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Spiritus

ORU Journal of Theology

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Editorial: Most Likely You Go Your Way…

Jeffrey S. Lamp, Editor

Spiritus 9, no. 2 (2024): 135-137
https://doi.org/

This issue of *Spiritus* is a special one indeed. Almost three years ago I received a message from Martin Mittelstadt of Evangel University concerning the dialogue underway between representatives of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA) and the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). This dialogue would take place over a three-year period (2021–2023), with papers and responses addressing three topics from the perspectives of Pentecostals and Roman Catholics. The participants expressed an interest in having the presentations from this dialogue published in journals representing both traditions. Professor Mittelstadt suggested that *Spiritus* be the repository of these studies on the Pentecostal side (the journal *Worship* will publish them on the Roman Catholic side), to which the editorial team gladly responded, Yes! The dialogue completed, Mittelstadt's team worked to compile the papers and send them my way for the editorial task of readying them for publication.

This was no small task! A total of fifteen separate offerings arrived in a combined document, along with author bios and photos. Disaggregating them into separate files and combining them with their respective bios and photos was the first step. But then came the task of reading them for the purpose of editing. What at first just seemed a daunting editorial task turned into a real delight. Before me was the fruit of a lengthy dialogue, a dialogue that was not only a gathering of learned scholars describing and responding to the positions of the two traditions on some potentially controversial topics—sacraments/ordinances of initiation, healing, and vocation—but also a time of refreshing and mutual edification. I could sense this in reading the submissions, so much so that I was often engrossed in soaking it all in and had to go back and do my job as editor.

As I noted, we have collected here fifteen pieces, consisting of three cycles of papers read and responses given by representatives of PCCNA and USCCB. Harold Hunter, International Pentecostal Holiness Church Ecumenical Officer, and Walter Kedjierski, Executive Director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the USCCB, launch this issue with general commentary on the proceedings of the dialogue from Pentecostal and Roman Catholic perspectives, respectively, providing historical context and personal reflections on the discussions. The first cycle of papers, presented in 2021 in Washington, DC, at a Catholic retreat center called the Washington Retreat House, addressed the topic of initiation, primarily baptism, in the

two traditions. Frederick Ware of Howard University presented the quite varied positions of Pentecostals, drawing on personal testimony to do so, while Kimberly Belcher of the University of Notre Dame presented the Catholic position. The second cycle, presented in 2022 at Oral Roberts University (ORU) in Tulsa, Oklahoma, covered the topic of healing (appropriately enough). David Han of Pentecostal Theological Seminary and Andrew Prevot of Georgetown University provided illuminating discussions of how healing is perceived in the two traditions.[1] The final cycle of papers, covering the topic of vocation, was presented on the campus of the University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Indiana. This topic proved sufficiently complex as to require two papers from the Roman Catholic perspective. The concept of vocation in the Catholic Church is understood from two angles: the sacraments of marriage and Holy Orders. Walter Kedjierski presents an insightful look at marriage from the Catholic perspective, much of which may be unknown to many Pentecostals, while Leonardo Gajardo, a priest in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Gary, Indiana, presents a Catholic understanding of ordained ministry. Martin Mittelstadt of Evangel University presents what is essentially a view of what vocation should be from a Pentecostal perspective in light of its somewhat narrow focus on church ministries.

At the end of the day, this collection of papers and responses was not only informative (at least from my perspective), but also very encouraging. While it may have been the preconception of many of the dialogue participants that there was not too much common ground between these two traditions, what eventuated was a recognition by all that there was a great deal of common ground that encourages continued discussion and provides a foundation for engaging in those areas in which there is substantial disagreement. In a world wracked with division, it is refreshing to see a concerted effort to understand one another and find common ground for discourse.

And now, the answer to the question some of you may have regarding the title of this editorial. First, some background. I was pastor of Spiro First United Methodist Church in Spiro, Oklahoma, 1995–2000. In June of 2000, I gave my final sermon before moving to Tulsa to take a full-time faculty post at ORU. The title of that sermon was the title of this editorial. Kudos to those who recognize it as part of the title of an old Bob Dylan song. In the way it was the title of my farewell to Spiro, it is also my farewell to *Spiritus*. To my surprise, I have been editor for eight volume years. As with any undertaking, there have been times of exhilaration, mostly when an issue is actually published, and times of great stress, but in the final analysis, I am happy with what the

[1] David Han was not available to respond to the paper by Andrew Prevot. It then became the responsibility of co-chair Harold Hunter to write the Pentecostal response to Prevot's paper.

journal has been able to accomplish in this time. As of the Spring 2025 issue, Mark Roberts of ORU will serve as editor. There are so many to thank for what has taken place here. I thank all who have contributed articles and book reviews, both those that were published and those that were not. I thank Wonsuk Ma for bringing the journal back from a thirty-two-year hiatus and making it a part of the scholarly culture at ORU. Sally Shelton and Robert McBain served as book review editors during this time. And Daniel Isgrigg has served in the herculean role of managing editor, which entailed all of the processes that take the articles I give him to the actual published issues people can actually read. I cannot thank him enough. He has been an indispensable part of the effort to produce this journal. And a great thanks to the College of Theology and Ministry at ORU for its support of the journal.

So to complete the title of the song, "Most Likely You Go Your Way, and I'll Go Mine." I am not leaving ORU, nor is this a final goodbye to the journal. I have lived with it for too long to let it slip away from my life. I will be a supporter of its efforts, and maybe here and there try to get something published in it. Any journal that has had downloads to Antarctica must be doing something right. Perhaps that is my proudest moment as editor.

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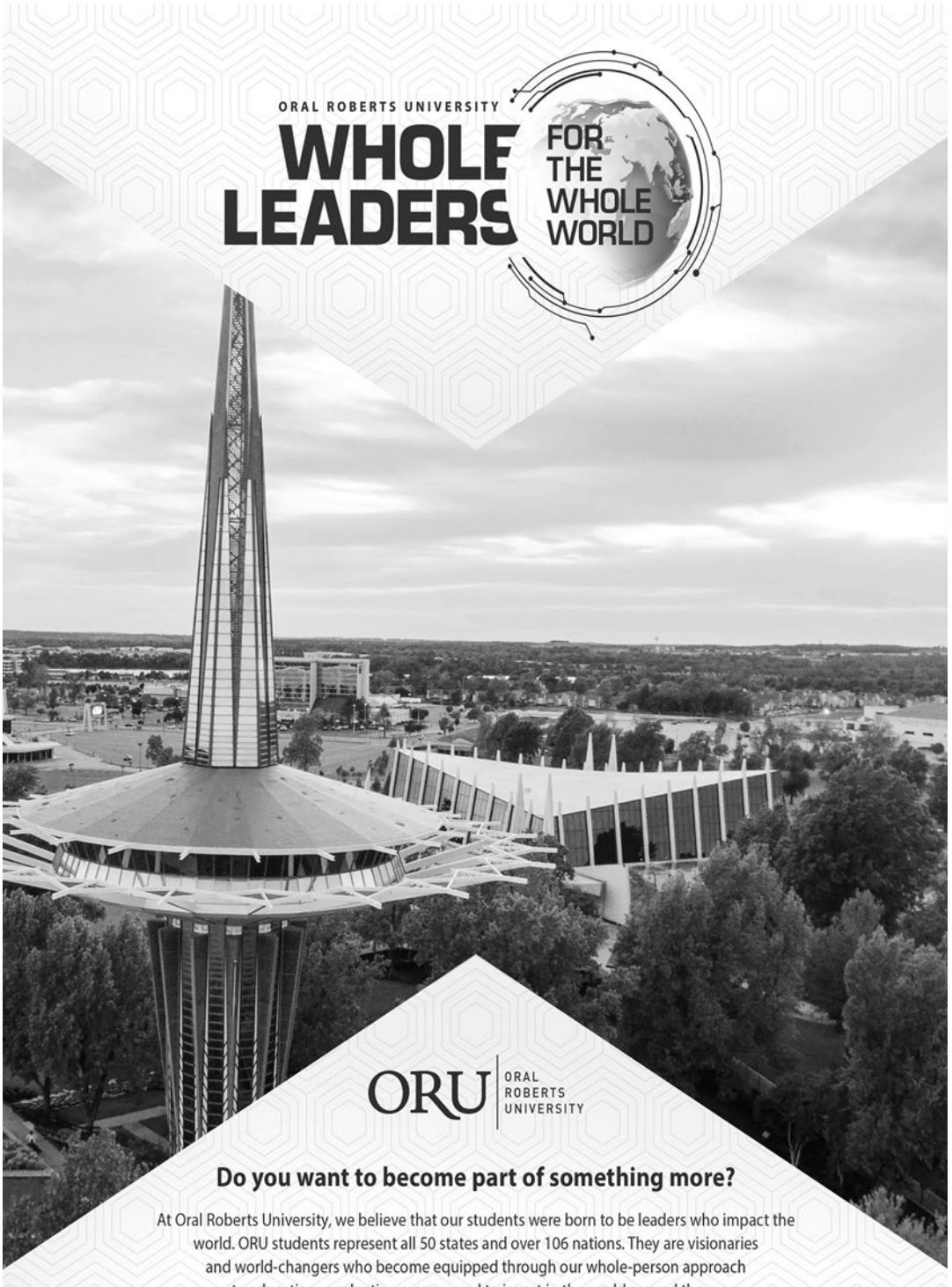
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PCCNA and USCCB Historic Exploratory Dialogue

From Mass to the Vatican then "Little Rome"[1]

Harold D. Hunter

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Venerated Apostolic Faith Mission South Africa (AFM/SA) ecumenist David DuPlessis was the Pentecostal co-organizer of the oldest and most prestigious Pentecostal dialogue. Talks with the Vatican in Rome have passed fifty years. DuPlessis would be eclipsed by anti-apartheid crusader Frank Chikane and now the AFM is the first church from the Pentecostal World Fellowship (PWF) to join the World Council of Churches (WCC). Those present with the WCC Central Committee (June 2021) witnessed AFM President Henri Weideman make mention of DuPlessis as part of his acceptance speech.

