It is thus significant that *Laudato Si'* has been criticized on biblical grounds for its lack of christology, particularly Pauline christology, specifically as this bears on and could have strengthened *LS*'s major focus on the doctrine of creation. Brendan Byrne, SJ, argues that even within the sections employing the insights of faith, *LS*'s use of the New Testament is underdeveloped. He writes:

Apart from a few scattered references here and there, the New Testament really features only in a final section of chapter 2 entitled "The Gaze of Jesus" (*LS* 96-106). Here the encyclical simply notes, in a rather homiletic tone, the keen perception of the natural world that is a constant feature of the imagery employed by Jesus in the Gospels. A couple of final paragraphs (*LS* 99-100) dealing with "the destiny of all creation" appeal to the role of Christ in creation as recorded in the Prologue of John (1:1-18) and the hymn describing his preeminence in Colossians 1:15-20. A brief allusion to 1 Corinthians 15:28 in connection with Christ's handing all things over to the Father at the end of time brings this sparse appeal to the New Testament to a close. (309)²⁷⁹

Byrne is clear that "it is not [his] intention to fault" (*ibid.*) the long encyclical for its sparse use of the NT given the burden of its already colossal and complex subject matter. Rather he offers "a Pauline complement to the scriptural base of the encyclical in the interests of adding to its theological weight and credibility... [thus] providing a richer scriptural background for the overall argument" (*ibid.*). Byrne's focus is on thickening the encyclical's theological account of how believers ought relate to creation by tapping

²⁷⁹ Brendan Byrne SJ, "A Pauline Complement to *Laudato Si'*", *Theological Studies* 77 no. 2 (2016): 308-27.

into Paul's own rereading of creation texts in his designation of Christ as the "Last Adam."

While a modest defense of *LS* could be made on a few particulars of Byrne's critique – I think Byrne underplays the theological richness of the encyclical's use of the NT texts he catalogues – in the main he makes a good point: *LS* is given theological weight by further, and specifically Pauline, christological citation and reflection. It is not that the relevant christological insights – on the presence of the resurrected Christ with and to all creatures in foretaste of the eschaton, say – are entirely absent. It is that they are underdeveloped biblically and theologically, and so benefit from a "Pauline Complement".

Similarly, and relatedly, I suggest that *LS* benefits from a spiritual or mystical complement, or even midwife, to its goal of fostering ecological conversion. Also, like Byrne, I do not point this out to be critical in the sense of negative. I love *Laudato Si'* and want it to be read and internalized, by myself first of all. What I offer here in this christological and mystical complement is aimed at and offered in the hope of the spiritual and ethical influence of the encyclical. In calling for a new and ecological spirituality, Pope Francis would seem to welcome such a complement: "The rich heritage of Christian spirituality, the fruit of twenty centuries of personal and communal experience, has a precious contribution to make to the renewal of humanity", he writes (*LS*, 6.216). This companion to *LS*, indeed, will endeavor to gather some of the fruit of our Christian heritage in order to strengthen the spiritual and theological connections between praise, paschal mystery, and ecological conversion exemplified for Pope Francis

in the person of St. Francis of Assisi. A more vivid sense of the ways in which we can participate in Jesus Christ's redeeming all things would be enabled by a richer appreciation of the unification of all things in Christ's paschal mystery. That is to say, a richer *subjective* christological and ecological spirituality can flow from a correspondingly rich *objective* christology. A companion to *LS* emphasizing both the objective and subjective christological poles allows us to make the spiritual and moral transformation of ourselves and our ecological engagement in the world in a way that is genuinely intrinsic to and fully integrated within our Christian discipleship. Anna Rowlands has suggested that, in *LS*, "Francis pleads for a more mystical political theology.... This encyclical baptizes no form of politics we currently have on offer."²⁸⁰ A mystical political theology – that is to say, a political theology bound up with ecological conversion and subjective christology – also begs for an objective christology seen in its relation to the subjective human response. We need to see the ways in which our sins against our mother Earth are a participation in Jesus' execution on Good Friday, the way in which our reflections which further our ecological conversion participate in Holy Saturday as the darkness of the tomb is itself overshadowed by Christ's resurrection, and the way in which our "new lifestyle" – including our politics – is a mystical participation in Christ's own resurrection, a "walking by the Spirit" which will be disclosed fully at the eschaton. This is, in short, what Pope Francis means in calling for an ecological spirituality, a spirituality which flows from and fosters ecological conversion. This christological and mystical companion to *Laudato Si'* aims to enable us

²⁸⁰ Rowlands, "Laudato si'", 419.

to receive the encyclical in a comprehensive Christian spiritual horizon that allows us to pass through study and reflection to active and effective practice. My chapter will indeed conclude in a very practical recommendation for the implementation of the encyclical which follows from the christology here developed.

Perhaps surprisingly, I think a good deal of help is offered here by a perhaps unlikely source – though not, I expect, in the context of this dissertation: the 12th century Augustinian canon, theologian, and mystic Hugh of St. Victor. In Hugh's theology, all of creation and history, including the spiritual life of the Christian or theologian herself, are unified in the 'three days' of Christ's paschal mystery – which is a self-manifestation of the Trinity to boot. In previous chapters, I characterize Hugh's theology as receptive-constructive, thematized according to the three days of the paschal mystery. In this chapter I will demonstrate an aspect of the contemporary relevance of the interpretation of Hugh's theology I have developed in parts I and II of this dissertation. I hope not only that the spirituality I put forth helps with the ecological conversion and practice of Christians, but that both liberal and conservative Christians might find the christological perspective here developed alluring, perhaps challenging and certainly helpful. In the course of this chapter I argue both that some 'low and liberal' christologies, in addition to being insufficiently attentive to the witness of the Holy Bible, are insufficient to the reception of *Laudato Si'* and to genuinely Christian ecological conversion. Further, I argue for an extension of biblical, traditional, orthodox christological positions to include, entail, and begin to articulate the Triune God's restoration of the nonhuman creation in Jesus Christ in a way that makes Pope Francis' moral call to conversion in *Laudato Si'*

correspond to and flow from impeccably orthodox christological commitments. Thus I hope to offer a midwife or companion to ecological conversion relevant, if not entirely agreeable, to Christians from across the theological spectrum.

There are four parts to this chapter. In the first I briefly discuss the ‘ecological conversion’ for which Pope Francis calls in *LS*, connecting it to the encyclical’s christological claims in their close connection to spirituality and praise. This section serves to further define the term ecological conversion, and clarify the christological horizon in which it operates. In the second part, then, I transition to discuss and argue for the central importance of the paschal mystery for eco-theologies within trinitarian doctrine and, indeed, the relevance of the paschal mystery for fostering ecological conversion according to the icon of St. Francis of Assisi. I thus engage the work of two living ecotheologians from the angle of christology: Sallie McFague and Celia Deane-Drummond. McFague’s eco-theology is intent to motivate in practical ways the new lifestyle which Pope Francis characterizes with the phrase “ecological conversion”. She is also concerned with the praise of the Creator. However, I argue that her christology is inadequate for the praise of God in the fullest sense of which Pope Francis makes St. Francis our icon. That is to say, McFague does not praise God on the basis of God’s atoning for and overcoming our sins against Mother Earth in Jesus Christ’s passover, nor does she praise God for Jesus’ resurrection as an eschatological inbreaking which reveals to us the glorious telos of the whole creation. McFague finds these beliefs about Jesus Christ absurd. The praise of which she speaks, in short, is not fully Christian praise, at least insofar as it corresponds to her christology. Similarly, McFague’s understanding of

ecological conversion stands in crucial respects outside what Pope Francis means by ecological conversion as something accomplished within the paschal mystery: something that God is doing in all creation because God has done it first in and through the dying, burial, and rising of Jesus Christ in history. In contrast to McFague, then, is Celia Deane-Drummond. Deane-Drummond furnishes an example of an eco-christology getting lots of things right, a christology which can warrant and sustain the kind of praise and the kind of ecological conversion for which *LS* calls. The mystical complement to *LS* I am developing with Hugh of St. Victor stands to gain much from her work.

In part three I expound briefly a theology of the unification and integration of all things in the paschal mystery. It is thus ‘objective’ christology. This christology follows the main trajectories of Hugh of St. Victor’s articulation of the paschal mystery in *On the Three Days*, reread in light of *Laudato Si’* and in conversation with the work of Celia Deane-Drummond. This christology, I argue, is sufficient to ground and make sense of the Christian ecological conversion for which Pope Francis calls. Finally, in part four I develop the corresponding ‘subjective’ Hugonian eco-christology as it relates to the reception and implementation of *LS*. This is the ‘mystical’ part of our companion to *LS*. This subjective christology flows into an interpretation of the structure of *LS* and yields insight into the way in which *LS* can be read, embraced, and implemented as a means of union with Christ via participation in the paschal mystery. Part four thus fosters an outline or itinerary appropriate for use by local churches and the pastors who guide them into ecological conversion as well as for individual Christians and academics studying these things in a personally involved way – which is to say, in a way responsive to the

Trinity's saving acts in history. Part four concludes with a brief recommendation for a way to implement *LS* in a serious and intentional way through three day retreats spiritually structured by the three days of the paschal mystery and the theology and spirituality I here articulate.

Without further ado, our itinerary begins by looking at the topics of ecological conversion and christology in *LS*.

8.1 ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION AND CHRISTOLOGY IN *LAUDATO SI'*

8.1.1 Ecological Conversion

Ecological conversion is taken up at greatest length in the sixth and final chapter of *LS*. Moreover, ecological conversion is intertwined with themes that are explored throughout chapter 6 and cannot be deeply appreciated apart from the context of the whole chapter. For Pope Francis, ecological conversion names the spiritual, intellectual, and moral conversion of human persons and communities *away from* futile and compulsive, ecologically destructive habits of seeking fulfillment through product consumption and *toward* the new life of virtue, moderation, and right delight in created beauties through orientation to the transcendent. Ecological conversion entails repentance for sins against creation and, in its most fully catechized forms of orientation to the transcendent, trust in the atoning work of the risen Lord Jesus Christ and praise of the Holy Trinity resulting in delight and the joy of discovering the Triune LORD in all

things. Such conversion involves and is furthered by a retrieval of the riches of Christian spiritual traditions in a new aspect, resulting in an “ecological spirituality.” Moreover, St. Francis, also an inviting figure to many persons outside the Christian faith, stands as the icon of the ecologically converted soul: one who, through union with Christ “lived [his earthly life] in full harmony with creation” (2.98), praises the Trinity with full freedom and lives simply and in harmony with his brother and sister creatures. Notice that ecological conversion, for Pope Francis, is not a different conversion than the holistic spiritual, intellectual, and moral conversion entailed in the pedagogy of biblical trinitarian faith. Rather, ecological conversion names an oft-neglected “dimension” of Christian conversion. Pope Francis understands himself, in part, as lifting neglected spiritual riches of the Christian tradition into the light in a new way in order to expose a neglected facet of life lived in obedience to the Holy Spirit, a facet of Christ’s likeness peculiarly visible, he urges, in St. Francis. In this section, I will first describe ecological conversion as Pope Francis describes it within chapter 6, and in that context. We will see that ecological conversion hinges on personal encounter with Jesus Christ. This leads to my second topic, the objective reconciling work of Jesus Christ’s incarnation and passover as described in *Laudato Si’*, which leads in turn to my third topic: the subjective human response to and participation in Jesus Christ’s objective reconciling act, that is to say, the full fruits of ecological conversion in the human person.

So, first, to ecological conversion, approached by way of the context in which it comes to us. The pit of sin and vice from which ecological conversion delivers us is, for Pope Francis, slavery to compulsive consumerism, which taxes the Earth’s resources

inordinately. This means a conversion in our relationship to the market and to advertising. “Since the market tends to promote extreme consumerism in an effort to sell its products”, Pope Francis writes, “people can easily get caught up in a whirlwind of needless buying and selling” (6.203). Pope Francis quotes Romano Guardini to the effect that new technologies are embraced and continually re-form our very “forms of life” – and we think that our conformity to the new “is both reasonable and just” (ibid.). Hence, people “believe that they are free as long as they have the supposed freedom to consume” (ibid.) – and in this we fail to note that our forms of life are being determined by those who “wield economic and financial power”. Moreover, our consumption does not fulfill us; rather, it consumes us, makes us greedy, and insecure, even as we participate anxiously in a whirlwind that disproportionately damages the poor and those who live in less politically stable regions. Yet we remain consumed by buying: “The emptier a person’s heart is,” says Pope Francis, “the more he or she needs things to buy, own and consume. It becomes almost impossible to accept the limits imposed by reality” (6.204).

Yet, there is hope: we can cooperate with the grace of the Triune God and transform ourselves. Pope Francis writes: “No system can completely suppress our openness to what is good, true and beautiful, or our God-given ability to respond to his grace at work deep in our hearts. I appeal to everyone throughout the world not to forget this dignity which is ours. No one has the right to take it from us” (6.205). Fulfilled by grace rather than left empty by consumption, individuals and, indeed, communities are capable of embracing a “new lifestyle” of conversion to the common good who is the Triune LORD.

This new lifestyle is cultivated through what Pope Francis calls “environmental education”, which educates “for the covenant between humanity and the environment” (6.II). Francis’ explanation of ecological conversion emerges from his treatment of environmental education. Environmental education aims at both instilling new habits and information. Of the new habits, Francis writes, “Only by cultivating sound virtues will people be able to make a selfless ecological commitment” (6.211) – which should also be encouraged by appropriate laws. Here is how he describes the intellectual formation within environmental education:

Environmental education has broadened its goals. Whereas in the beginning it was mainly centered on scientific information, consciousness-raising and the prevention of environmental risks, it tends now to include a critique of the “myths” of a modernity grounded in a utilitarian mindset (individualism, unlimited progress, competition, consumerism, the unregulated market). It seeks also to restore the various levels of ecological equilibrium, establishing harmony within ourselves, with others, with nature and other living creatures, and with God. Environmental education should facilitate making the leap towards the transcendent which gives ecological ethics its deepest meaning. It needs educators capable of developing an ethics of ecology, and helping people, through effective pedagogy, to grow in solidarity, responsibility and compassionate care. (6.210)

Whereas sin disrupts and disintegrates human relationships with God, self, neighbor, and the nonhuman creation, environmental education is a pedagogy focused on the healing and reintegration of these relationships, particularly as they bear on the created order.

The orientation toward God which is part of the environmental pedagogy Pope Francis enjoins is furthered, within the pedagogy of the Christian faith, at once intellectually through doctrine, and affectively and experientially through spiritual practice. Having received the form of Christ, we construct ourselves in light of it through

responsive theological and spiritual practice. Here, then, is how Pope Francis introduces the topic of ecological conversion in the section with that title:

The rich heritage of Christian spirituality, the fruit of twenty centuries of personal and communal experience, has a precious contribution to make to the renewal of humanity. Here, I would like to offer Christians a few suggestions for an ecological spirituality grounded in the convictions of our faith, since the teachings of the Gospel have direct consequences for our way of thinking, feeling and living. (6.216)

Ecological conversion, then, has to do with embrace of what he calls an “ecological spirituality.” Motivation and affect through spiritual practice is key:

More than in ideas or concepts as such, I am interested in how such a spirituality can motivate us to a more passionate concern for the protection of our world. A commitment this lofty cannot be sustained by doctrine alone, without a spirituality capable of inspiring us, without an “interior impulse which encourages, motivates, nourishes and gives meaning to our individual and communal activity.” Admittedly, Christians have not always appropriated and developed the spiritual treasures bestowed by God upon the Church....” (ibid.)

Pope Francis’ own quotation, within my quotation of him, is to his *Evangelii Gaudium*.

Christian spirituality, here as ecological spirituality, is the fountain of motivation and sanctified affection necessary to sustain and deepen ecological conversion. This resource, as Pope Francis laments, has not always been utilized. He expands his lament thus:

“The external deserts of the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast.” For this reason, the ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion. It must be said that some committed and prayerful Christians, with the excuse of realism and pragmatism, tend to ridicule expressions of concern for the environment. Others are passive; they choose not to change their habits and thus become inconsistent. So what they all need is an “ecological conversion,” whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience. (6.217)

Pope Francis' own quotation is of Pope Benedict XVI. And here Pope Francis discloses the essence of ecological conversion: ecological conversion is the effects of one's encounter with Jesus Christ becoming manifest in one's relationship to the nonhuman creation. Ecological conversion is interior to and an intrinsic part of full Christian conversion, rather than a secondary add-on. Pope Francis moves immediately from his concise definition of ecological conversion above to St. Francis as the exemplification or icon of an ecologically converted soul:

In calling to mind the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi, we come to realize that a healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion, which entails the recognition of our errors, sins, faults and failures, and leads to heartfelt repentance and desire to change. The Australian bishops spoke of the importance of such conversion for achieving reconciliation with creation: "To achieve such reconciliation, we must examine our lives and acknowledge the ways in which we have harmed God's creation through our actions and our failure to act. We need to experience a conversion, a change of heart." (6.218)

Our repentance, in the fully Christian sense, is intrinsic to full ecological conversion. St. Francis is an icon for us of a devout penitence which embraces simplicity and unity with all creation. In commending repentance, Pope Francis does not have in mind only converted individuals, but "a community conversion" (2.620).