DuPlessis set in motion a series of Pentecostal "Lone Ranger" ecumenists, although AFM would come to write their own story. These early ecumenists have impacted the academy but what about Pentecostal churches? Of course, it is a fair question about how many churches are listening when the dialogues are often removed from current issues faced by pastors.

Cheryl Bridges Johns published an article that showcased competing models of Pentecostal ecumenism. I was identified as someone who always got endorsements from the head of his/her church for a wide range of engagements involving NCC Faith and Order, WCC, Ecumenical Patriarchate, and various bilaterals.[2] Fast forward to the second decade of the twenty-first century and now official Pentecostal dialogues are processed through organizations like Pentecostal Churches of North America (PCCNA) and the PWF. When I put together talks with the Ecumenical Patriarchate—2010–2012—it was the first time that the PWF had endorsed any bilateral dialogue.

This monumental sea change along with the rise of ecumenical officers in North America like the late Church of God in Christ scholar Leonard Lovett, Cecil M. Robeck, David Cole, Frank Patrick, David Moore, and Harold D. Hunter, along with

[1] While a student at a Pentecostal college in Cleveland, Tennessee, I first attended Roman Catholic mass at age 19. My first visit to the Vatican was 1989 where I was able to greet Pope John Paul II. The first edition of the PCCNA—USCCB exploratory dialogue was hosted by the USCCB in Washington DC's "Little Rome."

[2] Cheryl Bridges Johns, "Remodeling Our Ecumenical House," in *Pentecostal Theology and Ecumenical Theology*, eds. Peter Hocken, Tony Richie, and Christopher Stephenson (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 146–47.

the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) ecumenical commission led by David Han, deserve attention due to the evolution of the approval process for conciliar ecumenism, bilaterals, and multilaterals. Parts of that new reality will be reviewed as illustrated in the historic PCCNA-USCCB (United States Council of Catholic Bishops) exploratory dialogue so that upcoming Pentecostal ecumenists have a clear path. I will not, however, give details about the work I did together with Prince Guneratnam and others to organize the PWF CUC (Christian Unity Commission) five years earlier at the Pentecostal World Conference in Calgary, Canada.

Dialogue Participants, Oral Roberts University, 2022

In the early 1980s, I was a full-time faculty member at the Church of God seminary in Cleveland, Tennessee, now known as the Pentecostal Theological Seminary (PTS). Some months after my 1983 Society for Pentecostal Studies (SPS) program hosted by PTS, Jerry Sandidge came to Cleveland on behalf of David DuPlessis. Sandidge was looking for church headquarters that would designate official representatives for the ongoing talks with the Vatican. I positioned Church of God of Prophecy (CGP) to endorse this notion. However, I subsequently declined the invitation from the CGP headquarters because at the time I thought teaching at PTS might create unnecessary distractions and also thought sending a CGP bishop at first would be an advantage.

This is not the only time I gave up my seat to make room for minoritized voices. CGP had taught me to take the last seat. While there were unfortunate aspects of that move on my part, one positive thing was opening a relationship with Jack Radano who

represented the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) in talks with Pentecostals led by DuPlessis. Radano made possible a 1989 General Audience with Pope John Paul II where I greeted him in front of St. Peter's Basilica. I have also been with Pope Francis various times including a 2022 General Audience inside the Vatican and more importantly in 2021 with global faith leaders of all religions working toward COP26.

In 2015, I made a routine visit to the PCPCU at the Vatican in Rome. This was part of a trip that would continue on to Antalya, Turkey, for the WCRC-Pentecostal Dialogue. There are parts of one conversation at the Vatican that kept those exchanges safely lodged in my memory. I came away from that visit convinced that now was the time to work toward a dialogue in the USA between Roman Catholics and Pentecostals even though earlier attempts had failed. I had taken a similar trajectory with the Eastern Orthodox launching direct talks with the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. When those talks went on hiatus then I launched an academic version in the USA linked to the annual AAR/SBL meetings.[3]

Once back in the USA, with the approval of International Pentecostal Holiness Church (IPHC) Presiding Bishop A. D. Beacham, Jr., I advocated for the prospect of a PCCNA-USCCB dialogue. As the IPHC Liaison to the Greater Christian Community all my ecumenical activities were subject to the approval of the IPHC Presiding Bishop. I then put the concept before the PCCNA Christian Unity Commission—that is the steering committee then the full commission—which was later taken up by the PCCNA executive committee.[4]

At the same time, Christian Churches Together (CCT) attracted many of those who would make decisions for both PCCNA and USCCB. IPHC is a charter member of CCT (USA) and is the only member of the PWF and PCCNA that is also a member of CCT. Open Bible Churches was a member of CCT when Jeff Farmer was president

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[3] Harold D. Hunter, "An Emmaus Walk with Ancient Fathers and Mothers: From the Sawdust Trail to the Ecumenical Patriarchate," in *Leadership, Spirituality, and the Holy Spirit*, eds. Wonsuk Ma and Robert Menzies (Tulsa, OK: ORU Press, forthcoming 2024), volume honoring the 70th birthday of Younghoon Lee.

[4] Some may not realize that PCCNA was created during the so-called "Memphis Miracle" in 1994 when PFNA (Pentecostal Fellowship of North America) was dissolved. More information can be found in the PCCNA *Reconciliation* magazine that I created and co-edited with Mel Robeck. Relevant information can be found in Harold D. Hunter, "Attacking Systemic Racism for the Common Good: Excerpts from the History of the 'Racial Reconciliation Manifesto,'" in *The Politics of the Spirit: Pentecostal Reflections on Public Responsibility and the Common Good*, eds. Chris Green and Daniela Augustine (Lanham, MD: Seymour Press, 2023), 39–50. This article uses the "Racial Reconciliation Manifesto" to judge the racial dimension of that transition by drawing attention to PFNA blocking Pentecostals of color and Oneness Pentecostals from membership or even participation. After Howard Goss, United Pentecostal Church, came to a 1948 meeting toward forming PFNA, the group quickly adopted a National Association of Evangelicals statement in part to exclude Oneness Pentecostals. I then speculate on what might have happened had the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (PAW) been a member of PFNA that would have included the legendary Bishop Brazier in Chicago.

of Open Bible Churches. Other PCCNA churches have declined invitations to join CCT. However, PCCNA approved an official observer for the 2023 CCT meeting in Savannah, GA.

The executive director of CCT for years was Carlos Malave who was faithful to attend annual PCCNA meetings and contribute to discussions with the CUC. The next leader to emerge in 2022 was Monica Schaap Pierce who joined the 2022 PCCNA CUC by Zoom and was present in-person for the 2023 PCCNA CUC in Albuquerque. Schappe Pierce also came to the 2022 IPHC General Conference in Jacksonville, Florida.

Another piece of the puzzle was Bro. Jeff Gross. During the 1983 SPS at the Church of God seminary in Cleveland, I wanted to invite someone from the NCCCUSA. However, the SPS executive committee did not endorse such a move. Further, I was not allowed to invite James Cone to be a keynote speaker. I was president of SPS in 1984 when we were hosted by Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary outside Boston, Massachusetts. Brother Jeff came at the behest of William G. Rusch to invite Pentecostal scholars to participate in the NCCCUSA Faith and Order Commission.

I knew about Rusch because I had used his book on the Holy Spirit in my PTS class on pneumatology. I gave up part of the time allocated to me as SPS President for Bro. Jeff to extend this invitation. My memory is that among those who were first to respond to this invitation were Edith Blumhofer (Assemblies of God), Cheryl Bridges Johns (Church of God, Cleveland), Cecil M. Robeck (Assemblies of God), Jerry Sandidge (Assemblies of God), and Harold D. Hunter (Church of God of Prophecy).

Now called Faith and Order Tables, this body expanded my ecumenical network in the USA and beyond. I also played a minor role in getting Bro. Jeff elected as an SPS president. This echoed my earlier work in 1982 when at the SPS annual meeting, hosted by Fuller Theological Seminary, I helped get through a constitutional change that translated into Reformed scholar J. Rodman Williams and then Roman Catholic Charismatic scholar Peter Hocken following me as presidents of SPS.

During the February 2018 PCCNA conference in New Orleans, members of the PCCNA CUC steering committee met with a subcommittee of the PCCNA executive committee. According to then PCCNA president Jeff Farmer in an email to the PCCNA CUC steering committee, a motion was made and passed to advance this dialogue I had proposed. When discussing my proposal with the PCCNA CUC while in New Orleans, we were fortunate to include Monsignor Juan Usma Gomez from the Vatican in our deliberations.

It is also the case that all the USCCB ecumenical officers I have engaged acknowledged the impact Bro. Jeff Gros had on them. Brother Jeff had advocated for a USA dialogue with Pentecostals. By 2020, it would be announced that this exploratory

dialogue was endorsed by both the PCCNA and USCCB.[5] The USCCB team is led by Rev. Dr. Walter F. Kedjierski, an ecumenical expert who has led with wisdom, compassion, and insight. We are most fortunate to have engaged the excellent USCCB team, a charisma to the church universal. The agreed themes were initiation, healing, and vocation/mission, which echoes Roman Catholic sacraments. Details about the three years may be found in press releases easily found by the web links in this footnote.[6] Our host each year has gone above and beyond to enable our ministry.

This historic dialogue provides an opportunity to review the emerging model of Pentecostal ecumenism linked to both PCCNA and PWF. The core member churches of PCCNA were identified as candidates for members of the Pentecostal team. I steadfastly campaigned for racial, gender, and faith tradition diversity. Note that each member of the Pentecostal team was endorsed by his or her church and received financial support.

Rev. Dr. Harold D. Hunter, International Pentecostal Holiness Church, chair.

Rev. Dr. Frederic Ware, Church of God in Christ, 2021–2023, paper read 2021.

Rev. Dr. David Han, Church of God (Cleveland, TN) 2021–2023, paper read 2022.

Rev. Dr. Martin Mittelstadt, Assemblies of God, 2021–2023, paper read 2023.

Rev. Dr. Tammy Dunahoo, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, 2021–2022.

Rev. Jennifer Thigpen, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, 2023.

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[5] Some will point to the lack of Oneness Pentecostals. I share that concern as the SPS executive committee member that took in Manuel Gaxiola-Gaxiola in 1982. Gaxiola was the first Oneness Pentecostal to join SPS and I was heavily criticized for receiving him at the time. However, beyond the Goss PFNA story mentioned earlier, one of the dramas at the 1994 launch of PCCNA was a request to include Oneness Pentecostals. A PAW minister came to the platform, where I and others were seated, to ask for such consideration, but that has never been realized. Since this dialogue is endorsed by the PCCNA then only member churches can be members of the team. However, during our September 2022 meeting at ORU, I accepted a Oneness Pentecostal as an observer who is a PhD student at ORU.

[6] Rev. Dr. Walter K. Kedjierski is executive director of the USCCB Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs. Here is his personal reflection on how we started: https://www.usccb.org/news/2021/celebrating-new-relationship-pccna-and-usccb. Press release for 2021: https://www.usccb.org/news/2021/pentecostalcharismatic-christians-and-roman-catholics-engage-exploratory-ecumenical. Press release for 2022: https://www.usccb.org/news/2022/representatives-catholic-and-pentecostal-churches-meet-ecumenical-dialogue. Press release for 2023: https://www.usccb.org/news/2023/representatives-catholic-and-pentecostal-churches-meet-ecumenical-dialogue. PCCNA released identical reports under their own name like 2022 at https://pccna.org/documents/2022.09.23_USCCB.pdf. and 2023 at https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Representatives-from-Catholic-and-Pentecostal-Churches-Meet-for-Ecumenical-Dialogue.html?soid=1109615552491&aid=XBKb_B_X5tI.

Dialogue Participants, University of Notre Dame, 2023

Harold D. Hunter (hdhpctii@gmail.com) is the International Pentecostal Holiness Church Ecumenical Officer and an Adjunct Professor at ORU Graduate School of Theology, Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA.

A Catholic Perspective

on the New Relationship Between the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches of North American and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Walter F. Kedjierski

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Introduction

"My family has just gotten bigger." That was a closing sentiment of one of the Pentecostal participants after the first gathering of theologians representing the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Although many associate ecumenical dialogues with their academic components, i.e., deeply delving into the distinctions and convergences in our respective understandings of the Christian tradition, successful dialogues also leave room for the active presence of the Holy Spirit to touch hearts. "There is no ecumenism worthy of the name," says the document on ecumenism from the Second Vatican Council, *Unitatis Redintegratio,* "without interior conversion" (i.e., a change of heart).[1] Hearts were surely touched during our interactions as the participants came to appreciate each other's unique journeys of faith as brothers and sisters in Christ, and I am most grateful for that gift.

The theme for the 2023 Society for Pentecostal Studies conference is "In Our Own Tongues: Amplifying Pentecostalism's Minoritized Voices," taken from the voices of those who heard Peter's inaugural Pentecost address described in Acts 2. The question participants have been called to consider is, "Why not reimagine and rethink our Pentecostal/Charismatic faith, theology and practice from the purview of the periphery?" I believe the Spirit who unites is actively at work in that question, and it is the same question that Pope Francis has called Catholics around the world also to consider in light of their own living of the Christian tradition. Pope Francis writes in his encyclical on human fraternity, *Fratelli Tutti:*

[1] Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio, Vatican Council II: Volume 1—The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents,* gen. ed. Austin Flannery, OP (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Company, 1998), 7.

> Love also impels us towards universal communion. No one can mature or find fulfilment by withdrawing from others. By its very nature, love calls for growth in openness and the ability to accept others as part of a continuing adventure that makes every periphery converge in a greater sense of mutual belonging. As Jesus told us: "You are all brothers" (Mt 23:8).[2]

Pentecostals and Catholics have made a commitment to understand the perspectives of those we may have ignored in the past for the sake of "convergence into a greater sense of mutual belonging." The line of demarcation between Pentecostal and Catholic Christians in our pasts undoubtedly caused us to ignore each other. The new exchange between the PCCNA and the USCCB is another substantive step toward eschewing past refusals to speak with each other. It is a new commitment for Catholics and Pentecostals to reach across the aisle in recognition of the gifts of the Spirit they could offer each other. This motivation coincides with the wisdom of the increasingly popular movement in dialogue known as "receptive ecumenism,"[3] a model that highlights the exchange of gifts between communities as opposed to the differentiated consensus model that compares doctrines. I believe it is a method that could be particularly helpful in dialogue with Pentecostals who place such a strong emphasis on pneumatology and the gifts of the Spirit.

This Dialogue's Place among Many

Dialogue between Catholics and Pentecostals has been taking place for decades—in fact, the first ecumenical engagements Classical Pentecostals had were with Catholics beginning with dialogues organized between some Classical Pentecostal Churches and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in Rome in 1972. Eventually the net of Pentecostal ecumenical relationships would widen to include the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, and on the national level full Pentecostal membership in an organization known as "CCT USA"—Christian Churches Together. CCT is the only ecumenical conciliar organization in the United States in which both the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and Pentecostals enjoy full membership.[4] This is due in large part to

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[2] Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti,* October 3, 2020, 95, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html.

[3] A good introduction to the method of receptive ecumenism can be found in Paul Murray's article, "Introducing Receptive Ecumenism," in *The Ecumenist: A Journal of Theology, Culture and Society* 51:2 (Spring 2014), 1.

[4] This is such a unique reality that, despite it being a national development, it was acknowledged by an international dialogue between some Classical Pentecostal Churches and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in its document "On Becoming a Christian: Insights from Scripture and

the conscious effort by those who wrote CCT's by-laws to ensure that none of the members ever has to compromise any aspect of their identities. Although CCT is one context in which American Pentecostals and Catholics already engage with each other, this new dialogue is the first attempt for scholars representing the USCCB and the PCCNA to enter into bilateral theological dialogue. Such a dialogue will, as Pope Francis puts it, give us the time to develop a deeper sense of fraternity and thus space for listening to and understanding one another.

The American context is one that offers unique opportunities for growth in mutual enrichment, attributable to both the origins of the Pentecostal movement in the United States[5] and a physical distance from the neuralgic circumstances for Catholics related to the mass exodus of Catholics from the Catholic Church to Pentecostal congregations in Central and South America.[6] These factors, in addition to the development of the Christian Unity Commission of the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches of North America in 2015,[7] made this an auspicious time for Catholics and Pentecostals to create a national ecumenical dialogue here in the United States.

An Exchange of Gifts: Prayer, Sacraments, and Liturgy

The individual who undoubtedly did the most to build this new dialogue, Harold Hunter, actively pursued a national ecumenical dialogue between Pentecostal and Catholic scholars for years. The records in the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the USCCB include copies of correspondence from Dr. Hunter to my predecessors dating back to at least 2010. There are also notes that were prepared by my predecessors promoting the idea of establishing a more formal relationship with Pentecostals, yet I am unaware of the contexts in which they were used. Harold shared with me details about many collaborative efforts he engaged in with the late Brother Jeffrey Gros, someone I, like many Catholic ecumenists, consider to have been a mentor. During Brother Jeff's ecumenical outreach, which included the crossing of many former barriers, he had the opportunity to address the Society of Pentecostal

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Patristic Writings with Some Contemporary Reflection" in ¶ 20. It is available at http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-occidentale/pentecostali/dialogo/documenti-di-dialogo/testo-del-documento-in-inglese1.html.