8.1.2 Objective Christology in *Laudato Si'*

Ecological conversion, as predicated on encounter with Jesus Christ, and as intrinsically involving repentance of sins, is grounded on the objective work of Jesus Christ in the paschal mystery. This is my second topic, the objective christology of *Laudato Si'*. Pope Francis says that this conversion is furthered in light of the "security

that Christ has taken unto himself this material world and now, risen, is intimately present to each being, surrounding it with his affection and penetrating it with his light” (6.221). Both as incarnate and as already passed over into the risen and eschatological state, Jesus Christ is united to the material world and is present to it. Francis’ consideration spans from Christ’s incarnation – his union with the created and indeed material world – to his risen and eschatological state in which he is spiritually present to and illuminating all creation. Jesus Christ’s death by crucifixion and his being-dead on Holy Saturday remain implicit within the span of consideration rather than explicitly taken up. Yet, in this reference to Christ, Pope Francis gestures backward to his prior development, in chapter 2, of convictions of Christian faith which “can help us to enrich the meaning of this [ecological] conversion” (6.221). Let us, then, attend to the christological enrichments of *LS* chapter 2, “The Gospel of Creation.”

The christological emphases of chapter 2 which Pope Francis bids us receive to enrich the meaning of ecological conversion span from the inner life of God to the eschaton, and include Jesus’ earthly ministry and crucifixion. Regarding Jesus’ mundane life and ministry, Francis emphasizes Jesus’ harmony with and embrace of the material and nonhuman creation. This includes Jesus’ non-ascetic embrace of the “pleasant things” of life, like food and drink, and Jesus’ work with his hands – his “daily contact with the matter created by God, to which he gave form, by his craftsmanship” (2.98) Pope Francis quotes Pope St. John Paul II that, through his own labor as a craftsman, Jesus makes labor and work a means of union with Christ crucified, and so with God.

Pope Francis also has much to say about the mystery of Christ from protology to incarnation, and from passover to the eschaton. He writes:

In the Christian understanding of the world, the destiny of all creation is bound up with the mystery of Christ, present from the beginning: “All things have been created through him and for him” (Col 1:16). The prologue of the Gospel of John (1:1-18) reveals Christ’s creative work as the Divine Word (*Logos*). But then, unexpectedly, the prologue goes on to say that this same Word “became flesh” (Jn 1:14). One Person of the Trinity entered into the created cosmos, throwing in his lot with it, even to the cross. From the beginning of the world, but particularly through the incarnation, the mystery of Christ is at work in a hidden manner in the natural world as a whole, without thereby impinging on its autonomy. (2.99)

In light of the way in which the mystery of Christ is the telos of all creation, Pope Francis specifies that it is “particularly through the incarnation” – including the cross – that Christ *works* hiddenly in the whole natural world, in a way that does not threaten the world’s freedom. The incarnation, here, is the center and heart of God’s work in the whole cosmos. Francis’ phrase “even to the cross” seems an echo of Phil. 2:8. Again, the centrality of the paschal mystery *within* the incarnation seems, at best, implicit, though it is certainly included. Pope Francis now concludes chapter 2 with simple elegance and theological profundity, once again on an eschatological note. In this passage, the centrality of the paschal mystery in the reconciliation and unification of the cosmos reaches its most nearly explicit level in *Laudato Si’*:

The New Testament does not only tell us of the earthly Jesus in his tangible and loving relationship with the world. It also shows him risen and glorious, present throughout creation by his universal Lordship: “For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross” (Col 1:19-20). This leads us to direct our gaze to the end of time, when the Son will deliver all things to the Father, so that “God may be everything to every one” (1 Cor. 15:28). Thus, the creatures of this world no longer appear to us under merely natural guise because the risen One is mysteriously holding them to himself and directing them towards

fullness as their end. The very flowers of the field and the birds which his human eyes contemplated and admired are now imbued with his radiant presence. (2.100)

Both the blood of Christ's cross and the risen and eschatological presence of Jesus are nestled closely in this passage, and their effect is universal reconciliation, eschatological peace, God's being all in all. All creatures are "mysteriously" held to the risen Christ, united to him, reordered to himself as their fullness and end (for Christ is the one in whom God's fullness dwells). This eschatological horizon in its connection with the risen Christ and the restoration of all creation is an important (and Pauline) focus in *LS*'s christology, which Pope Francis also emphasizes in 2.83, with similar content.

Interestingly, Francis notes that this work of Christ manifest in history and directing our attention to the eschaton results in a gift of spiritual vision, where we see creatures differently. This is among the subjective aspects of ecological conversion, to which Pope Francis, and I, will return. Note that Pope Francis does not address Christ's burial on Holy Saturday – this remains implicit, with the focus on Christ's crucifixion and resurrection.

Before turning to the topic of our subjective participation in Christ, or our ecological conversion, in *LS*, a few concluding notes on Pope Francis' objective christology in *LS* are in order. First, in dialogue with Byrne, it should be noted that, while *LS* can benefit from a Pauline biblical and theological deepening, particularly I think as it bears on the paschal mystery, what Francis offers of Pauline and paschal theology is concise and profound. Though he does not dwell on it at length, in the final passage quoted above the paschal mystery emerges – in further specification of the previous claim of the incarnation as the center of God's work in the cosmos – as the locus

of the purgation, illumination, and unification of the cosmos. Pope Francis' Pauline quotation emphasizing universal reconciliation and peace through the blood of the cross, nestled within his own eschatological reflections on the risen Lord, vividly if fleetingly gives his reader a glimpse of Christ's dying and rising as the becoming one of all creatures with God, the historical enactment, locus and manifestation of God's being, eschatologically, all in all. The paschal mystery – in the objective act of the Triune LORD upon which and the subjective appropriation of ecological conversion is based – deserves further theological reflection in relation to the reception and implementation of *Laudato Si'* pastorally and in Christian discipleship.

8.1.3 Subjective Christology in *Laudato Si'*

Subjectively – moving now and more briefly to my third topic – Pope Francis suggests that the responsive human participation in the Triune LORD named by ecological conversion bears various fruits. These include joy, peace, a contemplative life, simplicity, liberating sobriety from compulsive consumption (which is to say, from bondage to sin), moderation, humility, and a deeper and more grateful posture towards life. Love will also be expressed concretely through civic and political life. Mystics, wherever they are to be found in relation to the pedagogy of biblical trinitarian faith and the pedagogies of other religious traditions – and Francis here footnotes the 9th century Sufi mystical poet Ali al-Khawwas – will sense “the mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person's face”, and will “discover God in

all things” (6.233). The “mystic experiences the intimate connection between God and all beings, and thus feels that “all things are God”” (6.234) – quoting, there, St. John of the Cross. The mysticism inside and outside the visible Church is, Pope Francis suggests, fulfilled in sacramental worship – and so praise. “The sacraments”, he teaches, “are a privileged way in which nature is taken up by God to become a means of mediating supernatural life. Through our worship of God, we are invited to embrace the world on a different plane” (6.235). The culmination of this responsive sacramental praise of God is the Eucharist. The Eucharistic prayer and ritual, explicitly a participation in the paschal mystery, are discussed by Francis in a way that emphasizes their relation to the incarnate Son. Pope Francis’ core remarks on the topic bear quoting:

It is in the Eucharist that all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation. Grace, which tends to manifest itself tangibly, found unsurpassable expression when God himself became man and gave himself as food for his creatures.... In the Eucharist, fullness is already achieved; it is the living center of the universe, the overflowing core of love and of inexhaustible life. Joined to the incarnate Son, present in the Eucharist, the whole cosmos gives thanks to God. Indeed, the Eucharist is itself an act of cosmic love... it embraces and penetrates all creation. The world which came forth from God’s hands returns to him in blessed and undivided adoration: in the bread of the Eucharist, “creation is projected towards divinization, towards the holy wedding feast, towards unification with the Creator himself.” Thus, the Eucharist is also a source of light and motivation for our concerns for the environment, directing us to be stewards of all creation. (6.236)

The Eucharist, for Pope Francis, flows from the grace of the incarnation and most specifically of the paschal mystery. It is the becoming tangible of paschal grace which penetrates all creation, uniting it to the Creator (as Francis quotes Benedict XVI). The fullness of divinity and the fullness of creation – both present in Christ – are in the Eucharist dispersed throughout the cosmos as “the overflowing core of love and inexhaustible life”. This ‘life’ is the incarnate Son’s real, continuing, and risen presence

tangibly in our midst and with the agency of the Spirit. The Eucharist, for Francis, is thus also a source of Christ's light and of spiritual *motivation* – there is that word again – in our work for the environment. In short, the Eucharist, as the continuing source of the reconciling act of the paschal mystery in our midst, furthers our responsive conversion, and specifically also our ecological conversion.

The further subjective fruits of ecological conversion include the restored ability – at least in some measure – to discern the trinitarian structure in all things. Pope Francis works here from St. Bonaventure. The result of discerning the image of the Trinity in all creatures – possible as one is oneself reformed in the triune likeness – is praise. Indeed, praise of the Trinity is indeed the closing note of the encyclical entitled *Laudato Si'*, “praise be”. “Let us sing as we go” (6.244), Pope Francis invites us, enticing us to embrace the ecological conversion characteristic of his namesake St. Francis of Assisi, “*Praise be to him!*” (6.245)

In conclusion, Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* calls for an ecological conversion in the likeness of Jesus Christ, a conversion whose icon is St. Francis. His suggestive theological sketches of the person and work of Jesus Christ in *Laudato Si'*, which I refer to as the encyclical's objective christology, invite deepening. Further, his encyclical calls for the Christian development and embrace of an ecological spirituality. Hence I offer below both a christological and mystical companion to *LS*, inspired by the theology and spirituality of Hugh of St. Victor, and in furtherance of the ecological conversion for which Pope Francis calls.

8.2 ON THE CENTRAL IMPORTANCE OF THE PASCHAL MYSTERY FOR ECO-THEOLOGY

The underdevelopment of the theology of the paschal mystery in *Laudato Si'* – excellent and potentially fecund though Pope Francis' extant reflections on it are – is not, in the field of eco-theology, conspicuous to *Laudato Si'*.²⁸¹ One understandable, but I think mistaken, trend among some living ecotheologians is to attend heavily to the doctrine of creation to the relative neglect of the doctrine of cosmic salvation through the cross of Christ. The influential and noteworthy Anglican feminist ecotheologian Sally McFague is emblematic of this trend. Even McFague's language about incarnation, as we will see, is about creation as "procreation-emanation" rather than particularly about Jesus of Nazareth. McFague is an important interlocutor in this section not only because of her exemplification of this trend, nor only because of her prominence in the subfield of feminist eco-theology, but also for her influence in some strands of liberal Protestant Christianity. Her set of moves is not infrequent in the "working theologies" of some pastors and churchgoers in mainline Protestant denominations, including my own. I treat McFague first in this section, yet hers is not the only story. There are also ecotheologians who resist the tendency to downplay christology. Celia Deane-Drummond, who has written a monograph of eco-christology, is exemplary in this respect.²⁸² I treat Deane-

²⁸¹ So Celia Deane-Drummond's observation, "It is surprising, perhaps, that while the literature on eco-theology has proliferated in the last half century, there is a relative lack of sustained focus on the relationship between ecology (or evolution more generally, for that matter) and Christology." Celia Deane Drummond, *Eco-Theology* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2008), loc. 2678.

²⁸² Celia Deane-Drummond, *Christ and Evolution: Wonder and Wisdom* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009).

Drummond second in this section. Her work has much to offer a christological companion to *Laudato Si'* centered on the work of the Triune LORD in the paschal mystery, and so, likewise, much to offer a mystical companion to *LS* aimed at furthering ecological conversion within the biblical trinitarian faith.

8.2.1 Sallie McFague – Non-Christological Christology, Equivocal Doxology

Sallie McFague is a significant figure in matters feminist theological and eco-theological. As is or perhaps should be the case with any accomplished and interesting theologian, McFague's thought is comprised of a constellation of different elements and concerns, which add up to a wonderful whole in which the deep analysis of her thought requires the making of connections between the various elements. Some of these elements and concerns, necessarily oversimplified, are as follows. McFague holds that theological language is humanly constructed, metaphorical, mostly fictional and that Scripture is a source but not a norm for Christian theology; she has yet, through spiritual practice and a good spiritual director, grown over her life in the experiential conviction that God is real and God is love²⁸³; she is motivated in her stance toward theological language by both feminist concerns and the concern to take seriously the contemporary scientific understanding of reality; she eschews teleological interpretations of natural phenomena as requisite for theologians who take modern science seriously, and in a way

²⁸³ Though the following reading of McFague's christology is very critical, I very highly regard the four 'conversions' in her journey which she shares in her short religious autobiography at the start of her *Collected Writings*, particularly her experiential conviction that God is love. Sallie McFague, *Collected Writings*, David B. Lott, Ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013), xxiii.

that sometimes dovetails with her feminist opposition to hierarchy; she relishes “working theologies”, theologies that one can truly live and practice to good ends for the world and the excluded; she is a kind of panentheist, relishing both divine immanence and transcendence as it manifests as beauty and elicits wonder; her preferred metaphorical model in her panentheism is that of the universe as the “body of God”, which for her is a metaphorically incarnational paradigm; christologically, her focus is on Jesus Christ as metaphorically paradigmatic of incarnation, yet not unique, not qualitatively different from the way in which you or I or trees or plants are God incarnate or “body of God”; she likes the creation spirituality writers yet thinks their vision is utopian and eschatological, and underplays sin and injustice;²⁸⁴ and simultaneously she shies away from focus on Jesus Christ's death as sacrificial atonement for human sins, that is to say, she stands aloof from classical Christian soteriology.

I myself feel the allure of some of these positions. Others I think should be resisted. Of all of these positions, I want to argue that the most problematic are the christological ones. These positions are, alas, perhaps inextricable from McFague's views on theological language and divine revelation, yet an adequate engagement with her on that front would take me too far afield: others have engaged McFague on this front and my own will be minimal and in the service of my christological criticisms.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁴ While she points out that ‘creation spirituality’ “is a loose rubric and could include such diverse writers as Alice Walker, James Lovelock (of the Gaia thesis), Susan Griffin, and Starhawk” (*The Body of God* 232), McFague uses it especially to designate those writers within it influenced especially by the Christian tradition: “Thomas Berry, Matthew Fox, Brian Swimme, and their followers” (ibid., 70). Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993).

²⁸⁵ For engagements with McFague on metaphor, see, recently, Katherine Abetz, “Metaphor or ‘better for’? An appraisal of Sallie McFague’s ‘metaphorical theology’”, *Pacifica* 27, no. 1 (2014), 28-49, as

McFague's christology is problematic in that she underplays both the uniqueness of Christ and the centrality of the Paschal mystery – that is to say, her theology is inadequate in terms of both the person and the work of Christ, as each relates to the other and as both relate to the salvation of individuals and of the cosmos. *Laudato Si'* knows no conflict between classical Christian soteriology or christology, on the one hand, and ecological concerns, on the other. Rather there is assumed a surpassing fit. Indeed, the strongest way to put the criticism of McFague, within the concern for ecological conversion, is that McFague gives us a version of ecological conversion extrinsic to Christian conversion, or as something other than Christian conversion. That is to say, her theology indeed gives us a focus on a new lifestyle in relation to the created order, yet does so from outside the central soteriological and christological frames of biblical trinitarian faith. Yet where McFague's revision of Christianity dis-integrates its ecological and ethical aspirations from the soteriological vision of classical trinitarian faith, Hugh of St. Victor's thought offers a way to reintegrate all these things, every good and perfect gift, including ecological ones, in Christ, and so within a christology and soteriology weighted toward the paschal mystery. To McFague's work, then.

In *The Body of God*, McFague states that she will be “suggesting two interrelated moves in regard to christology” (162). Her first move “is to relativize the incarnation in relation to Jesus of Nazareth and the second is to maximize it in relation to the cosmos” (162). To appreciate what McFague means by “relativize the incarnation” one needs to know first what she is denying. Indeed, McFague simultaneously finds classical

well as David Bromell, “Sallie McFague's Metaphorical Theology,” JAAR 61 (1993) 485-503; Ted Peters, “McFague's Metaphors”, Dialogue 27 (1988) 131-140 .