[5] The Azusa Street Revival Movement in 1906 is acknowledged by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity's document "The Bishop and Christian Unity: An Ecumenical Vademecum" as what is "usually considered" the beginning of the Pentecostal Movement (47).

[6] For example, it has been noted that in 2023 for the first time Pentecostals might outnumber Catholics in Brazil. https://yourbibleversedaily.com/2022/01/wall-street-journal-catholics-are-losing-ground-rapidly-in-brazil-what-else-is-new/.

[7] The history of the Christian Unity Commission is recounted in the PCCNA's website: https://pccna.org/commissions_unity.aspx.

Studies a number of times and even as president in 2012.[8] In that presentation Brother Jeff acknowledged groundbreaking foundations to Catholics and Pentecostal dialogue here in the US. Harold began his work with the international Roman Catholic-Classical Pentecostal dialogue in 1983 and has not only published extensively on Pentecostalism and ecumenism but also offered personal testimony to the dialogue group about his appreciation for aspects of Catholic prayer and spirituality. All of this background brought Harold to most fittingly serve as the Pentecostal co-chair of the exchanges that would be inaugurated in September of 2021. I have found collaborating with him in the development of this dialogue to be a blessing and appreciate the many gifts he has brought to our table.

Harold and I first met at the CCT annual forum in Montgomery, Alabama, in the fall of 2019. It was during that interaction that he approached Bishop Joseph Bambera of Scranton, the chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the USCCB, and me as his staff member, to inquire about starting a Catholic-Pentecostal national dialogue. Ironically, Bishop Bambera would soon after that meeting be assigned to serve on the international Pentecostal-Catholic dialogue sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. Unfortunately, it was not long after that interaction that the normal day-to-day lives of all in the world were interrupted by a global pandemic. Despite that challenge, we were determined to make this aspiration come to fruition in an actual dialogue between Catholic and Pentecostal theologians.

On a cool winter's day in 2020 I made my way to a hotel near Washington, DC, where Harold was lodging. Given he was in my area, we decided to take the risk of meeting in person, despite the ominous reminders of the pandemic, namely mask regulations, prohibitions of in-person work, and news stories about lives lost. Harold graciously bought me a cup of coffee to dispel the chill I had from the walk over, and we dreamed together of the moment when we might begin a national theological dialogue between Catholics and Pentecostals. Those dreams seemed to be such a hopeful contrast to the sadness that surrounded us. Nevertheless, we were both convinced that it was the right time to proceed.

During that meeting Harold suggested that we spend the dialogue discussing issues related to prayer, liturgy, and sacraments. In accord with the spirit of receptive ecumenism as an exchange of gifts, he expressed his opinion, much to my surprise, that there might be some aspects of Catholic practice that could be beneficial to Pentecostals. As you could imagine, this was an unexpected request, especially given

[8] Brother Jeff gave the Presidential Address to the society in 2012: "It Seems Good to the Holy Spirit and to Us: The Ecclesial Vocation of the Pentecostal Scholar," *Pneuma* 34 (2012), 167–84.

obvious observations that have been made in the past about the divergences of practice between our communities on such issues. The international dialogue had already noted:

> It is true that in worship Catholics are more oriented toward liturgical rites while Pentecostals emphasize the charismatic dimension of the worshipping assembly . . . Charismatic manifestations like *glossolalia* and sacramentally orientated devotions such as exposition of the Blessed Sacrament may seem opposed to some.[9]

Nevertheless, the both of us felt that the group would be up to the challenge. I suggested that we divide up the three years of meetings around the three traditional ways sacraments are grouped together in Catholic thought: Initiation, as experienced through Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist; Healing, as experienced through Confession of Sins and Anointing of the Sick; and finally, Service or Vocation, as expressed through Holy Orders and Marriage. While traditional, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* does explain that there are other ways of grouping the sacraments that are just as acceptable. However, these three groupings highlight stages of life that I felt could be beneficial to this initial sharing between our communities of faith. The *Catechism* explains:

> Christ instituted the sacraments of the new law. There are seven: Baptism, Confirmation (or Chrismation), the Eucharist, Penance, the Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. The seven sacraments touch all the stages and all the important moments of the Christian life, they give birth and increase, healing and mission to the Church's life of faith. There is thus a certain resemblance between the stages of natural life and the stages of the spiritual life. Following this analogy, the first chapter will expound the three sacraments of Christian initiation; the second, the sacraments of healing; and the third, the sacraments at the service of communion and the mission of the faithful. This order, while not the only one possible, does allow one to see that the sacraments form an organic whole in which each particular sacrament has its own vital place.[10]

Leaving the language very broad, by simply assigning the general topics of initiation, healing, and service, offered to the theologians enough latitude to be themselves and express how their communities of faith live and manifest these three aspects of growth in the Christian life. Other than a general sense that the dialogue would develop the topic of liturgy and sacraments, as well as the "specific" topic of each of the three years, the theologians from our respective groups were given no further instruction. With plenty of room for the working of the Holy Spirit and the creativity of the theologians that could stretch across the aisle into another set of pews, we were ready to prepare for the dialogue.

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[9] "On Becoming a Christian," ¶¶ 189 and 191.

[10] *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* ¶¶ 1210 and 1211.

This initial dialogue consisted of three annual meetings and was provisional/exploratory in status. There were a number of reasons for this decision. First of all, this dialogue was our first interaction, and there needed to be an opportunity to learn about the viability and potential of success for such an encounter before making a longstanding commitment. Secondly, I needed to present the results of the interactions to the USCCB's Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs so that they could discuss it and discern whether or not to formally endorse the dialogue. Finally, observations from the experiences of the provisional dialogue helped the bishops' committee to discern if the presence of a bishop as Catholic co-chair would be useful to the relationship. I would also note that at the USCCB there are mundane financial matters involved with the distinction between exploratory, as opposed to official, dialogues.

Developments at Dialogue Sessions

Although one of the first aspects of this exploratory dialogue to be developed between the PCCNA and the USCCB was the overall theological theme and the topics of the papers, in addition, we felt strongly that there also be an exchange of faith experiences, religious cultures, and piety. Each day we were together was enshrined in prayer, one group leading in the morning and the other in the evening. Those daily prayers were developed in accord with the diverse spiritual expressions found in our various communities of faith. We also shared all of our meals in common, which offered the opportunity for the theologians and participants to share their faith journeys with one another in an informal setting. These dialogues also gave to all of the participants an opportunity to learn about their faith communities through brief pilgrimages to places of particular significance for Pentecostals and Catholics in the United States. Many of those sights made a lasting impact upon the participants.

The first dialogue session was held in September of 2021 in Washington, DC. The theme was "initiation." It was most appropriate to begin our time together with a dialogue on the beginning of the life of faith for the Christian. Lodging and dialogue sessions were at the Washington Retreat House. That retreat house is of particular historical significance for the Catholic ecumenical movement because it was built in the early twentieth century by Mother Luana White. Along with Father Paul Wattson, she founded the Franciscan Friars and Sisters of the Atonement, which is a religious community that has as its main charism the unity of Christians. This was the community that began the "Octave for Christian Unity," which would eventually become the "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity." A member of the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement, Sister Nancy Conboy, SA, offered a presentation on the history of her community's involvement with ecumenism to our group. We also spent a morning

at the National Shrine of Pope St. John Paul II. In addition to his considerable outreach to the Jewish community, St. John Paul was a strong promoter of ecumenism, authoring the first and thus far only papal encyclical on ecumenism, *Ut Unum Sint.* Another place we were able to visit was the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land, which includes life-sized replicas of a number of important monuments and shrines in the Holy Land. We were led on that tour by Fr. Jim Gardiner, SA, who is a Franciscan Friar of the Atonement that has made his own contribution to the ecumenical movement in the United States. Finally, we were led on a tour of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception by the director of pilgrimages, Monsignor Vito Buonanno. The basilica is in a particular way an architectural representation of Catholicism as it is experienced throughout the United States. These visits enabled the Pentecostal team to have a fuller picture of the lives and history of Catholics in the United States.

The Pentecostal team also led us on thought provoking pilgrimages as they hosted our dialogue in September of 2022 at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The first place the dialogue visited in Tulsa was the Greenwood Museum followed by a Pentecostal prayer service at the John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park. These visits were sobering reminders of the destruction of the prosperous "Black Wall Street" during the tragic Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921. The visits also reminded us of the distressing historical development that preceded the massacre with the forced displacement of the Native Americans from their lands. These stark historical realities coincided well with the theme of that second meeting: healing. None of the Catholics had ever visited Oral Roberts University before. The experience of being in an environment that is saturated in Pentecostalism gave greater depth to our understanding of Pentecostalism. We appreciated the opportunity to visit the Oral Roberts Prayer Tower and the university's deliberate efforts to provide an environment conducive to the building up of the students' prayer lives. It was particularly refreshing to have the opportunity to interact not only with representatives of the theology faculty at Oral Roberts, including Wonsuk Ma, whose work in Global Christian Studies is an invaluable contribution to the ecumenical movement, but also those involved with Oral Roberts University's commitment to creation care. We also found the experience of participating in chapel worship with the university's president, Dr. Billy Wilson, to be a particularly joyful moment and were honored to be welcomed so graciously by Dr. Wilson and the students present.