Christian soteriological and christological affirmations absurd, while misconstruing them in key respects. It is helpful to take in the tenor and texture of her characterizations in order to appreciate this. She begins her Christology chapter as follows:

“And the Word became flesh and lived among us” (John 1:14a). The scandal of uniqueness is absolutized by Christianity into one of its central doctrines, which claims that God is embodied in one place and one place only: in the man Jesus of Nazareth. He and he alone is “the image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15). The source, power, and goal of the universe is known through and only through a first-century Mediterranean carpenter. The creator and redeemer of the fifteen-billion-year history of the universe with its hundred billion galaxies (and their billions of stars and planets) is available only in a thirty-year span of one human being’s life on planet earth. The claim, when put in the context of contemporary science, seems skewed, to say the least. When the world consisted of the Roman Empire (with “barbarians” at its frontiers), the limitation of divine presence to Jesus of Nazareth had some plausibility while still being ethnocentric; but for many hundreds of years, well before contemporary cosmology, the claims of the other major religious traditions have seriously challenged it. In its traditional form the claim is not only offensive to the integrity and value of other religions, but incredible, indeed, absurd, in light of postmodern cosmology. It is not remotely compatible with our current picture of the universe. (159)

One hardly knows where to begin in appraising this remarkable paragraph. Does Christianity claim that God is “embodied in one place and one place only”? We have just seen Pope Francis claim that the incarnate Son of God is presently embodied in the Eucharist, seen him affirm the feeling known to mystics that all things are God, seen him claim that the Eucharist (and so Christ) embraces and penetrates all creation. To boot, McFague overlooks influential thinkers like St. Maximus the Confessor, for whom God is perhaps becoming incarnate in all creation *in and through* Jesus Christ. Hugh of St. Victor, as I note in chapter 6, speaks with universal theophanic inflection at times.²⁸⁶ Further, might the patriarchal geniuses ostensibly behind traditional Christianity have

²⁸⁶ See section 6.3.3.

noticed that Col. 1:15, which McFague quotes, might stand in some theological relation to Gen. 1:27 in a way that falsifies her “He and he alone”? Further, is it the case, in classical Christianity, that God is known through and only through Jesus Christ? Granted, there are christological complexities here if one has (as many have) a cosmic christology allowing one to claim that all divine truth is always known in and through Christ, even when it is known by “natural” philosophical means, because perhaps the *logos* is the *logoi* and vice versa.²⁸⁷ But this is a highly abstract matter, and in either case the *prima facie* epistemological meaning of McFague’s claim is falsified by the existence of natural theologies galore in the Christian tradition, a tradition which is happily ever eager to borrow from Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, and Proclus, and whose medieval masters were distinguished not least by their reception of medieval Jewish and Muslim metaphysical streams, and which shows many signs of an ongoing if (in the US) slow engagement of Hindu and other non-Western metaphysical streams – to say nothing of the decree of Vatican I on natural knowledge of God. Karl Barth and his distinctive heirs, alas, do not alone the tradition make, despite Barth’s centrality at a certain stage of McFague’s theological development.²⁸⁸ Further, and apart from the question of natural

²⁸⁷ Maximos the Confessor, *On Difficulties in the Church Fathers: The Ambigua*, vol. 1, Nicholas Constas, ed., trans. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 94/95.

²⁸⁸ Her awestruck account of encountering Barth deserves to be repeated in her own words, as does her mature appraisal of its imbalance. McFague records that her childhood experience of God “lay dormant... during my teenage years growing up in Boston as a member of a conventional Episcopal church. At most, God was the Great Moralizer, the upholder of proper appearances and conduct. My second conversion occurred at college while reading Karl Barth’s *Commentary on Romans*. Suddenly the transcendence of God took on a whole new meaning for me. I began to have a glimmer of what the word “God” meant. My boxed-in, comfortable, tribal notion of God was split wide open and like a cold, bracing mountain wind, the awesome presence of the divine brushed my life. That evening I walked home from the library in a daze; I had seen something I would never forget: that God is God and nothing else is. My teacher and mentor, H. Richard Niebuhr, would call it “radical monotheism,” and Paul Tillich described it as the Protestant Principle. It is Christianity in its “Protestant” or

theology, in ridiculing the claim that “the source, power, and goal of the universe” might be known “through and only through a first-century Mediterranean carpenter”, McFague just seems deaf to Christian rhetoric, sermonics, poetics. Claims which maximalize the categorical relevance of Jesus Christ in all of his poverty, Galilean provinciality, humility, and particularity are claims in which Christians more often than not, and rightly, revel and exult. As Johann Georg Hamann remarks with apt relish, “The more edifying the speaker, the heavier his Galilean shibboleth weighs on our ears.”²⁸⁹ Further, is it the classical Christian claim, as McFague avers, that the creator and redeemer of our aged universe is “available only” for 30 years? This is so stupefying a misconstrual one is tempted to cut her some slack on the grounds that she is engaging in polemic, yet, even so, her claim “seems skewed, to say the least”, not as much in the context of contemporary science (which bears on it not at all) as in the context of any book bearing a title like *Introduction to Christian Theology*. Further, as McFague says, has it ever been a Christian claim that the divine presence is limited to Jesus of Nazareth? Are omnipresence and pneumatology alike and as one so easily excised from a classical Christian account of things? Further, did the claim of divine presence in Jesus of Nazareth – maybe we can just call it the incarnation – seem wonderfully plausible in the Roman Empire but simply absurd beyond its borders? Was ancient Christianity found

prophetic mode and a necessary component, I believe, of any theology. For years, however, it would keep me from recognizing and growing into my early sense of wonder at life and its grounding in God (the “Catholic” side that every theology must have). It created a dualism in my belief and actions that sent me on a long detour, a detour in which the world was not *in* God and God was not *with* the world. The child’s love of nature was set aside for the budding theologian’s dedication to the transcendent – and distant – God.” McFague, *Collected Writings*, xxi.

²⁸⁹ Johann Georg Hamann, *Writings on Philosophy and Language*, Kenneth Haynes, trans., ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 78.

only within that venerated Empire? Further, does the very existence of non-Christian religious traditions in the world expose Christianity's claims as incredible, and to be jettisoned? And is it a sustainable claim that the doctrine of the incarnation should be jettisoned as "offensive to the integrity and value of other religions"? Imagine if the poor fisherman apostles had been as scrupulous as McFague, or as cowed by the existence of erudite and philosophically profound pagan traditions. Sophisticated paganisms were for the fishermen and for the zealous disciple of Gamaliel an impetus to evangelism in the name of the crucified and risen LORD, but for McFague they are evangelism's telos. *Nostra Aetate*, one notices, had been Catholic doctrine for some time when McFague wrote her chapter – and maybe it is too conjectural to bet on whether McFague's christological positions should be reckoned as ahead of the times or behind the times in relation to it. Further, and finally, is it actually the case that the doctrine of the incarnation is merely "absurd" in light of "postmodern cosmology" and "not remotely compatible with our current picture of the universe"? This kind of claim is frequently reiterated in McFague's work against traditional Christian doctrines, and ever without anything approaching a demonstration. Absent such demonstration, McFague's reader has no reason to buy her fervent appeals to inevitable and terminal incompatibility: lots of staunchly orthodox and sophisticated thinkers in recent centuries – some of them practicing scientists – have thought and written about this without concluding incompatibility. I suspect that the question of whether or not our current modern scientific picture of things is compatible with the incarnation can be provisionally

resolved by asking if there are people whose up-to-date picture of the universe includes the LORD becoming incarnate within it. One notices such people from time to time.²⁹⁰

Metaphysical reflection is not, judging by McFague's publications, her strong suite. This is not the primary target of my criticisms. It is fine to be a theologian but not a sophisticated metaphysician –relative to many theologians and even more philosophers that is a class I also inhabit – but at the very least, this recognition might inspire a hesitancy in leveling bastion-raiding polemic. The absence of such restraint causes the theologian engaging her work a quandary. Encountering classical Christian doctrines, and classical theist philosophical positions, rejected in forms so misconstrued does not inspire confidence that McFague understands well what she is rejecting. She may indeed, but *The Body of God* – her most systematic work – does not establish those bona fides.

At any rate, the above should suffice to acquaint my reader with the flailing texture of McFague's rejection of classical christological claims. Fortunately, she, and we, now turn to what she is positively claiming. "But", McFague assures, "the scandal of uniqueness is perhaps not the central claim of Christian faith. In the model of the universe as God's body, the important motifs are "became flesh" and "lived among us."" (159-160) She continues:

In other words, the proposal is to consider Jesus as paradigmatic of what we find everywhere: everything that is is the sacrament of God (the universe as God's body), but here and there we find that presence erupting in special ways. Jesus is one such place for Christians, but there are other paradigmatic persons and events –

²⁹⁰ Such people – thinkers conscious of the awesome age and breadth of the universe and who yet develop in light of it sophisticated accounts of incarnation which take seriously the particularity of Jesus – include John Haught, Denis Edwards, John Polkinghorne, Niels Henrik Gregersen, Nancey Murphy, Ted Peters, Jürgen Moltmann, Karl Rahner, Elizabeth Johnson, and William Stoeger, among others. cf. Niels Henrik Gregersen, ed., *Incarnation: On the Scope and Depth of Christology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015). Thanks go to Brian Robinette for directing me to this volume.

and the natural world, in a way different from the self-conscious openness to God that persons display, is also a marvelous sacrament in its diversity and richness.
(162)

Christians, in McFague's ideal version of things, are those people who, out of the whole cosmos which is the incarnation of God, pick out the human Jesus of Nazareth to be one of their focal sites of God's erupting presence. Jesus is one paradigmatic human person among others in being such, and what makes him such, for McFague, seems to be what she calls "self-conscious openness to God".²⁹¹ In the terms of the classical Christian lexicon, McFague regards Jesus as a saint. At best, her approach could be construed as Nestorian – yet it seems unlikely that McFague wants to affirm anything so 'ontic' as Nestorianism. What McFague's approach allows Christians to do, on her telling, is interpret the natural world in a Christian way through the suggestiveness of the metaphors that emerge from the "Christic paradigm". She writes:

the model of the world (universe) as God's body might, for Christians, be understood in "shape" and "scope" through the Christic paradigm. That is, from the story of Jesus of Nazareth and his followers we can gain some sense of the forms or patterns with which Christians might understand divine immanence. That story, both in its beginnings and its history, suggests a shape of the body; needless to say, other religious traditions would propose very different shapes, and even within Christianity, many variations exist. The shape suggested is obviously a construction, not a description, and is persuasive only in light of a range of criteria. The shape provides a purpose or goal for creation – something we could not find in evolutionary history. From the paradigmatic story of Jesus we will propose that the direction of creation is toward inclusive love for all, especially the oppressed, the outcast, the vulnerable. This paradigm suggests a trajectory for creation, one that we cannot read off evolutionary history but, from our wager of faith in the destabilizing, nonhierarchical, inclusive life, teachings, and death of Jesus of

²⁹¹ Of course, interpreting Jesus in terms of God-consciousness is not rare in modern or (especially) 20th century christology. It is, moreover, accomplished with different degrees of compatibility (and indeed desired compatibility) with Nicene faith. For a balanced but critical analysis of several influential figures in this mixed stream, including Schleiermacher, Rahner, Hick, Dupuis, and Sobrino, see Thomas Joseph White, *The Incarnate Lord: A Thomistic Study in Christology* (Washington, D.C.: CUA, 2015), chapter 1.

Nazareth, we can read back into natural, historical, and cultural evolution as its goal. Such a sweeping assertion will have to be carefully examined and qualified so as to limit it to the modest, metaphorical statement it is meant to be. (160)

One might think that McFague's position is that the Jesus narratives become a kind of 'key' to the theological interpretation of nature, but the connotation of precise fit between a key and that which it enters and unlocks seems stronger than what McFague is claiming. Rather, in McFague's model, various religious traditions gain the ability to see different shapes and forms in nature due to their diverse paradigms. Diverse religious interpretations of nature are diverse metaphorical overlays superimposed onto what is there.

McFague abstracts "the Christic paradigm" – the metaphorical paradigm of interpreting nature gleaned from the biblical stories of Jesus – from the particularity of the biblical witness to Jesus as the incarnate LORD. Jesus Christ, for McFague, is not the unique savior of the cosmos. Rather, he is one among many available constructed 'paradigms' superimposed onto nature for construing nature. Theologically, the claim of the incarnation is, for McFague, *pace* the Bible, a claim about creation itself and not a claim about the human person Jesus of Nazareth. Because everything is God incarnate, Jesus of Nazareth can also be said to be God incarnate: the movement and priority in incarnation is with creation as the body of God and thence necessarily includes Jesus. Yet this gets hermeneutically vertiginous, for McFague's warrant for construing all as creation as divine incarnation does seem to arise, textually, from the traditional Christian doctrine reflecting on Jn. 1:14, that is, from the claim that the Word is incarnate particularly as Jesus of Nazareth. As doctrine, McFague regards this claim about

incarnation as absurd – God would not become uniquely incarnate – yet McFague decides to universalize the absurdity. At this point it is perhaps wise to draw back a bit and realize that McFague does not think she is making a claim about the natural world at all: her claim is not that the natural world, nor we ourselves, nor any part of the universe, is God incarnate. Jesus of Nazareth, the historical person, the human man, certainly was not God incarnate in the Chalcedonian sense on her account.²⁹² Rather, her claim is that it is metaphorically the case that the natural world is God incarnate, or God embodied. Whatever she says about christology is all metaphorical enrichment of the, alas, also metaphorical topic of creation, into which it reduces. McFague stridently reads the claims, not just of Christianity, but of all other religious traditions within her totalizing account of theological language as metaphor and model such that other religious accounts of things, other humanly constructed metaphorical ‘paradigms’, can also be superimposed on the natural world and on God with just as much imaginative validity as the Christian claims. A model, for McFague, is a metaphor with staying power and as such evokes both similarity and dissimilarity.²⁹³ She writes that “theology is *mostly* fiction: it is the elaboration of key metaphors and models.”²⁹⁴ McFague rejects creedal language if it is

²⁹² Shannon Schrein observes: “Though one might draw the conclusion... that McFague’s christology is very close to the orthodox understanding of Jesus as “fully human and fully divine,” such a statement would be inaccurate. Her christology is “low” or from below, for the emphasis is clearly upon the person of Jesus of Nazareth as a vehicle for the divine. Perceiving Jesus as the parable of God necessitates flexibility and conceptual richness; even skepticism and uncertainty are appropriate, for a metaphorical statement is always a judgment of similarity and dissimilarity. McFague holds that “Jesus ‘is and is not’ God.” She is continuously aware that metaphorical statements are never identity statements. McFague is wary of idolatry and therefore will not make the move to identify Jesus with God.” Shannon Schrein, OSF, *Quilting and Braiding: The Feminist Christologies of Sallie McFague and Elizabeth A. Johnson in Conversation*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 36.

²⁹³ Schrein, *Quilting*, 14, 36.

²⁹⁴ quoted in Schrein, *Quilting*, 5.

understood as nonmetaphorical, and she worries that this is usually the case, such that the specter of idolatry raises its head.²⁹⁵ “Seldom”, she laments,

is [creedal language] recognized as tentative, open, relative, indirect, and tensive. The metaphorical “is and is not” is forgotten and identification takes place. God *is* Father, Jesus Christ *is* Son, and we *are* children. The appropriateness of these models as relative and helpful aids for interpreting the divine-human relationship is changed into an assertion of their literal and exclusive truth. (30)

For McFague, theological and creedal language is rooted in Jesus’ parables of the kingdom of God, which for her entails that it is metaphorical in such a way that it is not propositional. Dogma names the mishearing of proper relative metaphors as literally, exclusively true, as propositionally true in a straightforward sense. “Jesus Christ is the Son of God”, for McFague, is a metaphorical claim, which is to say that it is true and it is also not true. But McFague’s account of theological language – either equivocal metaphor *or* literal exclusive truth – is not subtle enough to account for what good practitioners of trinitarian doctrine in every era have understood themselves to be doing in speaking of the Triune LORD. That is to say, everything hangs on getting right the way in which Jesus Christ *is* Son and the way in which he is *not* – and learning to do this is the ordinary work of theological study and, indeed, spiritual practice. And inasmuch as Jesus Christ *is* the Son of God, it is true to say that he is Son and correlatively false to say that he is not. That is to say, we can be dogmatic while knowing that we are often speaking analogically and sometimes metaphorically, and by working to appreciate that we do not fully comprehend the one to whom we refer and refer ourselves. McFague worries that to exceed metaphorical equivocation is to claim to know things about God

²⁹⁵ McFague, “Creeds: Models or Dogmas”, in *Collected Readings*, 29.

that we just do not know, such that we subject God to our grasping, idolatrous, God-and-world-deforming will. And admittedly there are always dangers where the corrupt human will is at play, dangers which are not excised merely by recourse to apophaticism, equivocity, or metaphor: the *libido dominandi* can as soon lead one to deny the Nicene Creed as to make an idol of it. But contrast McFague's account of theological language with that given by Khaled Anatolios. Anatolios writes that in the practice of orthodox trinitarian doctrine, in the era of its patristic development and today,

the crucial distinction is between reference and full comprehension. I do not deny that trinitarian doctrine refers to God's being. But I do insist, along with the mainstream of the Christian tradition, that trinitarian doctrine says things about God that are not fully comprehensible. My point is that the meaning of trinitarian doctrine should not be sought primarily in the objective reference of a narrow set of "trinitarian" propositional formulae (since this objective referent is also asserted to transcend full comprehension by human intelligence) but rather in the exigencies that led to their articulation. If we ask what these exigencies are, the answer proposed in this book is that these exigencies involved the entirety of Christian faith and life and thus provide a demonstration of the systematic scope of trinitarian doctrine.... To appropriate the meaning of trinitarian doctrine today, one must learn from the systematic thrust of its development how the entirety of Christian faith and life means the Trinity.... Although we cannot encompass God's trinitarian being within our human knowledge, we can know and glorify God as Trinity and be consciously and thankfully incorporated into trinitarian life. Thus appropriating the meaning of trinitarian doctrine involves learning to think, live, and pray so as to refer to God's being as Trinity while at the same time learning to disavow a comprehensive epistemic hold on the God to whom we thus refer ourselves. (*Retrieving Nicaea*, 7-9)

Anatolios is sympathetic to McFague's linguistic concerns to a significant degree. He holds that trinitarian doctrine is misunderstood or misused if it is assumed to grant comprehensive epistemic hold, cognitive mastery, or comprehension of the transcendent triune being of God. At the same time, Anatolios maintains that trinitarian doctrine allows one to refer to God truly and humbly on the basis of God's triune self-

manifestation, and so to refer oneself, the world, the whole horizon of one's experience *to* God spiritually. For Anatolios, our success in referring to God in the midst of our failure to comprehend God is hospitably guaranteed by God because our reference to God is ever enfolded within the prior divine humility of God's self-manifestation in Jesus Christ and the Spirit. And McFague, too, wants to say that metaphors and models allow us to refer to God in the crucible of spiritual practice. The difference is that, within Anatolios' trinitarian spirituality, it is *true* to refer to Jesus Christ as the Son of God and to refer oneself to God this way, and it is *false* to think that this is a merely equivocal metaphorical claim which is consequently deniable in the same way and spiritual posture in which it is affirmed. McFague could not claim this. For Anatolios, the humility of divine revelation in the creation is the bridge on which language crosses over to the infinite: the Triune LORD in economic act has invited our verbal crossing, encouraged it, elicited it, welcomes it and hospitably receives it in anticipation of the union of ourselves and all things with God. McFague's inability to affirm something similar corresponds, at another level, to her universalization of the incarnation to all creation in a way that denies the uniqueness of Jesus Christ: for McFague, everything can be said to be God metaphorically and religiously because, at the levels of 'metaphysical' nature, 'natural' science, and history, nothing is. Her eschewal of dogma, with its normalization of Christian reference to and praise of God in specificity, corresponds to her denial of the doctrine of the incarnation in its biblical specificity.