The last session of this first, exploratory round, met in September of 2023 at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana. The theme was "vocation/service" and ministry, and it was another special opportunity to learn about how our faith communities live out their belief in the Lord Jesus and his love for all people. During this session Dr. Kimberly Belcher invited us to observe a course she teaches entitled "Holy Communion and Christian Disunity." We also had the pleasure of interacting with graduate students

in theology at a dinner hosted by the university's Office of Mission Engagement and Church Affairs. Jerry Powers of the Catholic Peacebuilding Network spoke to us about the university's promotion of Catholic peacebuilding efforts throughout the world. The group also enjoyed an experience at the *Digital Visualization Theatre,* a planetarium on campus, during which we heard a presentation by Keith Davis on "What the Ancients Knew about the Heavens and What Scientists Know." Kim mentioned how she brings her undergraduate students to the theatre when she discusses the creation narratives of Genesis. Once again, we were the recipients of tremendous hospitality at Notre Dame. All of these journeys helped to flesh out the necessary human and spiritual dimensions for a successful ecumenical dialogue.

Reflections on Theological Exchanges

The theological exchanges during the dialogue sessions were thought-provoking and exposed numerous unexpected areas of convergence between us. The presentations, once completed, will be made available for the public to read and reflect upon through both the journal of Oral Roberts University, *Spiritus*, and the Catholic journal *Worship*. Allow me to simply offer a few basic points on the Pentecostal presentations that are particularly interesting to Catholic sensibilities.

The first presentation on the topic of "initiation" was given by Rev. Dr. Frederick L. Ware (Church of God in Christ) of Howard Divinity School and it addressed primarily "water baptism." The first point he mentioned that is of particular interest for Catholics is that "Pentecostals are rediscovering sacramental theology and exploring its relevance and application to Christian faith and practice in Pentecostal churches."[11] Given the high emphasis on sacraments in the Catholic Church this "rediscovery" is most intriguing and could develop into an area in which Catholics and Pentecostals can fruitfully share their experiences with one another. This "rediscovery," I would boldly suggest, could be the work of the Spirit through Pentecostalism to heal the divisions between Christians. It is interesting to note that Ware confined his paper to water baptism with a sensitivity toward Catholic practice.

Ware indicated that Pentecostals do not practice confirmation because adults are baptized. Yet, interestingly for Catholics, confirmation (or chrismation in the East) is not only associated with initiation and a personal testimony to faith but also the bestowal of the gifts of the Holy Spirit necessary to live the Christian life, which links it to baptism. One could suggest that confirmation is not perceived as necessary to the Pentecostal precisely because of an already high emphasis on the Spirit's work in the

[11] Frederick L. Ware, "Initiation (Water Baptism) in North American Pentecostalism," *Spiritus* 9:2 (2024), 175.

lives of all believers. This leads me to think that while not formally sacramental in a Catholic sense, *perhaps every day is a day of "confirmation" for a Pentecostal?*

It was particularly interesting to be exposed to the denominational statements on water baptism by Dr. Ware's paper. A number of those statements highlighted the immersion in water and use of the Trinitarian formula found in Matthew 28. Ware indicated that in the past many denominations would encourage baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus alone but this has developed into a more common use of the formula found in Matthew 28 as a specific mandate of the Lord Jesus. This development indeed draws our communities closer together, given that for Catholics the proper form of baptism is always the use of water (regardless of the water being poured or the practice of immersion) and invocation of the Trinitarian formula.[12] The PCCNA membership being reserved to Trinitarian Christians is helpful since in Catholic theology belief in the Trinity occupies a prominent place in the "hierarchy of truths"—a notion that has been very helpful in our ecumenical dialogues.[13]

There are two important asides I would like to make with respect to the above observations. First, one crucial question Ware asked is, "How much variation can be accommodated without compromising the integrity of the baptismal event in Christian experience?"[14] One of the points that Ware made is that "If there is anything that may be called typical, it is the diversity of experiences, thoughts, and perspectives among Pentecostals."[15] This begs the question for Catholics that, although denominational statements promote water baptism with the Trinitarian formula, what is the usual practice? For Catholics, matter, i.e., pure water, and form, i.e., the Trinitarian formula,

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[12] In the *Code of Canon Law,* it states "Baptism . . . is validly conferred only by washing with true water together with the required form of words" (c 849). The *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms of Ecumenism* is even more explicit in this regard: "Baptism is conferred with water and with a formula which clearly indicates that Baptism is done in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. . . . Baptism by immersion, or by pouring water, with the Trinitarian formula is, of itself, valid. Therefore, if the rituals, liturgical books or established customs of a church or ecclesial community prescribe either of these ways of Baptism, the Sacrament is to be considered valid unless there are serious reasons for doubting that the minister observed the regulations of his/her own community or church" (93, 95a). Notably, the Catholic Church recognizes the validity of baptisms from Christian communities that prefer the notion of ordinance to sacrament when done in accord with proper matter and form. A prime example of this for us in the US is the Common Agreement on Baptism reached between the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and Reformed churches that was issued on November 16, 2010.

[13] As it states in the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity's document "Reflections and Suggestions Concerning Ecumenical Dialogue" from August 15, 1970: "It will be borne in mind that 'in Catholic teaching there exists an order of hierarchy of truths, since they vary in their relationship to the foundation of the Christian faith. Neither in the life nor in the teaching of the whole Church is everything presented on the same level. Certainly all revealed truths demand the same acceptance of faith, but according to the greater or lesser proximity that they have to the basis of the revealed mystery, they are variously placed with regard to one another and have varying connections among themselves'" (4, b).

[14] Ware, "Initiation (Water Baptism) in North American Pentecostalism," 186.

[15] Ware, "Initiation (Water Baptism) in North American Pentecostalism," 176.

are necessary for the validity of the baptism. Variations in practice compromising matter and form are a concern for Catholics, not only with Pentecostals, but also mainline Protestants and even Catholic ministers who might apply an overextension of variation to the conferral of the sacrament.[16] The upcoming annual forum of CCT will actually seek to address these issues while also relating baptism to the call to work for justice.

The second aside relates to an important caution Dr. Ware makes, one I find to be less of a caution and more of a convergence. He states, "Clearly, and without question, these rituals have been instituted by Christ. After giving these rituals, is there yet freedom for God to act beyond prescribed liturgy? How does God use the ritual, but also transcend it?"[17] This is indeed a question Catholics have considered, and an opportunity to make clear that Catholics do not consider the sacraments as in any way capable of limiting the activity of God. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains this important nuance carefully so as on the one hand not to denigrate a Catholic sense of the importance of baptism while at the same time preserving the sovereignty of God:

> The Church does not know of any means other than Baptism that assures entry into eternal beatitude; this is why she takes care not to neglect the mission she has received from the Lord to see that all who can be baptized are "reborn of water and the Spirit." *God has bound salvation to the sacrament of Baptism, but he himself is not bound by his sacraments* [emphasis is in the original].[18]

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[16] The Episcopal Church USA continues to discern the use of inclusive language in its liturgy and should this impact the baptismal formula of "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" this would, in the view of the Catholic Church, render such baptisms invalid. See Fr. Matthew S. C. Olver's commentary on changes in the Eucharistic Prayers in his article, "New Rites: Expansive, Inclusive or Stifling?," *Covenant*, November 18, 2018, https://covenant.livingchurch.org/2018/11/14/new-rites-expansive-inclusive-or-stifling/. There was a recent issue of a Catholic deacon using the wrong words of the baptismal formula and invalidly baptizing an infant who would later on become a priest. This mistake necessitated that he participate once again in ceremonies for his baptism, confirmation, and ordination. This was a particularly grave situation because as a result this young man functioned as a priest when he was not in fact validly ordained, rendering many of the sacraments he conferred invalid. For more information read Michael Stechschulte's article in, "A Priest Discovered His Baptism Was Invalid. Its Ripple Effects Bring Heartache and Confusion to the Entire Church Community," *America Magazine*, August 24, 2020, https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2020/08/24/detroit-priest-invalid-baptism-canonical-consequences.

[17] Ware, "Initiation (Water Baptism) in North American Pentecostalism," 187.

[18] Paragraph 1257. This is a summarization of the thought of Peter Lombard (twelfth century) who wrote, "Almighty God can and does give grace to men in answer to their internal aspirations and prayers without the use of any external sign or ceremony. This will always be possible, because God, grace, and the soul are spiritual beings. God is not restricted to the use of material, visible symbols in dealing with men; the sacraments are not necessary in the sense that they could not have been dispensed with. But, if it is known that God has appointed external, visible ceremonies as the means by which certain graces are to be conferred on men, then in order to obtain those graces it will be necessary for men to make use of those Divinely appointed means. This truth theologians express by saying that the sacraments are necessary, not absolutely but only hypothetically, i.e., in the supposition that if we wish to obtain a certain supernatural end we must use the supernatural means appointed for obtaining that end." https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/13295a.htm#I.

From this official teaching document of the Church Catholics can offer a resounding yes to Dr. Ware's question of there being freedom for God to act beyond prescribed liturgy. How that might take place lies in the realm of the mystery of God's grace.

Dr. David S. Han of Pentecostal Theological Seminary offered the Pentecostal paper for our second meeting that he entitled "Healing in the Pentecostal Tradition." He began by emphasizing how fundamental the ministry of healing is to the identity of Pentecostals: "The experience of divine healing is, however, just as significant as that of Spirit-baptism. Donald W. Dayton would even argue: '. . . even more characteristic of Pentecostalism than the doctrine of baptism of the Spirit is its celebration of miracles of divine healing as part of God's salvation and as evidence of the presence of divine power in the church.'"[19] It is interesting to note that despite the tremendous emphasis Pentecostals place on healing that the international dialogue did not pick up the topic of healing in a substantive way until relatively recently. During the first dialogue (1972–1976) it was noted that healing should be a topic of conversation among numerous others. In October of 1979 the dialogue met in Rome and the topic of healing was discussed alongside a consideration of the relationship between Scripture and Tradition. In subsequent documents and discussions, healing was acknowledged as one among many manifestations of the work of the Spirit but not given particular attention. However, during the last round of the international dialogue, Catholic and Pentecostal theologians devoted an entire session to the topic of healing at their 2013 meeting in Baltimore. The document produced by that round, "Do Not Quench the Spirit," dedicates a small section to healing and explicates the results of their discussions under three categories: healing in Scripture, healing in church history, and healing in the life of the church. It is apparent that more dialogue needs to be pursued in this area. Healing is not only an important part of Pentecostal life, but it has also been so in Catholic life, with the sacraments of Anointing of the Sick and Reconciliation as official public acts of the Church. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal also has a high emphasis on healing prayer. While some work has been done on Scripture and church history, a deeper appreciation and theological exploration of the phenomenological dimensions of healing, particularly as emphasized in Pentecostalism, would be helpful to Catholics and Pentecostals coming to understand each other better. Pope Francis in his letter for the World Day of Peace in 2021 urged all people to build a "culture of care." Given the recent pandemic and greater emphasis on promoting good health this would be an opportune time to discern how Catholics and Pentecostals together can bring the healing power of Christ to those around us.

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[19] David S. Han, "Healing in the Pentecostal Tradition," *Spiritus* 9:2 (2024), 218–19.

There is another point made by Han that has the potential of being developed into a substantive dialogue. He notes: "Healing envisages a holistic restoration of human being. Practices of healing are constant reminders to affirm the truth that human beings are only made whole when both their spiritual and bodily needs are brought to bear and met with nourishment."[20] This aspect of the healing ministry of the church emphasizes a Christian anthropology that understands the unity of the human person, body, mind, and spirit, in contradiction to contemporary trends that overemphasize materialism, reducing the human person to the bodily, and also Gnostic trends that denigrate the body and exalt the spiritual. Pope Francis has in a particular way pointed out the need to confront what he perceives to be an upsurge in Gnostic and Pelagian tendencies in today's world.[21] Ministers to the sick from both Pentecostal and Catholic churches understand that when an individual's body is in pain, it can impact the person's spiritual and emotional life, while when a person is spiritually or emotionally wounded, those wounds can manifest themselves in physical ways and even interfere with the healing processes of the body. This is surely a point of convergence that can assist in our mutual attempts to bring people closer to Christ during their times of need.

The final point of convergence I would highlight that is helpful to emphasize is that both Catholics and Pentecostals understand our rituals associated with healing as being consistent with and inspired by sacred Scripture. Han mentions: "Of a particular

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[20] Han, "Healing in the Pentecostal Tradition," 226.

[21] The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a letter, *Placuit Deo,* to bishops about certain aspects of Christian salvation on February 22, 2018. It stated: "Pope Francis, in his ordinary magisterium, often has made reference to the two tendencies described above, that resemble certain aspects of two ancient heresies, Pelagianism and Gnosticism. A new form of Pelagianism is spreading in our days, one in which the individual, understood to be radically autonomous, presumes to save oneself, without recognizing that, at the deepest level of being, he or she derives from God and from others. According to this way of thinking, salvation depends on the strength of the individual or on purely human structures, which are incapable of welcoming the newness of the Spirit of God. On the other hand, a new form of Gnosticism puts forward a model of salvation that is merely interior, closed off in its own subjectivism. In this model, salvation consists in elevating oneself with the intellect beyond 'the flesh of Jesus towards the mysteries of the unknown divinity.'" It also stated: "The salvific sacramental economy is also opposed to trends that propose a merely interior salvation. Gnosticism, indeed, associates itself with a negative view of the created order, which is understood as a limitation on the absolute freedom of the human spirit. Consequently, salvation is understood as freedom from the body and from the concrete relationships in which a person lives. In as much as we are saved 'by means of offering the body of Jesus Christ' (Heb 10:10; cf. Col 1:22), true salvation, contrary to being a liberation from the body, also includes its sanctification (cf. Rom 12:1). The human body was shaped by God, who inscribed within it a language that invites the human person to recognize the gifts of the Creator and to live in communion with one's brothers and sisters. By his Incarnation and his paschal mystery, the Savior re-established and renewed this original language and communicated it in the economy of the sacraments. Thanks to the sacraments, Christians are able to live in fidelity to the flesh of Christ and, as a result, in fidelity to the concrete order of relationships that He gave us. This order of relationality requires, in a particular way, the care of all suffering humanity through the spiritual and corporal works of mercy" (14).

note, all of the official statements of classical Pentecostal denominations appeal to James 5:14–16. It is partly due to the fact that this is the only place where we are given a description of a specific procedure to follow."[22] When Catholic priests offer the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, they read this same passage of Scripture. Although Catholics interpret the elders mentioned by James as having a responsibility reserved to a priest or bishop who has been officially ordained, precisely because this is an official act of the Church, both Catholics and Pentecostals engage in similar healing rituals. There is a laying on of hands and an anointing with oil. While the use of "anointed handkerchiefs" is not popular among Catholics, there are other practices of popular piety, like the use of water from the grotto at Lourdes, France, and the relics of saints, that are known to have similar impacts and meanings. Hence there is much in the way of convergence in regard to healing that should be explored.

Dr. Martin W. Mittelstadt of Evangel University offered the third Pentecostal paper entitled, "Called: A Pentecostal Theology of Vocation." It seemed to be particularly fitting to conclude our discussions with the notion of vocation since many of them eventually led to ways in which we could enrich each other's work of discipleship. The topic of a Pentecostal theology of vocation is one that has been of particular interest to Mittelstadt for a long time. He wrote: "For over twenty years, I have been teaching a required first-year course that includes an intense unit on vocation. With my department colleagues, we provide roughly fifteen sections of this course annually. I listen to the students' stories every day."[23] Due to these experiences, Mittelstadt was particularly reflective and insightful.

One of the most important points that Mittelstadt continually made in his paper was that a theology of vocation is deficient if it is only in reference to the clergy. He wrote,

> I believe the traditional narrative has led many Pentecostal believers toward church-related ministry because of minimalist theology of the call. Some of these folk, like me, have survived and thrived; others stumbled. Added to this, I have a concern for Pentecostal congregants who never receive the call to church-related ministry. Many struggle to understand why they receive no such call, and many more are left with little instruction and discipleship concerning their day-to-day vocations.[24]

This exclusive attention to the vocation of formalized ecclesial service was also a challenge in the Catholic Church. The *Baltimore Catehcism,* which was a text that was used to teach Catholic children in the United States about the faith before the 1960s,

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[22] Han, "Healing in the Pentecostal Tradition," 229.

[23] Martin W. Mittelstadt, "Called: A Pentecostal Theology of Vocation," *Spiritus* 9:2 (2024), 285.