McFague's denial of the doctrine of the incarnation, and subsequent metaphorical retrieval of it as a restatement of panentheist "procreation-emanation" is, I

suggest, the beginning of a distinctively nonchristological christology which is insufficient to ground Christian praise. By calling her christology nonchristological, I mean that her metaphorical claim about the cosmic incarnation does not have anything actual to do with Jesus Christ of Christian confession and, God help us, of history – John furnishes a metaphor which she takes up and puts to another use. By saying that her christology is insufficient to ground Christian praise, I mean that since she claims that Jesus Christ is not the second person of the Triune God incarnate to enact the salvation of the world, it does not make sense to praise Jesus Christ as though this is the case. But praising Jesus Christ as though this is the case is one of the characteristic features of Christian worship, liturgy, prayer, and praise, from Jn 20:28 to today.²⁹⁶

The depth of McFague's evacuation of biblical trinitarian doctrine comes still more sharply into view when we consider the way in which her model interprets the paschal mystery. Having claimed that "the cross is not the last word", she continues:

The enigmatic appearance stories of the risen Christ, the Christ who appeared in bodily form to the disciples, is the witness to an ancient, indelible strain within the Christian community. It is the belief and the hope that diminishment and death are not the last word, but in some inexplicable manner, the way to new life that, moreover, is physical. This is an important point for an embodiment theology. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are paradigmatic of a mode of change and growth that only occurs on the other side of the narrow door of the tomb. Often that pattern has been absolutized as occurring completely and only in Jesus of Nazareth: his death and resurrection are the answer to all the world's woes. In his

²⁹⁶ McFague does not concede the ground that she is outside of the tradition of Christian orthodoxy. Nor would she say that she is light on christology. To Deane-Drummond's criticism of her christology, she replies: "I believe our positions are closer than her comments suggest." Yet, these ignore the radically different stances toward dogma, doctrine, and, indeed, theological language itself between McFague and Deane-Drummond. When McFague affirms that "Christ is risen", she does not affirm that Jesus of Nazareth is risen, and would seem in fact to strongly affirm that he is dead. Given the extent of their disagreements, Deane-Drummond's criticisms of McFague are remarkably understated and gentle. For the public correspondence between McFague and Deane-Drummond, see their "Review Conversation" in *Theology and Science*, Vol. 8(1), 2010, 109-117.

death all creation dies; in his resurrection all arise to new life. The absolutism, optimism, and universalism of this way of interpreting the ancient and recurring relationship between death and new life – a relationship honored in most religious traditions as well as in evolutionary biology – are problematic in a postmodern, ecological, and highly diverse cultural and religious era. What is possible and appropriate, however, is to embrace these strains in Christian thought as a deep pattern within existence to which we cling and in which we hope – often as the hope against hope. We must believe in the basic trustworthiness at the heart of existence; that life, not death, is the last word; that against all evidence to the contrary (and most evidence is to the contrary), all our efforts on behalf of the well-being of our planet and especially of its most vulnerable creatures, including human ones, will not be defeated. It is the belief that the source and power of the universe is on the side of life and its fulfillment. The “risen Christ” is the Christian way of speaking of this faith and hope: Christ is the firstborn of the new creation, to be followed by all the rest of creation, including the last and the least. (190-91)

McFague’s key moves here are unsurprising in light of her moves surrounding theological language and the incarnation. Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection is not, for her, the historical locus of trinitarian divine action enfolding cosmic death and sin in itself in Christ’s death in order to raise the cosmos, in and with Christ, to eschatological new life. Such a “universalism” would not be “appropriate”. There is no atonement for sin. Rather, for McFague, speaking of Christ’s death and resurrection functions as a metaphorical overlay to history and nature which crystallizes and affectively enriches our assent to the biological and interreligiously recognized pattern of death and new life. To say that this kind of claim has ramifications for the evangelical proclamation of the Gospel would be an understatement: instead of sharing with one’s neighbors the good news of what God has done in Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection (i.e., nothing), a 2nd century McFague-style Christian would presumably have encouraged her pagan neighbors to seek solace in their own culture’s mythic and metaphorical evocations of the passage from fall, through winter, and into spring. Not to denigrate those venerable

seasons. Once more, her reduction of christological claims to metaphorical claims about creation qua panentheist procreation-emanation reduces those christological claims to simultaneous affirmation and denial, and so annihilates them in equivocity. The Christian believer need not affirm the truth of Jesus' resurrection in a way the nihilist cannot, if only the nihilist be nimble enough with a metaphor. The Christian believer of today, on McFague's account, would in fact be acting inappropriately if her christology did surpass that of her literary nihilist neighbor. McFague can consequently claim, "The resurrected Christ is the cosmic Christ, the Christ freed from the body of Jesus of Nazareth, to be present in and to all bodies" (179). It is hard to see how this is good news for Jesus of Nazareth. Moreover, it is hard to see how the risen Christ, when I die, will not then be freed of my body too.

In conclusion, Sallie McFague's christology, particularly in its bearing on the paschal mystery, is inadequate to the content of Christian praise. The history of the cosmos is not recapitulated in the paschal mystery; there is, on the contrary, no passover for Jesus of Nazareth on McFague's account. The resurrection following his death is a metaphorical construction, and to affirm it is only to affirm the natural cycle of birth and death and birth.²⁹⁷ Hence McFague's christology is insufficient to ground the understanding of ecological conversion for which Pope Francis calls, or its culmination in "Franciscan" praise, tethered as these things are to biblical christological claims which

²⁹⁷ McFague's attenuation of Jesus Christ's historical resurrection is not uncommon among those interested in giving an account of Christ in relation to evolution. So Deane-Drummond's observation, "It is hardly surprising that those who are engaged in the dialogue between evolution and theology are more attracted to liberal accounts of Christology, where Christ is portrayed as a man unique only inasmuch as he is uniquely obedient and open to God... resurrection is interpreted in terms of what happens in the minds of the disciples" (*Christ and Evolution*, 33-4).

exceed the equivocal, accord with traditional dogma, and proceed from historical claims McFague will not make. More broadly, McFague exemplifies the trend in much eco-theology to give short shrift to christology in preference for the doctrine of creation, in her particular case by reducing the biblical doctrine of the incarnation to a universal, if metaphorical, interpretation of the natural world as God incarnate. Within this general tendency, she also embodies the tendency in christologies concerned with evolution “to avoid developing an adequate theology of the resurrection.”²⁹⁸ Yet, as I said at the outset of this section, McFague’s is not the only story here. Celia Deane-Drummond, who holds doctorates in both theology and biology, furnishes a noteworthy contrast. To her work I now turn.

8.2.2 Celia Deane-Drummond – Cosmic Atonement and Wonder in the Evolutionary Theodrama

Celia Deane-Drummond, as exemplified by her *Christ and Evolution: Wonder and Wisdom*, writes christology informed both by her specialized training in biology and her reading in the natural sciences generally, as well as by her wide theological studies. Her normative theological positions on incarnation and paschal mystery owe most to Sergius Bulgakov and Hans Urs von Balthasar, while remaining in close dialogue with Moltmann and contemporary biblical scholarship. Indeed, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza’s feminist retrieval of Sophia in her own articulation of the sophiological thread in New Testament christology plays a significant role in Deane-Drummond’s christology, finding

²⁹⁸ Deane-Drummond, *Christ and Evolution*, 194

a natural if wonderfully surprising fit with Bulgakov's sophiological christology and mariology. Most importantly for my purposes, Deane-Drummond offers a rich and nuanced christology in relation to a theodramatic reading of evolutionary history, including an account of the paschal mystery which is sufficient to ground the human doxological response to the Triune God's reconciling act in Jesus Christ. She suggests that wonder is the appropriate human response to this saving act in relation to the natural world. In all of this, Deane-Drummond is an important contributor to the minority movement of serious christology in the field of eco-theology. She offers important resources for a christological and mystical companion to *LS*, and to the furtherance of the distinctively Christian vision of ecological conversion to which Pope Francis invites us. Further, Deane-Drummond's christological doctrine stands both to enrich and to be enriched by a Hugonian doctrine of the paschal mystery such as he outlines in *On the Three Days*.

In my treatment, I will first give an account of Deane-Drummond's doctrine of the incarnation in relation to evolutionary history read as a theodrama. Then I will attend to her doctrine of the paschal mystery – Christ's dying, burial, and rising – as the Triune God's atoning act that reconciles not just human persons to God, but also extends to nonhuman animals and the cosmos with all the ill and violence of our long, dramatic, and at times tragic, evolutionary travail.

8.2.2.1 The Incarnation of Wisdom in the Evolutionary Theodrama

Deane-Drummond's christology is developed in key respects in dialogue with Sergius Bulgakov, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Kathryn Tanner and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. While the major trend in evolutionary christologies is to embrace some version of a liberal 'low' christology – as we have seen in McFague, for instance – in which Jesus of Nazareth is exclusively a product of cosmic evolution (itself sometimes quasi-divine à la process theology) and perhaps a pinnacle within evolution in his acute God-consciousness and openness to the divine, such that Jesus can be regarded as a source of human God-consciousness and openness to the divine for others, Deane-Drummond takes a different tack. On the one hand she takes seriously the non-teleological stance of the natural sciences in tracking evolutionary development, and on the other hand reads cosmic evolution naturally as drama and theologically as theodrama. In her reading of evolution as drama she draws near to Stephen J. Gould's 'punctuated equilibrium' revision of Darwin. In partial contrast to what can be described as Darwin's account of evolution as a kind of steady development through natural selection – which she likens to a 'narrative' or 'epic' genre – Deane-Drummond points out that Gould's analysis of the fossil record in terms of punctuated equilibrium shows, in contrast, long periods of relative stability interrupted by sharp and dramatic changes, and this is evocative of drama. Deane-Drummond thus regards 'drama' as a more apt category than 'epic narrative' for capturing the actuality of evolutionary history in its surprises, tragedies, and unforeseeable lurches. Her preference for 'dramatic development' over 'epic narrative development' extends to other areas of natural science as well: drama accounts for the

degrees of agency and even moral agency researchers are increasingly able to take seriously in the lives of animals like apes and dolphins. Drama also accounts for the jaggedly tragic elements of evolutionary history and the theodicy in which they rightly result: catastrophic and sudden instances of species extinction, and instances of evolved behaviors in some animal species that ought be regarded as exceptionally cruel and brutal.

From the theological side of things, evolutionary drama fits with and within an extended Balthasarian theodramatic frame. Deane-Drummond's extension of Balthasarian theodrama to include the drama of natural evolution is helpful to her in terms of her doctrine of God – the Triune God is able to be accounted for both as Director of the drama, and, as the Son and Spirit, as agentially active within the drama. Theodrama thus grants Deane-Drummond, within a non-competitive account of the God-world relationship developed in dialogue with Kathryn Tanner, an avenue for a rich account of divine transcendence of creation and simultaneously of active agency within creation, in a way in which the agential freedom of human and nonhuman agents is honored, as is the relative freedom of the long dramatic evolution of the natural order as a whole. In her articulations of Trinity and christology, as in her accounts of the evolutionary theodrama, Deane-Drummond's pen is ever on the watch against accounts which skew toward epic narrative rather than drama, as these blunt the integral and interactive freedom of divine and created agents, as well as a real dramatic openness of the present moment and the future.

Deane-Drummond's doctrine of the incarnation is developed within her theodramatic frame. The most important thinkers in her doctrine of Christ as divine and human are Sergius Bulgakov and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, who each develop a sophiological christology. Balthasar recedes into the background here. Deane-Drummond integrates the insights of Schüssler Fiorenza and Bulgakov in a way that attempts to check the patriarchal and sexist overextensions of Bulgakov (and Balthasar too), while checking on the other side patriarchy's inverse mirror in the feminist exclusivity of Schüssler Fiorenza, which resists articulating Jesus' divinity out of concern that to do so is unavoidably patriarchal. Deane-Drummond's christology is thus at once Catholically Chalcedonian and historically-critically intriguing. Her account of Jesus as incarnation of Sophia is not, she argues, ultimately at odds with the Logos christology of John's Gospel. Dovetailing to a degree with Balthasar, and even moreso though by extension Karl Barth, in a way most acutely derived from her study of the modern sciences, Deane-Drummond worries about the inadequacy of premodern philosophical and theological terms like 'human nature' and 'soul' in light of the material fluidity of the evolving cosmos. This is a feature of her analysis to which I will return and lightly criticize. Yet this worry fits her well to the theodramatic act-focused christological emphasis that she receives in relation to Balthasar's reception and transformation of Karl Barth's actualistic christology.²⁹⁹ Deane-Drummond's doctrine of Jesus Christ's divinity and humanity accents the way in which Jesus Christ is divine and human *action* in and as a single historical person, or as a divine-human personal act. Her perspective is

²⁹⁹ On Barth's theology as characterized by 'actualism', see George Hunsinger, *How to Read Karl Barth: The Shape of His Theology* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1993), 30ff.

compatible with, though it does not entail, a Hugh-style rendition of the hypostatic union in which the Word assumes human nature (bracketing, for the moment, her worry about the term ‘nature’) such as I have outlined in chapter 3.

Deane-Drummond’s understanding of the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ’s divinity and humanity is tied to her understanding of the Son’s kenosis in the incarnation and to her understanding of divine and human Sophia/Wisdom. We start with kenosis, an idea which is grounded biblically in St. Paul’s Christ-hymn in Phil. 2:5-11. The relevant biblical word, ἐκένωσεν, is often translated “he emptied himself” (Phil. 2:7). St. Paul claims that Jesus Christ was in the form or μορφῇ of God and yet emptied himself unto the form of a slave, to human estate, ultimately to death on a cross. Though Kathryn Tanner does not emphasize the term kenosis, Deane-Drummond suggests that Tanner’s understanding of the hypostatic union is profoundly and aptly kenotic. Deane-Drummond seeks “a kenotic Christology that is less about God “giving up” particular divine attributes or divine and human essences and more about a theodrama expressed in a radical, deep incarnation of God assuming human and thereby creaturely being in Christ” (95).³⁰⁰ Such a christology is made possible by Tanner’s retrieval of divine and creaturely noncompetition, which extends into (and, for some cosmic christological thinkers, is grounded in) the noncompetition of divinity and humanity in and as the person of Jesus Christ. Hence Jesus Christ is fully human without any loss of divine transcendence. For Tanner, this is because divine nature and human nature name

³⁰⁰ For another significant feminist retrieval of a kenotic christology and corresponding spirituality, see, among many of her pertinent works, Sarah Coakley, *Powers and Submissions: Spirituality, Philosophy, and Gender* (Malden: Blackwell, 2002), 3-39, and *The New Asceticism: Sexuality, Gender, and the Quest for God* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2015).

different planes of reality. As with Balthasar, the kenosis of the Son in historical incarnation is grounded, for Deane-Drummond, in the prior kenosis in the immanent Trinity in the Father's eternal begetting of the Son. She will even follow Bulgakov in speaking of a kenosis of the Holy Spirit. Yet, Deane-Drummond worries about Tanner's premodern theological lexicon in relation to words like 'nature' and 'substance': these are "highly problematic in an evolutionary context" (98). Further, "any rhetoric about a human and divine nature as such", she writes, "makes less sense in an evolutionary world, even if Tanner's notion of "different planes of reality" softens any classical thought of fixity of nature" (ibid.). Rather,

it is here that Hans Urs von Balthasar's portrait of Christ coheres with that of Tanner, but he succeeds where she fails in shifting the agenda from ontological into obediential terms; hence we arrive at "a union of divine and human activity in Christ." In this way, the Word on the human plane suffers and acts, but the Word does not suffer and do those acts in precisely the same way as a human being would, for this would "bring divinity down to a human level"; instead, the Word as subject means that what Jesus does is attributed to the Word. (ibid.)