[24] Mittelstadt, "Called: A Pentecostal Theology of Vocation," 285.

contained an illustration that on one side depicted a husband and wife with the caption, "good," while next to it was a picture of a priest and a nun with the caption, "better." Yet with the Second Vatican Council the Catholic Church recognized and emphasized the point that Mittelstadt is now making. It is referred to as the "universal call to holiness" and is described in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium,* in this way:

> It is therefore quite clear that all Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of love, and by this holiness a more human manner of life is fostered also in earthly society. In order to reach this perfection, the faithful should use the strength dealt out to them by Christ's gift, so that, following in his footsteps and conformed to his image, doing the will of God in everything, they may wholeheartedly devote themselves to the glory of God and to the service of their neighbor.[25]

Mittelstadt contends that there is a certain equality among faithful Christians, each following an individual calling from Christ. He even goes so far as to make this statement: "If the Spirit enlists everyone, patriarchy and hierarchy collapse."[26] As a Catholic my ears naturally perk up when I hear the word "hierarchy." However, I believe that the use of the term as Mittelstadt understands it, seemingly individuals who "lord their authority over others,"[27] would render this sentence correct for Catholics. Pope Francis has offered a distinct view of hierarchy that is a description of the authentic Catholic understanding of that term:

> Even when the function of ministerial priesthood is considered "hierarchical," it must be remembered that "it is totally ordered to the holiness of Christ's members." Its key and axis is not power understood as domination, but the power to administer the sacrament of the Eucharist; this is the origin of its authority, which is always service to God's people.[28]

Catholics understand that when their hierarchs are immersed in humble service as opposed to domination they are fulfilling the will of Christ. They would consider it a part of the diversity of callings that exist in the Church in keeping with the sentiments of 1 Corinthians 12:28. Mittelstadt emphasized this diversity as it exists in the

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[25] *Vatican Council II: Volume 1—The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents,* ed. Austin Flannery, *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church 39 (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Company, 1988), 397.

[26] Mittelstadt, "Called: A Pentecostal Theology of Vocation," 290.

[27] Matt 20:25.

[28] Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium,* The Joy of the Gospel, Apostolic Exhortation, 103. Available at www.vatican.va.

Pentecostal tradition. He used imagery from the African American spiritual song tradition to make this point:

> Out of their spiritual songs, African-Americans gave rise to jazz, a genre that serves as a suitable metaphor for Pentecostal life in the Spirit. Pentecostal worship, liturgies, theologies, and—I suggest—vocations do not produce orchestral or symphonic performances; instead, Pentecostals celebrate oral and bodily spontaneity and improvisation. For this reason, *jazzolalia* serves as an imaginative extension of first-century glossolalia. . . . If applied to vocation, the aphorism by Nigerian-American Pentecostal scholar Nimi Wariboko resonates well: "It-does-not-make-sense-but-it makes-spirit."[29]

Before one might jump to a conclusion that this is a far cry from Catholic perspectives on vocations, it would be wise to note well these sentiments of Pope Francis:

> Differing currents of thought in philosophy, theology and pastoral practice, if open to being reconciled by the Spirit in respect and love, can enable the Church to grow, since all of them help to express more clearly the immense riches of God's word. For those who long for a monolithic body of doctrine guarded by all and leaving no room for nuance, this might appear as undesirable and leading to confusion. But in fact such variety serves to bring out and develop different facets of the inexhaustible riches of the Gospel.[30]

The Catholic Church does accept a variety of paths and ways of thinking that lead to holiness. This is most clearly demonstrated by an examination of the collection of names of those canonized as saints by the Catholic Church. These are individuals who are held up as examples of living the Christian life with heroic virtue. They include people of all walks of life, men and women, young and old, hailing from highly diverse cultural and national backgrounds.

One point of divergence, which might be more of emphasis than practice, is the role of the community (to Catholics, the institutional Church) in the discernment of vocations. Given that the Catholic Church holds that its leaders have been given gifts of discernment (as in Matthew 16:18 Peter is acknowledged to have a wisdom about the identity of Jesus that comes from his heavenly Father), Catholics contend that the clergy have a special role in helping Christians to accept their vocations. Vocations are callings that come from God, and while there is a charismatic aspect of this particular individual being given a particular call by God, Catholics contend that this calling is only recognized as authentically from God through the discernment of the clergy. While Pentecostals do

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[29] Mittelstadt, "Called: A Pentecostal Theology of Vocation," 291.

[30] Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium,* 40.

have seminary and congregational boards that discern when one is called to formalized Church ministry, this was not highly emphasized in the discussion.

Possibilities for the Future

This first exploratory dialogue between the PCCNA's and the USCCB's representatives concluded in September of 2023. By all accounts it was a success. All of the participants entered into the interaction with the greatest of respect and maturity. From the onset the theologians attempted to discern connections and convergences between our practices and theology. The experience of praying together was particularly lifegiving. The USCCB's Bishops Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs has been continually updated on the progress of this dialogue. In its October 2022 meeting the bishops unanimously agreed to send a member of the committee to the September 2023 session. The observations that Bishop Peter Smith, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon, brought the bishops' committee to agree to elevate the status of the USCCB-PCCNA dialogue. We look forward to a future in dialogue together and an incorporation into the regular rhythm of the committee's ecumenical portfolio. Discernment will need to be made about the next topic to be developed. Another issue to consider is that the PCCNA is international in scope while the USCCB is confined to the United States. It might be appropriate at some point for the Catholics to consider including the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops in the dialogue. With widespread fluency in online platforms, it would be possible to be both financially responsible and have our theologians meet together with more frequency. Yet at the same time, given the mutual emphasis by Pentecostals and Catholics on the experiential, the importance of periodic in-person meetings cannot be overemphasized.

Conclusion: Reaching Out to the Periphery

I would like to conclude by returning to the theme for this conference, "Amplifying Minoritized Voices." When thinking about such voices my thoughts bring me to the theologians who graciously volunteered to participate in this first national dialogue between Pentecostals and Catholics. Harold and I were deliberate in seeking out a diverse group of participants. The theologians have included women and men, clergy and laity, as well as individuals with Asian, African American, Hispanic, and European backgrounds. We can celebrate together that there are "varieties of gifts but the same Spirit."[31] Should they maintain this mutual commitment to listening to all voices, especially those on the periphery, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Pentecostal Churches of North America will surely come closer together.

[31] 1 Cor 12:4.

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Initiation Sacraments and Directions for Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue

An Essay for the Exploratory USCCB/PCCNA Dialogue

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Abstract

This article surveys Roman Catholic understandings of initiation sacraments. It traces historical developments and current practices for the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and Holy Communion. Throughout attention is paid to the areas where convergences and issues for further discussion between Roman Catholics and Pentecostals emerge.

Introduction

> Our ancestors . . . were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. (1 Cor 10:1–4)

In the New Testament and other documentation from the early churches of the second and third centuries, there were a variety of different practices of initiation. In general, these communities' initiation included some of the following: the water bath known as baptism (that is, immersion), anointing with olive oil,[1] laying on of hands, and table fellowship.[2] Though these would later become separated into three different rites with

[1] Gabrielle Winkler and Sebastian Brock argue for the primacy of anointing in the earliest Syriac evidence, suggesting that some churches may have initiated using an anointing without any water bath. See, for example, G. Winkler, "The Original Meaning of the Pre-Baptismal Anointing and Its Implications," *Worship* 52 (1978), 24–45; Sebastian P. Brock, *The Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2008).

[2] Nathan D. Mitchell, *Eucharist as Sacrament of Initiation: Forum Essay #2* (Chicago, IL: Liturgy Training Publications, 2007).

different interpretations, in the pre-Nicene period, they were understood as one initiation into Christ and the church, bestowing on one the Holy Spirit and his gifts, and leading one to a holy life. Unity in agapeic love was one primary mark of inclusion in the body of Christ, supported by a virtuous life, especially patience in suffering, and the charisms of prophecy, interpretation, and teaching (e.g. 1 Cor 13; 1 John 2). By the end of the fourth century, throughout the Christian world, most churches used rites[3] including preparatory teaching and exorcism, at least one anointing with oil, a water bath (immersion or submersion) accompanied by the Trinitarian name, hand laying, and participation in the Eucharist. We can call this general pattern the catechumenate.

In the contemporary Roman Catholic Church, there are also multiple initiatory practices. The best-known pattern is one inherited from the medieval "dissolution" of the fourth-century united rites, in which baptism, confirmation, and communion, which were received together in the catechumenate, are received years apart.[4] A child of at least one Catholic parent is often baptized in "infancy" (a technical term that means before the age of seven). In my experience it is common to have initiands from a few weeks old to toddlers of two years old, depending on the ethnic composition and socio-economic conditions of the parish community. Reconciliation and first communion are received at the age of seven or eight, and confirmation anywhere between age seven and late adolescence. In some Latino communities in the United States, it is not unusual to defer confirmation until one is preparing for marriage or to be a godparent for a new baptizand.

The other major pattern is a mid-century adaptation of the ancient catechumenate that has been adopted with slight differences by the Roman Catholic Church and many mainline Protestant churches. In this Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, initiands age seven or older go through a period of spiritual and intellectual formation, culminating at the Easter Vigil with baptism, confirmation, and first communion. The Liturgical Movement that animated the mid-twentieth-century renewal of Catholic liturgy and spirituality was deeply inspired by the practice and reflection of the fourth- and fifth-century Christian churches. As a result, the adult initiation pattern, although it is less common, is more important for understanding contemporary Roman Catholic theological reflection on initiation.

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[3] In this essay, I use "rite" to mean a whole, recognizable liturgy or part of a liturgy. In Catholic liturgical theology, neither "ritual" nor "rite" means something that is done without conscious intention or emotional impact; rather, Catholic liturgy is meant for "full, conscious and active participation" by each member (Vatican II, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," ¶ 14). "Rite" does not exclude improvisation, but it does constrain it within certain boundaries.