Hence Balthasar's Barthian actualism helps Deane-Drummond further historicize Tanner's position – in a chronological reversal Tanner herself might find surprising – and in a way that conforms to the descriptive approach to things natural in modern history and evolutionary biology. This, then, is received into a theodramatic theological frame. Yet, note, that in her terminological revisions of theologians, the modern natural sciences – not philosophy and certainly not theology – again hold the epistemic trump in terms of what is knowable and sayable about nature, and so to speak of a 'human nature' in Christ is problematized. It is here that I register a passing concern with Deane-Drummond's preoccupation against certain premodern and theological terminologies in light of modern

natural scientific world pictures.³⁰¹ Yet notice that Deane-Drummond still often finds it helpful to use the term ‘nature’ in continuity with its traditional metaphysical and theological sense, put in quotations to indicate her hesitance.³⁰²

As previously mentioned, Deane-Drummond draws on modern biblical scholarship, including Schüssler Fiorenza’s feminist retrieval of a Sophia christology, and notably also the argument from Hurtado *et al* that Jesus Christ is seen as divine early rather than late in the (are you ready?) *dramatic* growth of the New Testament’s christologies, to historically ground her own use of Bulgakov’s sophiological christology from the systematic theological side. Deane-Drummond’s christology is both Chalcedonian and evolutionary: Jesus Christ, for Deane-Drummond, is Wisdom both from above and from below. Deane-Drummond offers a sophisticated reading of and

³⁰¹ Latin *natura* as used by medieval Christian writers and Greek *physis* as used by patristic writers have a different constellation of meanings than does English ‘nature’ in the way Deane-Drummond worries over it in relation to scientific accounts of things. There are many accounts of the philosophical transformations surrounding the dawn of modernity and modern natural science that record these differences and the relations between them, and Brad Gregory and David Bentley Hart, for example, have both given accounts in works that attempt to bridge the academic-popular and specialist-generalist divides. Though getting right the relation between premodern physical and metaphysical terms and the terms (which are sometimes revised senses of the same words) employed in the modern sciences is a contested and tricky knot to untangle – sufficiently so that it is impossible to do so in the context of this chapter – it seems plausible to me at present that the tradition of Christian Neoplatonist thinking can be revised and extended to accommodate and include our 19th century discovery of the long term relative material fluidity of creaturely forms. For helpful works related, in whole or in part, to this tangle of issues, see: Stephen M. Barr, *Modern Physics and Ancient Faith* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame, 2003) and Connor Cunningham, *Darwin’s Pious Idea: Why the Ultra-Darwinists and Creationists Both Get It Wrong* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010); Brad Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society* (Cambridge: Belknap, 2015); David Bentley Hart, *Atheist Delusions: The Christian Revolution and its Fashionable Enemies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); David Bentley Hart, *The Experience of God: Being, Consciousness, Bliss* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

³⁰² e.g. Deane-Drummond, 221-2. Perhaps something like Anatolios’ approach to theological language’s referential quality, discussed above in relation to McFague’s linguistic quandaries, could be helpful for Deane-Drummond here: as Deane-Drummond implicitly concedes through her continued use of the traditional term ‘nature’, it is intended and used to refer, by turns, to the realities of God and of creation. Right use and true reference, as Anatolios insists, does not imply full comprehension of that to which reference is made, i.e., we can speak theologically of divine nature and too of created nature without presuming to understand fully that to which we refer.

engagement with Bulgakov's exceedingly complicated trinitarian theology and sophiology, and treating its nuances would exceed my present purposes. It is noteworthy that when she balks at one of Bulgakov's moves, it tends to be either on feminist grounds or because she does not see an aspect of his claim as plausible in natural scientific perspective. Yet, though we do not detail her engagement of Bulgakov, it is important to notice how she draws on him in developing her own positions. Her words summarize well the christological synthesis at which she arrives regarding Sophia:

One of the strengths of Bulgakov's account is not just his Trinitarian approach to Sophia, but also the way he links his speculative thought with specific practices and the liturgy of the church. This trend connects his thought with more recent emphases in biblical scholarship on the importance of devotion to Jesus in the earliest Christian communities. Bulgakov offers a Christology that is traditional yet, by incorporating sophianic themes, opens up the possibility for inclusive interpretations of Christ's significance. (125)

Further:

the distinctions that [Bulgakov] draws between God and creation, and their link through creaturely sophia, take a new dimension in Christ, who is not just God-humanity, but also the integration of divine Sophia and creaturely sophia that anticipates the sophianization of the cosmos. In Mary we find a deeper affirmation of the possibilities latent in creaturely sophia, both in Mary's receptivity to the divine Word and in her divinization, so in this sense, she becomes an icon of hope for the realm of nature as inclusive of humanity, rather than the other way around. (126)

In both of these quotations, we see in different ways that the heart of Deane-Drummond's christological concerns around incarnation are oriented to the development of an articulation of how Jesus Christ matters for the "realm of nature" – in short, for the whole cosmos, the human *and* nonhuman creation, in all its evolutionary history, drama, and tragedy. As such, it will also matter for the whole "realm of nature" today. Her

development of that articulation is her doctrine of the atonement and of the paschal mystery, to which we now move.

8.2.2.2 The Paschal Mystery – Cosmic Atonement

Each of the ‘three days’ of Jesus Christ’s passover is significant to Deane-Drummond. In developing her positions, she draws on a variety of theological and biblical sources – the accent falls on Bulgakov and Balthasar, yet also in dialogue with Moltmann – as well as natural scientific perspectives and research. Specifically, she will draw on studies of nonhuman animal behavior to argue (with Michael Northcott, with whom she had previously disagreed) that members of some smarter nonhuman animal species display what we can rightly recognize as vices and virtues. Indeed, Northcott has argued that dolphins, in particular, need Christ’s redeeming work.³⁰³ Framing the evolution of humans, then, in theodramatic evolutionary perspective, Deane-Drummond argues regarding the fall that:

we need to view the fall as a mythological rather than a historical account, epitomizing the outcome of humanity’s self-assertion in claiming radical independence from God, and leading to a series of breakdowns in relationships with God, the land, and the human community. In evolutionary terms, the fall could be thought of as that sharper awareness of the capacity for negative choice that is present in the human community, with its enhanced capacity for moral action. How far and to what extent such moral or immoral capacity emerges at least in part in biological continuity with our primate cousins, or whether it is simply the indirect outcome of greater evolved intelligence in humans, is not the issue here; the point is that the “fall” reaches *behind* into the evolutionary history of the world as well as pointing *forward* as a shadow on human history. (169)

³⁰³ Michael Northcott, “Do Dolphins Carry the Cross? Biological Moral Realism and Theological Ethics,” *New Blackfriars* (December 2003): 540-53. Deane-Drummond reports her change of mind – she has come around to agree with Northcott – in Deane-Drummond, *Christ and Evolution*, 162.

And according as Deane-Drummond's doctrine of the fall extends backward into the evolutionary prehistory of humankind, so must her doctrine of the atonement. Deane-Drummond will favor an interpretation of the atonement that deals, not just with evil or ill human and animal acts or behaviors, but also with evolutionary suffering. She writes:

regardless of how far we see dolphins or primates as expressing moral tendencies that are good rather than evil, this issue raises a wider one of how far and to what extent we need to revise our understanding of atonement (and redemption) in the light of such ethological studies of nonhuman animals, set within an even broader compass of the sheer extent and volume of evolutionary suffering and extinction of species. (168)

Indeed, evolution raises distinct problems of theodicy. Deane-Drummond wants to face these problems squarely and christologically. Drawing on Christopher Southgate, she canvases some of the pressing questions: why, ontologically, would God give existence to a world containing such evils?; why, teleologically, would God use such suffering to create humans?; and, how is such a weight of evil dealt with soteriologically? Deane-Drummond will propose a christological response to the third (soteriological) question, while resisting answers to the first two questions that in any way seem to reconcile us to evils or to their acceptance. Fatalist resignation is not the gospel. Many theodicies, she argues, "show themselves as inadequate, as in all sorts of ways they seem to *reconcile* us to evils, rather than deal with their awful impact" (174). The ontological and teleological problems raised by evolutionary suffering should not be resolved by theology or philosophy, should not be made to go away, but should be entered into and engaged spiritually through a better theology of Holy Saturday. To this I will return. And indeed this answer points back to the soteriological issue: for Deane-Drummond, the impact of

the evils of evolutionary history and human history must be addressed objectively and, where possible, subjectively by christology.

Deane-Drummond's account of atonement and paschal mystery is sophiological and trinitarian. In terms of grounding in Scripture, Colossians 1:19-20 is of paramount importance. The passage reads: "For in him [Jesus Christ] all the fullness was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile all things for him, making peace by the blood of his cross [through him], whether those on earth or those in heaven." In Deane-Drummond's initial articulation of the 'scene' of the atonement, she takes cues from Balthasar. Her account of the atonement itself she subsequently enriches using Bulgakov's sophiology. She quotes Balthasar of the crucifixion: "God's entire world drama hinges on this scene. This is the theo-drama into which the world and God have their ultimate input; here absolute freedom enters into created freedom, interacts with created freedom and acts as created freedom" (183).³⁰⁴ She then exegetes the significance of Trinity, love, and revelation in Balthasar's account:

In interpreting the cross in a Trinitarian way, Balthasar puts particular emphasis on the love of God for the world in giving up his Son, so that all that the Son suffered is understood as being attributed to this love. In particular, he intends to stress the cross as the *revelation* of the Trinity, rather than the *actualization* of the Trinity. (183)

Balthasar does not, like the Hegelians, think God needs historical actualization to fully become God.

Instead, Balthasar favors the view of the immanent Trinity that allows an eternal, absolute self-surrender that in turn explains God's self-giving to the world as love, without suggesting that God somehow needed either the world process or the cross in order to become God. He suggests, therefore, that the Trinity exists in self-

³⁰⁴ Her quotation of Balthasar is from *Theo-drama* IV, 318.

surrender in the generation of the Son in an initial kenosis within the Godhead that underpins all other kenosis. Balthasar therefore rejects the idea that God suffers in the manner of creaturely suffering, and “something happens in God that not only justifies the possibility and actual occurrence of all suffering in the world but also justifies God’s sharing in the latter, in which he goes to the length of vicariously taking on man’s God-lessness.” While he recognizes that this means “to walk on a knife edge,” his concept of suffering that is in solidarity without identity is convincing to some extent. Of course, Jesus, in his God-humanity, is also one who would share fully in human suffering to the extent that we may be able to say rather more as to what that solidarity with suffering implies. (184)³⁰⁵

For Deane-Drummond as for Balthasar, the infinite kenosis within the Godhead is the ground at once for the possibility of suffering in the world and of God’s incarnate suffering *of* the latter, in solidarity but not identity.³⁰⁶ She follows Balthasar in holding that Christ on the cross carried the “load of the world’s No to God” (*ibid.*). The full weight of this No is accepted existentially by Christ, not imposed externally. She quotes Balthasar’s claim that Jesus accepts “an inner appropriation of what is ungodly and hostile to God, and identification with that darkness of alienation from God into which the sinner falls as a result of his No” (184-5, quoting *TD* 334-35). Jesus’ existential suffering of the world’s No does not, for Deane-Drummond, find its limit at the edge of the human community. She extends it:

it is also equally possible to extend the existential burden that we understand that Christ was accepting to include not just human sin in isolation, but also the negative weight of evils as understood in terms of evolved creaturely being as such. Without such extension, the death of Christ becomes expressed just in terms of human weakness and need for human reconciliation with God. While the latter should not be minimized... I am here arguing for a more thoroughgoing compass to

³⁰⁵ Her quotation of Balthasar is from *TD* IV, 324.

³⁰⁶ Deane-Drummond’s claim that God incarnate suffers in solidarity *but not identity* should be investigated more closely with relation to Balthasar’s own claims and with respect to Hugh’s distinctively Chalcedonian, Conciliar, and indeed Cyrillian locutions. Indeed, for the Creed as for Hugh and Cyril, the divine identity of the suffering one is exactly what is at stake: hence Cyril will speak of the incarnate Word’s impassible suffering. Consider my chapter 3 above, as well as Khaled Anatolios, “The Soteriological Grammar of Conciliar Christology”, *The Thomist* 78 (2014): 165-88.

the scope of the atoning work of Christ, such that it takes up and includes the voice of all creaturely Nos, including and especially that of humankind.... [I]n naming the wisdom of the cross as the wisdom of God, Paul had in mind the widest possible scope of Christ's reconciling and redeeming work. (185)

Christ's atoning and redeeming work, for Deane-Drummond, takes up and includes the Nos to God of all creaturely beings, at every applicable stage of evolutionary development. She will connect the way in which Christ's atonement widens out from the human sphere to include all creation to Rom. 8:18-30's stunning claim that, in her interpretation, "the whole of the created order is waiting in anticipation of human redemption, for this is the prelude to that glorious future that is to follow in the power of resurrection hope for the whole of the created order" (190). For Deane-Drummond, the whole created order – spanning the whole drama of 'punctuated equilibrium' evolution – is in travail awaiting the apocalypse of the children of God, which is the redemption of all creation.

From this initial Balthasarian understanding, Deane-Drummond enriches her account of the work of Christ on the cross and in going to the dead through Bulgakov's sophiology. Specifically, she argues that Christ's atoning work addresses what Bulgakov calls "shadow sophia." For Bulgakov, there is divine Sophia, creaturely sophia, i.e. good creaturely wisdom, and shadow sophia. 'Shadow sophia' names the dark possibility of creaturely wisdom or creativity, and the dark possibility of evil in the world. Only creaturely sophia, not divine Sophia, is subject to this shadow side, and it is significant that there is "no such shadow side to the creaturely wisdom found in Christ" (186).

Deane-Drummond agrees with Bulgakov (and most of the premodern Christian tradition) that "evil is not a "substance" or a "principle"" but is a mysterious privation. She makes

the connection that, biblically, Bulgakov's idea of shadow sophia corresponds to Dame Folly as the dark counterpart to Dame Wisdom in the Hebrew scriptures. Jesus Christ's kenotic and atoning work transforms shadow sophia. She writes:

The wisdom of the cross expresses a reversal of human claims for power and superior knowledge. As such, it is a kenotic Christology, one that is a gift of offering, a *self-emptying love* for the sake of the other, but that other is understood to include all created existence, not just human beings. At the cross, we can envisage shadow sophia as finally being transformed through the dramatic self-offering of Jesus, not only for humanity, but for all vulnerable creation as well. In other words, atonement needs to be thought of not so much just in sacrificial terms, and especially not in terms of penal suffering, but as Christ's dramatic and loving self-offering, in spite of the brutality of human evil, a love that serves to dispel once and for all the negative aspects of the dark shadow of sophia. The cross is not so much one more instance of evil in the world, but a way of confronting and transforming that evil through the loving self-offering of Christ. What seems to be human folly turns out to be paradoxically an expression of God's wisdom.... What does it mean to say that Christ's work of atonement expresses God's judgment on shadow sophia? It means that suffering and evil do not have the last word... it goes deeper than simply displaying the atonement as a shared suffering, for this would restrict its scope to sentient creatures. (189-90)

For Deane-Drummond, the accomplishment of the atonement is to the victory of a love so bright it exceeds and dispels the darkness of shadow sophia, the darkness of all the evil and folly that have been perpetuated through the long course of evolutionary history. Deane-Drummond does not say so explicitly, but I think her doctrine of the atonement might be seen to work like this: Jesus Christ's free self-offering is able to luminously outshine the darkness of evil and shadow sophia because his is not only a finite love, or rather includes a finite love in a unique (and here I wax a bit 'Hugonian'³⁰⁷) way: Jesus Christ's performance of humanity is an integral offering of properly finite human love even in the face of harshest extremity; moreover, since Jesus' humanity, assumed and

³⁰⁷ I see this articulation as following upon my interpretation of Hugh's christology in chapters 2 & 3.

constituted in the incarnation, is assumed as having passed over into the hypostatic identity of the divine Son, the form of Jesus' humanity is a manifestation, icon, sacrament, and ultimately the mundane source of the infinite love and light of the Triune LORD's divine form. In Jesus Christ's crucifixion and death, the Trinity acts in and as Jesus Christ's created freedom to enact in creation an infinite love and light. This love and light is freely offered in the drama of Christ's crucifixion, and the free offering Jesus Christ makes of himself is the most pleromatic finite manifestation and enactment of the infinite kenosis in which the Father generates the Son in love from all eternity. Hence, the paschal mystery is atoning for all the sin and evil of all of evolutionary and human history in the sense that, in and as Jesus Christ's humble self-offering on the cross, the infinite love of the Triune God's inner life infinitely exceeds creation's evil (inasmuch as evil is finite) and annihilates that evil (inasmuch as evil is privation anyway). This, at any rate, seems to fill out the logic Deane-Drummond is unfolding by her synthetic engagement of Balthasar and Bulgakov, as I correlate her views on the intertrinitarian kenosis with what she states about Jesus' self-offering and try to work it out a bit more explicitly.

Notice that, like McFague, Deane-Drummond is critical of some traditional accounts of the atonement. Yet, unlike McFague, Deane-Drummond engages those positions with some nuance. So she affirms opposition to understanding atonement in terms of "penal suffering" in which Christ vicariously takes on the wrath of God against sinners, and she rejects this because "penal substitution theories... are unconvincing because... [in such theories, as exemplified in the earlier work of Moltmann,] God's

holiness somehow demands retribution in some form, even on an innocent victim” (177). One could of course probe Deane-Drummond’s position further: does her account of the atonement account for all the threads and themes of the biblical witness regarding Christ’s death? What should be said positively, say, about Christ’s death as sacrifice or about the wrath of God in relation to sin and Christ’s death? A position like Deane-Drummond’s can presumably develop answers to these questions, but that work remains to be done.³⁰⁸ Yet it remains the case that Deane-Drummond develops a serious christological account of the salvation of all creation enacted in the paschal mystery, something McFague assiduously avoids. Deane-Drummond’s work also has another positive relation to McFague’s. Similar to McFague’s seeing the message of the cross as one of God’s solidarity with the weak and excluded and the nonhuman creation - one of the loveliest and most Christian features of McFague’s metaphorical theology – Deane-Drummond also envisages atonement as expressing a kind of solidarity with creation in its vulnerability. Yet, notice the significant differences even here. Deane-Drummond’s account offers a rich construal of the biblical materials and even receives and sharpens previous atonement theologies in ways warranted by scripture and our present knowledge. Most of all, perhaps, Deane-Drummond’s account of the paschal mystery is one in which the Triune God is *acting in the cross to restore all of creation*. Where McFague is shocked at the hubris she sees in the unique “universalism” of the biblical claim that all die and all are raised in Christ’s dying and rising, and so jettisons the

³⁰⁸ An account of the revelation of God in the three days of the paschal mystery like Hugh’s, which allows in history for more and less perfect ways of speaking about the atonement, could be helpful. See my chapter 3.

biblical doctrine of the atonement altogether, Deane-Drummond deepens and widens the traditional and biblical claims themselves through a fresh reading of Scripture and a re-engagement of the tradition in light of our knowledge of evolutionary history. Where McFague steps outside the pedagogy of biblical trinitarian faith in a way that vacates christology as the fundamental site of cosmic redemption, Deane-Drummond studies and teaches so as to deepen the Church's reception of its own redeeming pedagogy.

Before she moves in a subsequent chapter to consider the resurrection, Deane-Drummond moves to the second day of the paschal mystery, Holy Saturday. She writes:

With Balthasar, I suggest that we need to stay under this shadow for a period and reflect on the experience of the dark night of Holy Saturday before moving too quickly to consider the positive elements of redemption theory.... [F]or Balthasar, it is at the crucifixion and eventual descent into hell that Jesus enters most fully into alienated human existence, and Christian discipleship is marked by sharing in the dark night of Christ's passion, the final stage of every human journey.... [A]t the crucifixion... Jesus enters most fully into alienated existence, and the dramatic existential sharing in the dark night of Christ's passion by humanity is one that is also *representative* for the whole of created existence in its suffering.... Before the mystery of evil, we need to spend time in silence, to experience the silence of the tomb after the death of the Son, rather than race too quickly to the visitation in the garden following the resurrection. (189-91)

In light of evil – in light of its toll on human and nonhuman creation across evolutionary time – and in light of the death of the innocent victim Jesus Christ, Deane-Drummond proposes a spiritual response, a practice of silent waiting “in” the darkness of Christ's tomb. This waiting, note, is a means of participating in Christ's alienation in death, *and* a means of sitting with the reality of evil. It is to help Christians face the weight of evil in its mystery without reconciling ourselves to it, without slipping into stoicism or fatalism. Christ, indeed, has borne the full extent of this evil, has suffered its full alienation, and it

is important that we participate in Christ's alienation in order to rightly oppose evil, to fully face our sin, to repent.

Deane-Drummond's treatment of the resurrection draws on the sophiology, pneumatology, and eschatology of Bulgakov's account of the resurrection, though she worries that the universalism of Bulgakov steers too much out of theodramatic terrain and into epic narrative.³⁰⁹ She gives a theodramatic reading of Mary Magdalene's encounter with the risen Christ in the Gospel of John, both showing "the way the Gospel of John is influenced by the Sophia tradition, but also the importance of women in the resurrection narrative and early Christian apostolic ministry" (194). As in relation to the other 'days' of the paschal mystery, Deane-Drummond extends the effects of the feat of the resurrection to the nonhuman animal world and the whole cosmos. Engaging Bulgakov, she writes:

I am... convinced that... something happens in God inasmuch as human "nature" is, in a mysterious way, incorporated into the divine "nature" and opens up the possibility of access to others who also participate in Christ. (221-22).

Regarding how this works out eschatologically in terms of what this means for the fathomless variety of animal species who have enjoyed their time on Earth and gone extinct, or for the particular members of those species, she thinks wisdom is with apophatic reserve. "In keeping with creaturely sophia" (224), she writes,

we have to learn to accept that [creaturely] vulnerability after the pattern of the one who showed forth divine Sophia in that he emptied himself. Perhaps we should think of such futures more in line with how we think about the resurrection of Christ; namely, that while we can be confident that there will be a new creation, one that is to some extent in continuity with the present world, it also far exceeds

³⁰⁹ cf. the analogous concerns of Balthasar in Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Dare We Hope "That All Men Be Saved"?* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1988).

and is beyond our expectations and imaginings. We wait in anticipatory hope for what we know not, except that, in a mysterious way, God will be revealed as all in all, and this revelation will be an act of divine condescension, of grace. Seeking wisdom remains open to the possibility of mistake, so that the schemes rendered in the name of Christ are not necessarily of Christ at all. Our hope in Sophia is opened up and opened for the possibility of wonder, a wonder that is not a reflection of scientific knowing as much as a poetic appreciation of unknowing. (225)

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As Pope Francis took his theme in *LS* from the poetic and characteristically Franciscan praise of God with and for all of creation, Deane-Drummond's account of the paschal mystery terminates in poetic wonder: what the LORD has accomplished in Jesus Christ happily exceeds human knowing, modern scientific or otherwise. In contrast to many eco-theologies, Celia Deane-Drummond has offered a christology which is sufficient – and more than sufficient – to ground the praise of the Triune God as well as the ecological conversion for which Pope Francis calls.

In the next section (8.3) I sketch a Hugonian theology and spirituality as it is enriched in light of *Laudato Si'* and Celia Deane-Drummond's christology. In the final section (8.4) I extend this Hugonian theology and spirituality of the paschal mystery to make concrete suggestions for the study, reception, and implementation of *LS* by individuals and churches.

8.3 THE UNIFICATION OF ALL THINGS, INCLUDING EVOLUTIONARY HISTORY, IN THE PASCHAL MYSTERY: HUGONIAN CHRISTOLOGY

CHRISTOLOGY

The ability to read evolution not just as science but also as history means that through evolutionary accounts, nature as such becomes historical, a perspective that, according to some, is one of the most significant discoveries of science.

-Celia Deane-Drummond³¹⁰

The end is like the beginning, a great theologian once said. And so here, at the end of this dissertation, is the text at the end of *On the Three Days* with which its first chapter began, no less stunning, I trust, for the intervening expansion:

As he [God] wished to have three days in order to work out our salvation in Himself and through Himself, so he gave three days to us in order that we might work out our salvation in ourselves through Him. But because what was done in Him was not only a remedy, but also an example and a sacrament, it was necessary that it happen visibly and outwardly, so that it might signify what needed to happen in us invisibly. Therefore, His days are external; our days are to be sought internally. (III.27.2)

We have three days internally by which our soul is illumined. To the first day pertains death; to the second, burial; to the third, resurrection. The first day is fear; the second is truth; the third is charity. The day of fear is the day of power, the day of the Father. The day of truth is the day of Wisdom, the day of the Son. The day of charity is the day of kindness, the day of the Holy Spirit. In fact, the day of the Father and the day of the Son and the day of the Holy Spirit are one day in the brightness of the Godhead, but in the enlightening of our minds it is as if the Father had one day, the Son another, and the Holy Spirit another. Not that it is to be believed in any way that the Trinity, which is inseparable in nature, can be separated in its operation, but so that the distinction of persons can be understood in the distribution of works. (III.27.3)

When, therefore, the omnipotence of God is considered and arouses our heart to wonder, it is the day of the Father; when the wisdom of God is examined and enlightens our heart with recognition of the truth, it is the day of the Son; when the

³¹⁰ Deane-Drummond, *Christ and Evolution*, 198-99.

kindness of God is observed and enflames our hearts to love, it is the day of the Holy Spirit. Power arouses fear; wisdom enlightens; kindness brings joy. On the day of power, we die through fear. On the day of wisdom, we are buried away from the clamor of this world by contemplation of the truth. On the day of kindness, we rise through love and desire of eternal goods. Therefore, Christ died on the sixth day, lay buried in the tomb on the seventh, and rose on the eighth day, so that in a similar way through fear the power of God on its day may first cut us away from carnal desires outside, and then wisdom on his day may bury us within in the hidden place of contemplation; and finally, kindness on its day may cause us to rise revived through desire of divine love. For the sixth day is for work; the seventh, for rest; the eighth, for resurrection. (III.27.4)

The spirituality of the paschal mystery as depicted in these elegant culminating paragraphs of *On the Three Days* is one in which human persons responsively and interiorly participate in Jesus Christ's dying, burial, and rising. The result of this repeated exercise, as previously detailed over the course of this dissertation, is that sin is cut away or killed – the “old man” is put to death with Christ, as St. Paul would say – and one is simultaneously illuminated and made wise by the light of divine Truth/Wisdom, as this illumination is made complete in the charity of the Holy Spirit poured into our hearts. This progression of cutting away sin, illumination of intellect, and resurgence in charity corresponds, for Hugh, to the progression of Jesus Christ's dying, burial, and rising. Objective Christology founds subjective Christology, or spirituality. Christian life, in Hugh's thought, is constituted by repeated sacramental and interior participation in the paschal mystery, and this repetition results in progressive and holistic re-formation of the human person in the triune likeness.

The ‘Hugonian’ systematic and spiritual retrieval of Hugh's thought, which I have developed across the length of this dissertation, will shortly be put in synthesis with lessons we have learned from Deane-Drummond. It can be fruitfully recapitulated as

follows. Objectively the paschal mystery recapitulates and unifies all of history, from creation to eschaton. All history can be considered under three headings: the history of sin, the history of truth, and the history of love. Whereas these three complexly overlap and intertwine in the long course of material history, they are disambiguated in the paschal mystery such that the evil is sifted out and annihilated and the good and true are re-integrated and fulfilled in love. To say this goes beyond what Hugh says explicitly, yet putting it this way aptly retrieves his thought in relation to Romans 6:6.³¹¹ This re-integration and fulfillment takes place and is historically manifest initially in Jesus Christ's incarnation and especially resurrection, itself an eschatological disclosure. The re-integration is fitfully and progressively manifest in creation especially within and also beyond the visible Church as the Israel-Church is supervened by the Holy Spirit, yet creation's full re-integration culminates in and coincides with the glory of Christ's resurrection only in the eschaton. There, creation is fully re-integrated through the Triune God's work in the paschal mystery; there and then, the Triune God and creation have become one in Christ such that God is "all in all" (1 Cor 15:28, and, again, as I have urged that Hugh ought to be re-heard today).

The three days of the paschal mystery, as they cumulatively reform human persons unto eschatological perfection, are a temporal and, indeed, history-spanning mirror of the life of the Trinity. The days are not only chronological, but chronological and cumulative. Thus they mirror the eternal act of the Triune LORD, in which there is

³¹¹ "We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin" (NRSV). The thought of Gregory of Nyssa is also in the background of my account. cf. chapter 8 of the *Catechetical Oration*, in Edward R. Hardy, ed., *Christology of the Later Fathers* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1954) 282-6.

both definite order and a culmination in the Holy Spirit or Love. The culmination of the LORD's eternal act in Love is mirrored in the culmination of the three days in Christ's resurrection, itself an eschatological disclosure of the Spirit's perfection of history in charity. The reformation of the whole macrocosm of the world in the triune likeness is thus already visible in the 'microcosm' of Jesus Christ's person as he culminates his own historical act in the paschal mystery, a microcosm which activates all other creaturely microcosms into their eschatological perfection, even and as it activates the cosmos' perfection in charity. This perfecting is not fully worked out in history until the eschaton. Yet all of these creaturely microcosms, like the 'macrocosm' of the world itself, mirror in their temporal unveiling the eternal and inner Triune life.

Hugh's theological and spiritual vision of the restoration and re-integration of creation in the triune likeness through the paschal mystery can be of great service to the Church in fulfillment of Pope Francis' call to ecological conversion. What is needed for this to be the case is an updated Hugonian theology and spirituality – updated in light of what we know of the world's deep evolutionary history and, indeed, of our present moment of ecological crisis. Celia Deane-Drummond offers a christology which is both conversant with our present scientific knowledge and broadly compatible with Hugh's.³¹² As such, many elements of Deane-Drummond's christology can be received into a Hugonian theological and spiritual frame to enrich, partially renovate, and extend this frame in service to the ecological conversion for which Pope Francis calls. This section

³¹² There are, of course, tensions here: Hugh's accounts of the atonement beyond *On the Three Days* do not always agree with Deane-Drummond's account. Deane-Drummond's doctrine of grace, or of the (hopefully) accomplished scope of Christ's redeeming work, stands on this side of the ecumenical Barth-Bulgakov-Balthasar revolution of the 20th century.

thus constitutes a Hugonian christological companion to *LS*. Here I treat the material objectively, while the next section (8.4) is the Hugonian mystical companion to *LS* and treats the material from the subjective pole. It is important to clarify that, while I draw on Deane-Drummond's work in my commentary on Hugh, I do so with little or no citation or quotation, having displayed her positions extensively, and with extensive quotation, above. Nor do I directly quote Hugh here with frequency, having done so extensively in the seven previous chapters. The theological positions I offer are my own, and criticisms of Deane-Drummond's work should not be directly adduced from criticisms of mine; I offer some positions she does not and with which she might well disagree.

The re-forming and restoring unification worked in creation by the Triune LORD, a restoration enacted by and manifested in the paschal mystery, is said by Hugh to happen interiorly in us in the present. As St. Paul writes, "Outwardly we are wasting away, but inwardly we are being renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16). But this interior and subjective restoration of ourselves will become objectively manifest with the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21) – in the eschaton. Here and now, our bodies go the way of all flesh. The extinction of our life is, in microcosm, the extinction of the human species, and is analogous to the extinction of any species – like the Sabretooth Tiger, the Pteranodon, or the Dodo. Yet, interiorly, we, like all creation, are being renewed day by day in the paschal mystery, as Holy Saturday succeeds and completes Good Friday, and as Easter Sunday succeeds and completes both alike. Christ's dying, burial, and rising works a redemption and a restoration which is universal, and so necessarily extends to created nature as a whole, not only to that particular spectrum of created nature termed

human nature as it is instantiated in human persons. Rather, personally through Christ's human nature as an instance of created nature, the restoration extends to all things.³¹³

This is so, and is so in the way in which it is so, because of Hugh's doctrine of the hypostatic union. "God assumed man, man passed over into God" – as in the axiom Hugh finds in Gennadius of Massilia. Jesus Christ's human nature is constituted as having passed over into union with the person of the Word. This means that Jesus Christ, acting in and through his human nature, is acting personally and historically in and through a nature that is 'hierarchically identical' to the divine Word. In a way which is more marvelous and ineffable than the way in which, for Hugh, the human body has passed over into or been assumed into identity with the hierarchically transcendent soul, so Christ's human nature has passed over into identity with the divine Word. Just as things done to my hand, say, are done not only to a part of me but to me, so the unjust and brutal execution of the *body* of Jesus of Nazareth on Good Friday is the unjust and brutal execution of Jesus of Nazareth; moreover, and most importantly, since Jesus' human nature (as soul and body, for Hugh) has been constituted as passed over into identity with the divine person of the Son, so Jesus Christ's execution and death is truly the execution and death of the impassible and eternal Son of God. Yet, as pointed out above, Jesus Christ's human nature is an instance of created nature as a whole, and is ultimately inseparable from the whole of creation. As part of the fabric of the 14-some billion year old cosmos, with all of its dramatic swerves, surprises, and evolutionary,

³¹³ My use of 'nature' here, note, supposes that this term should be retained theologically and philosophically, however our understanding of it might need to be revised in its reference to created things. See notes 30 & 31 above.

societal, and personal tragedies, Jesus Christ's bodily being is inextricably united to our own, to that of all earth's creatures, and to that of stars and galaxies far removed from our perception and imagination. The evil that obtains in this drama – the dark and shadowy privation and lack from which we are never here below entirely free – obtains across the whole of the material fabric of the cosmos. Yet, infinitely and ineffably *moreso*, Hugh would push us to recognize, the incarnation of God in and as a particular Jew from Nazareth obtains and *redeems*, with unconstrained 'universalism' (as McFague might worry), across the fabric of the whole. When Jesus Christ's human nature is constituted as assumed into the uncircumscribed unity of the divine person of the *Logos*, human nature and so an instance of created nature has passed over into the unity of the Triune LORD. Like a bedsheet lifted off of a flat surface at one point and continuing to rise will, eventually and inevitably, lift the whole sheet into the air, so the divine assumption of Jesus Christ's human nature will, just as inevitably, lift the whole fabric of the cosmos, the hundred billion plus observable galaxies and all they contain, with their long and dramatic temporal extension, into union with God. The scope and vastness of the cosmos, unfathomable as it is to our finite minds, is ultimately irrelevant with regard to the scope of the incarnation's effect. If God has become a creature, creation is revealed as having passed over into God. What remains for Christians is to live in loving wonder and compassion on the basis of this revelation. And not only, on our Hugonian interpretation, has the fact of the incarnation been accomplished in some merely abstract and atemporal or logical sense: it is a person in history, and so a person whose human nature is in historical actualization, who is revealed historically as having passed over,

and historically passing over, into divinity: there is no separating the paschal mystery from the incarnation which it reveals. In fact, the revelation of the hypostatic union accomplished in the paschal mystery (and in the resurrection in particular) is finally inseparable from the re-formation of human persons in history which the incarnation (including the paschal mystery) accomplishes. Hugonically, divine revelation *in history* (i.e. objective revelation) is an aspect of the restoration or re-formation of history unto eschatological perfection in love. And, correspondingly, divine revelation as apprehended by human persons (i.e. subjectively) is part of their re-formation in the triune likeness through knowing the Truth; i.e. receiving revelation is, for Hugh, intrinsic to the transforming process of appropriating salvation. As Bonaventure writes, “eternal life consists in this alone, that the rational spirit, which emanates from the most blessed trinity and is a likeness of the trinity, should return after the manner of a certain intelligible circle – through memory, intelligence, and will – to the most blessed trinity by God-conforming glory.”³¹⁴ It is the actual three days of the paschal mystery – in even their mundane historicity – which because of the hypostatic union have become signs, sacraments, mysteries, icons in which and through which and – in their inhabitation by and as the body of Jesus Christ – *as* which the Triune LORD is purifying, illumining, and perfecting the whole vast cosmos.

The restoration enacted in Jesus Christ is thus historical through and through, even and especially as we consider the drama of evolutionary history. Celia Deane-Drummond writes, “The ability to read evolution not just as science but also as history

³¹⁴ St. Bonaventure, *Disputed Questions on the Mystery of the Trinity* 8.7, Hayes p. 266, *Opera* 5:115

means that through evolutionary accounts, nature as such becomes historical, a perspective that, according to some, is one of the most significant discoveries of science” (198-9). Nature in its continual development and unfolding is thus read rightly as history: specifically, for Deane-Drummond, as a kind of dramatic history. In this, she utilizes (as mentioned) the work of Stephen J. Gould on punctuated equilibrium and recognizes it as rendering natural history a dramatic, rather than steadily developing epic, narrative. The drama of evolutionary history, in line with Hugh of St. Victor’s theology and spirituality, is rightly read in relation to the paschal mystery in the light of the three historical divisions which intertwine complexly but are sorted out by the action of the Trinity in and through the paschal mystery. The whole evolutionary drama of the cosmos (even if one thinks it a multiverse³¹⁵) is read and remembered, in light of Christ, as comprised of the history of sin, the history of Truth/Wisdom, and the history of Kindness/Love. The tragic, brutal, and evil in evolutionary dramatic history – whether on the macro scale of cataclysmic species extinction as in the multispecies extinction event of the dinosaurs, say, or on the micro scale of particularly brutal evolved habits or the perhaps morally culpable destructive behaviors of some dolphins – is recapitulated, ‘fulfilled’, and annihilated in Jesus Christ’s death on Good Friday. This day is at once

³¹⁵ Of course, speculative difficulties here multiply beyond control. If a feature of a genuine multiverse is the absence of causal links or influence between such universes, there is, while no question of the bearing of the Creator’s activity on or in all of them, still a question about the efficacy of Christ’s human nature and activity in this universe on all of them. Of course, pneumatology stands poised to do the extra work of making this possible participation actual, such that the “all things” united in Christ includes all universes. Were the ‘things’ and beings of other universes connected to Jesus Christ, including his human nature, through the agency of the Spirit, the union of all things in Christ would entail straightforwardly if also, it hardly needs be said, mysteriously, a convergence of all universes in Christ. Whatever word we use, the many are becoming united as one world, one common frame: creation.

the dramatic No to God/Goodness of both nonhuman creatures and human creatures, at whatever level of awareness and moral culpability, and human creatures.³¹⁶

Additionally, our collective, ‘cosmic’ No, to the full extent to which we have each and all participated in it, extends through Christ’s crucified person into human nature and thence through all animal natures unto created nature simply and universally. As such Christ’s crucifixion ‘includes’ “in Christ” the evil of all of the violent circumstantial tragedies of the evolutionary drama in a free creation – like the destruction of the dinosaurs subsequent the asteroid, say. All of this, all evil of past, present, and future, from the first moment of creation to the eschaton, is recapitulated in and annihilated in the death of the Son of God on Good Friday. “Behold”, we are ever and in all evil, all tragedy by the prophet bidden: “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (Jn 1:29). For “through him [Christ] God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross” (Col. 1:20).

The history of truth and the history of love also extend both backwards into evolutionary history and forward to the eschaton. The history of truth, in our Hugonian interpretation, is most normatively the history of the incarnation. In evolutionary perspective, this means that the history of truth is normatively instantiated in creation’s history objectively, and that this becomes subjectively manifest in Christ’s incarnation

³¹⁶ In light of evolutionary history, the traditional distinction between natural evil and moral evil may be best thought of as a matter of spectrum or degree: an agent is capable of moral good and evil to the degree that it or she is self-reflectively conscious. Angels and humans, then, are the most morally culpable creatures we know about, dolphins and some other mammals a measure less so, and on down from there: it is probably not helpful for us to think of a spider’s cruelty to a fly as particularly moral evil.

culminating in the paschal mystery. That is to say, what has been called the “anthropogenic” quality of our universe – a phrase I owe to Rowan Williams though others use it – even as it is manifest in creation dramatically and, in creaturely terms, through many an evolutionary historical contingency (which is not in conflict or competition with God’s eternally willing it) – is the long backstory of the history of truth that is fulfilled in the incarnation.³¹⁷ The union of divine Truth/Wisdom, on the one hand, and creaturely self-reflection, on the other, in the one person of Jesus Christ is the trajectory of Truth’s objective and subjective manifestation. In Christ, the poles of truth are at one. This history, stretching back to the early aeons of the drama of created nature, includes the whole evolutionary story of animal development, into the development of ‘higher’ mammals etc.³¹⁸ It flows into the dramatic evolution of human culture, etc., and culminates in the incarnation of Jesus Christ and in the paschal mystery, even as the history of truth continues ‘past’ the paschal mystery. There is no ‘after’ the incarnation in an absolute sense, since all history, even subsequent history, is recapitulated and redeemed in the paschal mystery. A Hugonian train of thought, as per part I of *On the Three Days*, would be to glimpse the history of truth/wisdom in nature particularly as beauty.

³¹⁷ lambethpalace. “Dialogue with Richard Dawkins, Rowan Williams and Anthony Kenny”. Filmed February 2012. YouTube video, 1:28:16. Posted February 2012.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bow4nnh1Wv0>. Williams’ initial use and definition of “anthropogenic” comes in his opening statement, around the 9:20 mark.

³¹⁸ Though it is objected that the phrase ‘higher’ is scientifically problematic for its hierarchical and teleological assumptions, these assumptions are intrinsic to the Christian doctrine of the incarnation – as I show here – and are also defensible philosophically. Modern science, as a set of subdisciplines which attenuate out final and formal causality, can defensibly claim and continue to argue that these kinds of causality are not the business of the subdisciplines of natural science, but cannot, it seems to me, sustain the claim that these kinds of causality should be ruled out of existence or philosophy.

The history of kindness/goodness/love also culminates in the paschal mystery, specifically in Jesus Christ's resurrection as a manifestation and enactment in the midst of history of the eschatological state of the glorified integration of creation and God. This history of kindness itself also has a long and dramatic evolutionary backstory. At the risk of sounding platitudinous: theologians should continue to learn from and appreciate the work of scientists and philosophers in appraising the moral goodness and vice possible for various nonhuman animals, and the more fundamental preparation for that goodness and kindness in the analogous manifestation of such in nonhuman animals we continue to reckon to be agentially amoral. Whatever is, to the extent that it is, is good.³¹⁹ The Hugonian preference for the term 'kindness' (e.g. III.27.4) is also suggestive, inasmuch as kindness can be appreciated phenomenologically as goodness sharing goodness, or Neoplatonically in terms of the Dionysian dictum that Goodness is diffusive of itself. 'Kindness', we might think, is the highest aspect of goodness-in-act, or, in still more self-conscious animals, goodness-in-act-as-love. 'Kindness' may thus be a helpful rubric by which to seek to discern the history of kindness in evolutionary history. Whatever story we gradually discern in this kind of interdisciplinary research, theologians may rightly call the history of kindness, and consider it as recapitulated in and fully manifest as the resurrection of Jesus Christ as a history-reorienting foretaste of the eschaton. Moreover, to whatever extent, and in whatever fits and starts and moments, creation appears and manifests and gives itself in kindness and love, just so it is

³¹⁹ Viruses constitute a challenging, if not insurmountable, test case for this claim.

manifesting or giving a foretaste of itself, in all of its history, as a purified imitation and mirror of the Triune LORD.

Does it make sense to say that the restoration of all things in the paschal mystery, which humans appropriate inwardly unto their interior re-formation in wisdom, beauty, and love, makes an objective difference for nonhuman animal subjectivities, inasmuch as it makes sense to speak this way with regard to a particular animal? After all, even intellectually and morally higher nonhuman animals, angels excepted, do not, so far as we know, know anything historically about Jesus Christ. As Wittgenstein famously (and perhaps wrongly) remarked, “if a lion could talk, we could not understand him.”³²⁰ Nonetheless, I think it would be a mistake to think that the paschal mystery does not effect inward renewal in nonhuman animals in the present. To whatever degree an animal species or an individual animal within that species can be spoken of as displaying moral virtue and vice, or amoral simulacra of such, we can speculate and expect that the work of Christ as it is extended by the Holy Spirit is giving and operating in the virtue of that animal. The Roman Catholic Church already holds dogmatically that humans may be saved objectively by Jesus Christ without subjectively knowing anything historically about Jesus Christ.³²¹ Standing under Colossians 1:20, we should expect the same is true of all nonhuman animals.

³²⁰ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan, 1958), 223.

³²¹ cf. the justly famous teaching found in *Gaudium et Spes* 22: “The Christian man, conformed to the likeness of that Son Who is the firstborn of many brothers, received “the first-fruits of the Spirit” (Rom. 8:23) by which he becomes capable of discharging the new law of love. Through this Spirit, who is “the pledge of our inheritance” (Eph. 1:14), the whole man is renewed from within, even to the achievement of “the redemption of the body” (Rom. 8:23): “If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the death dwells in you, then he who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will also bring to life

For human animals, however, Hugh of St. Victor's theology and spirituality – as here reread and revised into a contemporary Hugonianism in light of some of the christological insights of Celia Deane-Drummond – serves the present need of the Church and the world for ecological conversion. That is to say, in light of our expanded vision of the relevance of the person and work of Christ to humankind, to nonhuman animals, and to all of created nature (cf. Romans 8:18-27; Col. 1:15-20), how ought humans participate in the paschal mystery in light of the universality of Christ's restoring work and in our present moment of ecological crisis? Responsive human participation in the paschal mystery *as ecological conversion* is the topic of my final section.

8.4 ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION IN THREE DAYS: *LAUDATO SI'* AS AN INVITATION TO PARTICIPATION IN THE PASCHAL MYSTERY – SPIRITUAL CHRISTOLOGY AND PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS ON IMPLEMENTATION

All things, all created nature and all created natures and persons with their evolutionary and dramatic histories, are objectively included in and saved by recapitulation in Jesus Christ's dying, burial, and rising. Just so, human persons are

your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who dwells in you" (Rom. 8:11). Pressing upon the Christian to be sure, are the need and the duty to battle against evil through manifold tribulations and even to suffer death. But, linked with the paschal mystery and patterned on the dying Christ, he will hasten forward to resurrection in the strength which comes from hope.

"All this holds true not only for Christians, but for all men of good will in whose hearts grace works in an unseen way. For, since Christ died for all men, and since the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery."

called to participate subjectively and responsively in Jesus Christ's passover through death to eternal life. As Pope Francis teaches, an intrinsic dimension of Christian conversion is ecological conversion. Here I outline a Hugonian spiritual theology of ecological conversion in the paschal mystery. To do so I first treat the steps of responsive ecological conversion as they entail and correlate to spiritual and interior participation in each of the days of the paschal mystery. Second I summarize what this means for how we understand the structure of *Laudato Si'* and what it suggests for how we might best implement *LS* through a spirituality of the paschal mystery. Third, and in light of all I have written, I make some suggestions for the implementation of *LS* in furtherance of ecological conversion, including about one form such implementation for ecological conversion might take: a revised, Cursillo style, three day "Praise Be!" retreat.

8.4.1 Ecological Conversion as Participation in the Paschal Mystery

The overall process of ecological conversion in an individual can be understood Hugonically as that individual's re-formation in the image of the Triune God through participation in the 'days' of the paschal mystery.

Our participation the first day of the paschal mystery, Good Friday, entails both our inward participation in Jesus Christ's death as it corresponds to the fact of our participation in sin, and so in Jesus Christ's unjust execution. The former is tied to our recognition of the latter. These responsive participations take place, initially, through the fear of the wrath of God we rightly feel in the early stages of conversion. To the degree

that our participation in Good Friday is fulfilled in participation in the Holy Spirit, to the extent we “walk by the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16), our fear itself is no longer slavish: it is reformed into reverent fear or wonder as it is perfected in charity, by which perfection our conceptual vision of the LORD as love is also being perfected.

The death we die in and with Christ cuts us away from our sins. Regarding ecological conversion, our participation in Good Friday helps us to disambiguate, in memory of our histories (personal, social, evolutionary), the ways in which we have acted also toward the nonhuman creation in sinful ways. Disambiguated, these acts, insofar as we remember them, are consciously repented of. In repenting of them we trust that Jesus Christ will annihilate our sin in such a way that we, groaning along with all creation, will be reborn utterly free of it (cf. Rom. 8:18-25). In addition to repenting of direct and intentional sins against creation, we participate in Good Friday by repenting of our chronic consumption. Deane-Drummond argues for the use of a third category of evil besides natural and moral evil, namely, “anthropogenic evil”, or “evils suffered in the nonhuman sphere because of human activity” (174). All of these kinds of evil and sin are intertwined complexly, and, in particular this last kind of sin is tied to our chronic consumption: we rightly lament it, and repent of making the world a desert in order to satisfy our inner desert – by piling sand onto sand. We repent of culpable ignorance and of our resistance, often politically-motivated and determined, to the goodness of the creation being restored in Jesus Christ. The objective manifestation of Jesus Christ crucified – figured in the serpent lifted high in the desert (cf. Jn. 3:14) – reveals all the coils of our guilt and otherwise poisonous complicity in reducing the LORD’s garden to a

desert in which neither man nor beast may flourish. As such, as the LORD's judgment and gift, Jesus Christ appears in our deserts as the hope of eternal life.

Holy Saturday, for Hugh, is figured as burial and so as bodily stillness in the dark of the tomb and as silence. Or, silence of a kind. Hugonically, Holy Saturday connotes a bodily stillness figuring Jesus Christ's bodily burial, combined with avid meditation and contemplation figuring the ongoing life, beyond the tasting of death, enjoyed by Jesus' human soul as it (like his body) remains assumed into the person of the Word. "Our goal is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity, but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it" (*LS*, 1.19). Knowledge rightly inclines the knower to act for the good. To participate in Holy Saturday is to become a participant in the history of Truth by meditating on the kinds of things discussed in *Laudato Si'* and in this companion to *LS*, and in meditating on such things with the ultimate aim of contemplative union with the Triune LORD in the eschaton – a union which will include the renewed and whole creation. We 'build the ark', as Hugh enjoins. That is to say, those who study, think, meditate in the light of faith participate in Holy Saturday. Those who so meditate imitate the peculiar comprehension of creation achieved by Jesus Christ himself on Holy Saturday: as Word in the heights and omnipresent below, as bodily, dead in the tomb in solidarity with the dead, the extinct, and the studious, and as soul plumbing the depths of Sheol/Hell. In its effort to understand all things in their union with the Triune LORD, meditation inclines toward contemplation, the immediate comprehension of all things in God, a state which, Hugh always notes, cannot be sustained short of the

eschaton to which such comprehension inclines us. Such moments of contemplation occur as the Spirit in pleromatic kindness bestows fulfillment on our meditative and contemplative efforts. Participation in Holy Saturday results in illumination and wisdom.

To participate in Easter Sunday is to participate in Jesus Christ's resurrection by acting responsively to, and so in, the charity of the Holy Spirit. Participation in Christ's resurrection is participation in the history of love, the history which will culminate in the eschaton, when the body of Christ 'catches up' to the ascended and sovereign Head.

When we endeavor practically to live in harmony with and gratitude for all creation we participate in Jesus Christ's resurrection. This entails, as McFague suggests, seeing nonhuman creation as worthy of our charity in particular in regard to the ways we unjustly make it 'poor', excluded, etc. The work of Charlie Camosy is relevant here.³²² Mystical participation in Christ's resurrection appears also as love-motivated endeavors, legal, communal, and political, to care for creation, endeavors for a sustainable economy and eco-justice, and pursuit of a harmonization, as far as possible, of the just needs of humanity with the just care of the nonhuman creation. Life in these ways, resurrection ways, is characterized by joy and rejoicing.

8.4.2 The Paschal Mystery as the Theological Substructure of *Laudato Si'*

In 4.1 above we have shown the process of ecological conversion, within Christian conversion, as participant in the three days of the paschal mystery. This

³²² Charles C. Camosy, *For Love of Animals: Christian Ethics, Consistent Action* (Cincinnati: Franciscan Media, 2013).

schematic suggests a way of interpreting the overall structure of *Laudato Si*'s chapters and message, a way which is, I think, pedagogically and spiritually useful for the reception and implementation of the encyclical. The christological enrichment of parts II and III makes this kind of approach not only possible, but hermeneutically urgent and obvious. The chapters of *LS*, seen through the ways they call us to spiritual re-formation in Christ's passover, run as follows:

***LS* chapter 1**, "What is Happening to Our Common Home" = Participation in Christ's **dying (Good Friday)**

***LS* chapters 2-4**: "The Gospel of Creation", "The Human Roots of the Ecological Crisis", and "Integral Ecology" = Participation in Christ's **burial (Holy Saturday)**

***LS* chapters 5-6**, "Lines of Approach and Action", and "Ecological Education and Spirituality" = Participation in Christ's **resurrection (Easter Sunday and Pentecost)**

Reread Hugonically, the structure of the encyclical itself takes its readers sequentially through the paschal mystery. Chapter 1, "What is Happening to Our Common Home", should be read, preached, and taught as an invitation to sharing in Christ's dying on Good Friday. Chapter 1 thus invites its recipients – whether readers or those who hear its emphases in sermons or oral teaching – to repent of the concrete ways in they have engaged in and participated systemically in wounds and sins against the

creation, against Mother Earth. Through such repentance, the sinful character of our vices begins to be “cut away”.

If Chapter 1 of *LS* should be read as a call to repentance, Chapters 2-4 should be read as an in-forming or re-forming of the intellect in light of the doctrines of the biblical trinitarian faith and in light of the ecological crisis. That is to say, in light of Hugonian mystical christology, these chapters invite us to participation in Holy Saturday, which Hugh associates most deeply with meditative study oriented toward contemplative union with God. Having learned that there is a crisis, here we study, meditate, scrutinize, learning in dynamic ways simultaneously from scientific and theological sources – and this is what *LS* accomplishes across these chapters. Chapter 2, “The Gospel of Creation”, takes up the theological themes most directly, while Chapter 3, “The Human Roots of the Ecological Crisis”, and Chapter 4, “Integral Ecology”, bid us study in a scientific and interdisciplinary way the ways in which humankind is living unjustly – out of harmony with nature and unjustly to the nonhuman creation and to the poor – and to think about what it would entail to live according to an “integral ecology.” In Hugonian terms, as one engages *LS* holistically and mystically within these Holy Saturday chapters, one is constructing in one’s intellect and in the intellects of one’s hearers (if one is preacher or teacher) a twofold edifice of knowledge. First, one begins to construct a more-than-superficial analysis of how human life and economic activity unfold unjustly in ways that hurt Mother Earth and the poor. Second, one begins to construct an understanding of what sorts of large scale societal transformations would more closely approximate just

states of affairs, human flourishing, and the flourishing of the nonhuman creatures on Earth.

Chapters 5 and 6 of *LS*, then, invite readers and hearers to a mystical participation in Jesus Christ's resurrection, and to a life lived according to the Spirit. Here the encyclical becomes very practical, or, as Hugh might say, tropological, in the united sense of morality and spirituality. Chapter 5, "Lines of Approach and Action", focuses on the kinds of dialogue and the kinds of approaches that might make for local, national, and international change in our relation to the Earth. In Chapter 6, "Ecological Education and Spirituality", the focus is on how to make access to a new lifestyle and to ecological conversion accessible for more people. This new lifestyle must come through education and an "ecological spirituality". Embrace of these things in a practical way, and as a manifestation of kindness and love for other humans and the nonhuman creation, is a participation in Christ's resurrection. Ecological spirituality, correspondingly, is, by the activity of the Spirit, the spiritual wellspring of motivation to live in a transformed way in relation to the natural world, and in anticipation of the harmony that will exist in the eschaton.

8.4.3 Implementing *Laudato Si'* in the Church in Various Ways. A Proposal: "Praise Be!" Cursillo-Style Retreats.

The reception of *Laudato Si'* as an invitation to mystical participation in the paschal mystery should, we pray, progress at various levels of the Church's life and

institutions in manifold ways: through personal prayer and study, through diocesan and parish study programs, through sermons and catechetical courses given by pastors and teachers, through courses offered at Catholic and Christian universities and as part of the curriculum in Catholic and Christian primary and secondary schools. Ecological conversion can be fostered and nurtured in all of these settings in various ways. Yet, in this final section, I would like to propose one particular way in which the Church might foster ecological conversion: Cursillo-style weekend (or three day) retreats. These might be called “Praise Be!” retreats.

Originating such a movement of retreats would require significant sacrifices of time and intentionality, yet effective and reproducible models may be generated rather easily. A wildly popular and effective three day retreat model in fact already exists and has much of the framework already in place in terms of helping pilgrims transform their lives through participation in the paschal mystery: the Cursillo retreat.³²³ This retreat has enjoyed wide popularity for its capacity to transform lives and secure lasting, life-changing commitment to Jesus Christ and set pilgrims on a course to deepen themselves by the grace of God into an energetic and joyful faith, animated by the Spirit. The Cursillo course has also enjoyed a wide Christian reception outside of the Roman Catholic Church: Walk to Emmaus and Chrysalis are the United Methodist versions, for example, for adults and teens respectively; other denominations have their own versions as well. In addition, there is the very important Kairos version to offer the pilgrimage to

³²³ Information on the Cursillo movement, and its various specialized and Protestant offshoots such as Walk to Emmaus, is readily available on the internet. For a Roman Catholic and print articulation, now over 40 years old, see *The Fundamental Ideas of the Cursillo Movement* (National Ultreya Publications, 1974).

the incarcerated. Moreover, the Cursillo retreat model includes periodic ‘reunion groups’ for those who have attended, and these offer encouragement and refreshment to pilgrims to keep growing in their pursuit of Christ in the power of the Spirit. The Cursillo retreat model could be adapted into a Praise Be! retreat focused on ecological conversion through participation in the paschal mystery.

Much of the teaching content for this retreat could come directly from *Laudato Si’*: this would need to be supplemented by someone with skill at preaching the Gospel in relation to ecological conversion, a bit more ‘book data’ and facts, and context-flexible teaching on practical and concrete steps and resources for transformed living – as well as activities that help participants do the thought work of re-visioning of their lives and practices in light of *LS*.³²⁴

Cursillo retreats, as mentioned, span three days, and so naturally fit the model of the paschal mystery. They could be adapted into Praise Be! retreats in this way:

Day one – comprised of part of an afternoon and an evening – is devoted to emphasizing the gravity of the ecological crisis, and the ways in which it represents a part of our individual and collective No to God and human and nonhuman creation (i.e. *LS* ch. 1). Participants are invited at the end of the evening to a commitment to trust in the work of Christ on the cross, who endured the cross to reconcile all creation to God (Col. 1:20).

Day two is devoted to a fast-paced series of talks interspersed with time for prayer, reflection, and conversation – this day is devoted to ecological education for ecological conversion proper (i.e. *LS* ch.s 2-4). Participants are invited to learn, think,

³²⁴ www.catholicclimatecovenant.org offers many excellent resources.

and pray, in light of Christ's death and the silence of the tomb, first, about what the Holy Bible and the Church teach about the dignity of creation and Jesus Christ's redeeming work for all creation. Second, participants are taught and given an initial grasp of the key issues related to climate change, also in light of the human injustices it fosters and exacerbates. Third, in the midafternoon session, participants are led into very practical reflection, conversation, and planning about the nuts and bolts of what their "new lifestyle" in relation to creation will look like (i.e. *LS* ch. 5). This includes discussing the means of political engagement and involvement with civic and community leaders. In the evening service participants commit to living in this new way, pray and receive prayer, and, in the night, take part in a liturgy similar to an abbreviated Easter vigil, in which the theological themes and preaching relate especially to our commitment to live in light of Christ's universally restoring work in creation.

Day three, which ends in a final, and very praise oriented, Eucharist before lunch, is devoted to teaching participants the basics of an ecological spirituality (*LS* ch. 6), and orienting them towards "Praise Be!" small groups in which they will continue receiving and giving nurture, accountability, and encouragement in their commitment to continuing and deepening the ecological dimension of their Christian conversion, among others. Jesus Christ's resurrection and the work of the Holy Spirit in all creation, and in the pilgrims who have gone with Jesus Christ through his universally transforming passover, are the spiritual emphases of the morning.

The subsequent Praise Be Small Groups are comprised of pilgrims who have attended the Praise Be retreat. These groups foster a spirituality of Christian conversion

which includes significant emphasis on continuing and deepening ecological conversion. This network of small groups also cements the network of those who promote and facilitate others' participation in the Praise Be! retreat.

As with Cursillo and its extra-Roman Catholic children, participants can only attend one Praise Be retreat as a pilgrim. Those who have attended previously are part of the sizeable community devoted to recruiting and providing the retreat for other pilgrim participants. These various tasks which make the Praise Be retreat, like Cursillo, a unique experience of receiving the love of God and neighbor in light of God's love for all creation are similar to the ministries provided in Cursillo by those who have attended the retreat. Each of the short lectures given during the Praise Be retreat is, like those of its Cursillo cousin, pre-outlined. Some are given by pastors or religious, but most are given by pilgrims who have already attended, and these pilgrims add their own testimonies and experience in the relevant places on the outline. In order both to provide a maximum number of testimonies and voices to those taking the retreat as pilgrims, and to grow and encourage the maximum number of former pilgrims in conviction and involvement, each lay lecture is ideally given by a different layperson.

This, at any rate, is one way among others the Church (within and without the RC denomination) might promulgate and implement *Laudato Si'*, if its ministers and laity are serious about doing so. As with the Hugonian theology and spirituality of the paschal mystery outlined in this chapter, such retreats induct their pilgrims into repeated practices of mystical participation in, and re-formation by, Jesus Christ's passage through death and burial and into the eschatological life of the resurrection. The theology here

developed is, I suggest, a good one for promoting ecological conversion and implementing *LS* in various ways in and beyond the Church. The retreats should, of course, be under the patronage of St.s Francis and Clare.

8.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have offered a Hugonian christological and mystical companion to *Laudato Si'*: amplifying and supplementing its suggestive christological notes in order to bolster its ethical and mystical program of personal and societal reformation. I did this first by briefly studying ecological conversion, objective Christology, and subjective participation in Christ insofar as these are outlined or defined in *LS* itself. Second, I argued for the importance of sound christology for sound eco-theology through an engagement of Sallie McFague and Celia Deane-Drummond. Objective Christology grounds subjective participation in Christ, and in this regard Sallie McFague's christology provides an inadequate theological and spiritual foundation for her best ethical and eco-theological impulses. Celia Deane-Drummond's christology does better both scientifically and theologically, and thus gives resources for, third, updating Hugh's thought in ways that can allow for an illuminating Hugonian spiritual christology centered on the paschal mystery. Fourth, I return to *LS* with this enriched Hugonian perspective, suggesting a schematic structure for reading and teaching *LS* in light of, and as ordered to participation in, the three days of the paschal mystery. I concluded the body

of this companion by suggesting a specific means of implementing *LS* in the Church:
Cursillo-style Praise Be! retreats under the patronage of St.s Francis and Clare.

The paradox, if one ought call it that, of *Laudato Si'* is, finally, the paradox of St. Francis of Assisi himself. St. Francis' wide appeal beyond Roman Catholicism and indeed Christianity – the way in which he is an invitation and an address to the whole world which shines its light christically over so many human divisions and fissures of sin – is finally inseparable from the way in which St. Francis is resolutely and traditionally Christian: trinitarian, christocentric, eucharistic. The way in which St. Francis is convincingly and alluringly both lovely to the worldly and to the saintly follows upon the extent to which he witnesses for the biblical trinitarian faith in a way so evidently animated by God's love and care for all people and all creation. St. Francis' way of living the gospel is, as *Laudato Si'* displays, at once universally creaturely because particularly Christian, and ever ancient because ever new. Submerged into the paschal mystery, his way is characterized by the joy of a praise which is universal.³²⁵

³²⁵ This chapter is dedicated to the Rev. Dr. Tina Carter of the Rio Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church, in gratitude for her witness to the freedom, rigor, and beauty of ecological conversion.

9.0 CONCLUSION

Through the ‘Passover’ of the three parts – eight chapters – of this dissertation I have fulfilled the promise made before the *Bon voyage* with which the Introduction came into port. The specifics of the tasks of each chapter can be seen in Introduction section 0.3, while the central argument is spelled out in 0.1 of the same. In this conclusion, then, I will offer a brief collection of reflections on the historical import and contemporary possibilities, of research and theological construction, opened up by the work here accomplished.

In terms of import to historical theology and the discipline of history, this dissertation offers a new interpretation of the founding figure of the ‘Victorine-Franciscan’ theological stream. I have not sought to hide in my citation habits what the argument would have made perspicuous to medievalists anyway, namely, that the present interpretation of Hugh points forward to St. Bonaventure, integrative prodigy and renowned shining light of the ‘early Franciscan intellectual tradition.’³²⁶ Hence, the present dissertation joins other recent and ongoing research – including a recent interpretation of Thomas Gallus and ongoing research into the theology of Alexander of Hales and the circle of early Franciscan theologians gathered about him – which will, in

³²⁶ For an assessment of Hugh’s legacy, cf. Piorel, *Livre*, 169-198.

time, perhaps, among other benefits, make possible an enriched interpretation of Bonaventure himself.³²⁷ Becoming Bonaventure – the elegantly piercing logic, the panting for ecstatic union, the triad-juggling virtuosics – may soon be less *historically* mysterious, if, I trust, no less ontologically and objectively wonderful. Yet the stream of Victorine-and-early-Franciscan influence does not end with Bonaventure, if only because this stream remains influential – that is to say read and remembered.

In terms of further historical theological research into Hugh himself, several fruitful paths I have happened upon but not been able as yet to explore as fully as they might be come to mind. First, Hugh's christology seems that it may continue as a topic of lively debate in at least the near future: in addition to this dissertation's offering, I am aware of two other writers who have contributions that are being or hopefully soon will be published, and a third just beginning to study the topic. Does Hugh's thought bear the potential to inspire and shine light for the possibility of an alternative, entirely orthodox and Chalcedonian, rendition of *homo assumptus*? Second, a connected matter to christology is of course theological anthropology: is there something to be said for a retrieval and interpretation of a theological anthropology that is more heavily Platonic than Aristotelian, i.e., that lets the soul bear the brunt of personhood rather than positing that the person is a body-soul composite? Such would be not only highly controversial, but knotty in its complexity and implications – though also possibly interesting on many fronts.

³²⁷ Also relevant is Andrew Salzmänn's interpretation of the pneumatology of Hugh of St. Victor in his as yet unpublished Boston College dissertation.

Moving from historical implications and possibilities of this dissertation to systematic and constructive ones, several lines of potentially fruitful possibility here, too, are visible to me. The first concerns a question alluded to in the Introduction, i.e., does the christocentric interpretation of Hugh's theology developed here add or emphasize anything helpful and underdeveloped or absent from the great, and more greatly developed, christocentric systematic theologies of the 20th century by the Protestant Barth, the Orthodox Bulgakov, and the Catholic von Balthasar? Admittedly, this dissertator learned something structural from some of these projects: objective and subjective polarities, and the possibility of christology to sideline or render accidental and seemingly dispensable those aspects of the later Augustine's doctrine of grace, still so influential in the West, in which the LORD's saving election is limited to some, and so never truly offered to others, from before the foundation of the world. In my interpretation of Hugh I have learned from this ecumenical christological revolution – yet what does Hugh have to say to it?

Second, Hugh offers something of contemporary value with respect to the practice of Christian theology. This dissertation is an act of historical theology as theological retrieval, and, in attempting it, I have become aware of and sought to embrace the way in which doing this with respect to Hugh is attempting to do the thing Hugh was attempting to teach. Hugh's approach to theology as receptive-constructive and as participation in the days of the paschal mystery oriented to divine union has something to teach us. Hugh gives a model of historical theology as constructive systematic theology, and vice versa. Yet Hugh's approach, finally, and as made clear above, is more integrative and

comprehensive than even ‘systematic theology’ is often taken to be. After all, it is often assumed that systematic theology is not ethics. Yet, for Hugh, tropological interpretation – as both mysticism and ethics at once – adorns the structure of the whole. Hugh offers, then, an exemplification of and attempt at something for which contemporary theological writers are also grasping and seeking: theology as comprehensive trinitarian spirituality à la Khaled Anatolios; theological thinking, interdisciplinarity, and spirituality with Jean-Yves Lacoste and contemplative thinking prayer with Andrew Prevot; phenomenology as participant in the paschal mystery as in Jean-Louis Chrétien; systematic theology and contemplation as complementary and united as in Sarah Coakley and Brian Robinette – the list could perhaps go on. Hugh glimpsed the nascent reformation of the human person in the divine image taking place even through the study of the liberal arts and philosophy. That is to say (in Lacoste’s idiom) he recognized the same *logos* there,³²⁸ or (a bit nearer his own idiom) he saw the pattern of divine Wisdom, revealed in Scripture, also and in view of it in the thought patterns of worldly philosophers, if more dimly. There are interesting interreligious and comparative theological arguments that might here be drawn out. In sum, though, Hugh offers a prayerful, and eschatologically oriented, way to practice theology, a way which seeks re-integration where modernity and its high medieval precursor have compassed divide or rent asunder – as St. Bonaventure began perhaps to glimpse already in the thirteenth century.

Third, and perhaps more pressing and more important than everything I have said so far in this Conclusion, the suggestion about Cursillo-style *Praise Be!* retreats outlined

³²⁸ Jean-Yves Lacoste, *From Theology to Theological Thinking*, trans. W. Chris Hackett (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 2014), 81-2.

in Chapter 8 ought to be considered and perhaps enacted. Hugh really does have instincts about theological integration and the visible things of the world which will be necessary to the development of any healthy, and convincingly Christian, ecological spirituality.

Lord, have mercy.

Finally, a question with which, in view of the beginning of my Introduction, I will close without trying here to answer: how might a renewed, integrative, ‘Hugonian’ approach to theological education reorient our pedagogical thinking and institutional praxis?

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