[4] Nathan Mitchell, "Christian Initiation: Decline and Dismemberment," *Worship* 48:8 (October 1974), 458–79.

Both of these patterns convey important truths about God's work of redemption. Sacraments for Catholics both represent and convey grace; as the medieval adage put it, they "effect what they signify." They do so not on their own magical power, but because it is God who communicates with us in the sacraments and uses them to accomplish our salvation. Thomas Aquinas uses the analogy of a hammer (sacrament) that is an instrument in the hand of a craftsman (God), whose will is reflected in the finished work.[5] He argues that the shorthand "sign of a sacred thing" (a common aphorism in medieval theology) is not adequate because every created thing is a sign of the creator (referencing Rom 1:20). Rather, "properly speaking a sacrament . . . is the sign of a sacred thing inasmuch as it is sanctifying human beings."[6] In particular, a sacrament points to Jesus Christ as the source of our holiness, as the one who makes us holy.[7] A sacrament, then, is a symbol of grace as well as a manifestation of God's work saving human beings.

The two contemporary processes of Roman Catholic initiation manifest different aspects of God's mysterious work of salvation. The process of initiation that begins with infant baptism and concludes in adolescence or early adulthood demonstrates our conviction that God adopts us because of a love that comes before any work we do.[8] It also shows that conversion is a lifelong call with many phases of development. It illuminates the familial intimacy of the Christian family, which was expressed in the early church with the kiss of peace. Adult initiation, on the other hand, highlights the importance of human cooperation in the process of salvation, the radical and ethical character of conversion, and the role of Jesus Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection. Both have themes of participation in the sonship of Jesus Christ, of being filled with the Holy Spirit, of being united with the church that is Christ's living body, of looking in hope towards the fulfillment of the promised kingdom in the age to come. For Catholics, both of these processes communicate something true about God's plan of salvation.

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[5] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, IIIa, 64, articles 1-3.

[6] My translation. *Proprie dicatur sacramentum, secundum quod nunc de sacramentis loquimur, quod est signum rei sacrae inquantum est sanctificans homines.* Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, IIIa, 60, 2, respondeo.

[7] He establishes this clarification by way of the observances in the Old Testament that can be considered sacraments: "Some things pertaining to the Old Testament signified the holiness of Christ considered as holy in Himself. Others signified His holiness considered as the cause of our holiness; thus the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb signified Christ's Sacrifice whereby we are made holy: and such like are properly styled sacraments of the Old Law." Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* IIIa, 60, 2, rep. obj. 2; translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 1920.

[8] Infant initiation grounds Catholic approaches to pastoral care for and inclusion of people with profound intellectual disabilities or developmental delays: see Edward Foley, ed., *Developmental Disabilities and Sacramental Access New Paradigms for Sacramental Encounters* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2020). My treatment of infant participation in liturgy in *Efficacious Engagement* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011) provides a model for participation for non-verbal persons of any age.

In this article, I will begin with baptism, which is the part of Christian initiation that Catholics most closely associate with our healing from sin and conversion to truth, as well as our conformity to Christ (Rom 12:2). It is the foundation of our spiritual life. Themes of Christ's death and resurrection, incorporation into the Body of Christ, and indwelling of the Holy Spirit are reflected in our rites of baptism. These theological themes have been important for the mid-century liturgical and pastoral renewal of the Roman Catholic Church, and they have also been important in ecumenical dialogue, especially in the mutual recognition of baptism. Confirmation is very tightly connected to baptism, and especially emphasizes the ongoing role of the Holy Spirit in the believer's call to holiness. Roman Catholic theologies of confirmation have also been strongly influenced by the Charismatic Movement in the United States. Then I will turn to Holy Communion as a sacrament of initiation, and the grounds for ecumenical discussion in this group surrounding that sacrament. I speak throughout as a Roman Catholic; nonetheless, I know that many of my points are held by most or all Christians. My language "Roman Catholics believe" reflects my position on this dialogue, not necessarily any distinctiveness about my points. The work is invitational, not excluding Pentecostal or Charismatic Christians, or indeed of any of our other ecumenical dialogue partners.

Baptism

The rite of baptism includes (1) the reading and preaching of scripture, (2) prayers for the new initiate, (3) blessing of the baptismal water, (4) an anointing with the oil of catechumens (blessed olive oil), (5) a question and answer profession of faith, (6) baptism with water by either infusion (pouring) or immersion, (7) clothing with a white garment, and (8) lighting a baptismal candle from the Paschal Candle; (9) child baptism also includes an anointing with chrism called "chrismation," while adult initiation includes a different anointing with chrism called "confirmation."

Catholic sacramental theology recognizes that both human beings and God act as agents in the sacraments. On the human side, the acts of baptism express, even for infants, a personal conviction about the lordship of Jesus Christ and a commitment to a Christian life. The best analogy for the agency and personal commitment of infant baptism is probably language and cultural identity. The child is baptized into and on behalf of the faith of the church, becoming part of a linguistic and cultural world of meaning that forms her or his identity for a lifetime. In a contemporary pluralistic environment, however, nourishing the Christian identity of those children (or adults!)

baptized as Catholics by non-practicing or semi-practicing parents is an ever-present pastoral problem that occupies a lot of our ministerial energy.[9]

On the divine side, Catholics do not believe that baptism itself gives grace, nor that the human minister can give grace, but rather that God acts (according to the revelation made by Jesus, and out of love for human beings) within and through the scriptural reading and symbolic action of the sacraments to bless God's people with grace. This is appropriate to human beings, since human beings are symbolic and linguistic creatures, whose relationships, including the relationship with God, depend on communication. In this respect, human beings are created in the image of the Triune God whose very nature is one of communication, mutuality, and love, and especially reflect the person of the Word of God, who is the image of the Father, who returns a filial love for the Father's begetting, and who is the firstborn of creation (Col 1) and our model (Phil 2).

Paschal Mystery

Paul, in Romans 6, describes each Christian's baptism as a participation in Christ's death and resurrection: "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."[10] The mysterious way that God has united Christians with Jesus, so that we are joined to his saving work, is what we mean by the phrase Paschal Mystery. All the meanings of Christian baptism— or rather, of Christian initiation—are grounded in this one.

Adult baptism takes place at the Easter Vigil, late at night on the eve of Easter, where the history of the first covenant, from creation to Exile, is read and sung, culminating in this passage about baptism in Romans 6 and the account of Christ's resurrection. The Paschal Candle, which is used to bless the baptismal font and light the baptismal candle, is a sign of Christ, light of the world. The paschal character of baptism is also reinforced by the sign of the cross, which we trace on the foreheads of children and on the senses, hands, and feet of catechumens. When Catholics make the sign of the cross, either with or without holy water, they recall their baptism. The act of anointing, likewise, is an imitation of Jesus the Anointed One, who was anointed as a preparation for his burial (Mark 14). Most of all, immersion into the baptismal water shows the "dying to Christ." For this reason, immersion is preferred for Catholic baptism; however, infusion (that is,

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[9] See *Perspectives on Koinonia: Report from the Third Quinquennium of the Dialogue between the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity of the Roman Catholic Church and Some Classical Pentecostal Churches and Leaders (1985–1989)* (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, 1989), §§43–44, 48.

[10] Roman Catholics in the United States use the New American Bible for liturgical readings, but in this article I have used the New International Version (NIV).

pouring water over the head) is also an acceptable form of baptism. Baptism is thus, for Catholics, about bearing in our bodies the cross of Christ and hoping for resurrection.

Baptism's association with the Paschal Mystery is also, historically, the origin of the liturgical or church year, which associates particular days of the year with events or aspects of the revelation of God's good news. In the early church, baptism at Easter or Pentecost gradually gave rise to the development of the major cycle of the church year: Lent, Holy Week, Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday), Easter season, and Pentecost. Baptism at Christmas or Epiphany may also have been responsible for the development of an Advent/Christmas cycle. Early church homilies suggest, additionally, that Lent, Easter, and Pentecost were privileged moments of repentance and renewal for those who were already baptized, in solidarity with those undergoing Christian initiation. This baptismal character for the church year has been reestablished in the contemporary liturgical movement.

Although Roman Catholic churches in the United States generally use the same liturgical books and thus the same basic words and actions, there is significant variance in liturgical style and cultural performance. Charismatic Catholic, Latino Catholic, and Black Catholic churches celebrate the liturgical year in ways that reflect characteristic features of the Azusa Street movement. These variances are unfortunately not always obvious from published literature, but there are a few exceptions. Mary McGann, for instance, describes the pre-Lent revival at Our Lady of Lourdes in San Francisco, which features charismatic preaching, laying on of hands, an altar call, body postures and dance, and reference to the work of the Spirit.[11] Initiatory practices and eucharistic worship also might include some charismatic elements, which might provide a provocative opening for further convergences in the understanding of baptism.

Incorporation into Christ's Body

Participation in the Paschal Mystery, while deeply personal, is not individualistic. Rather, Catholics strongly emphasize that part of God's plan for human salvation is the gathering together of a priestly people from all the ends of the earth, who give thanks and praise to the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit, who tell the Good News, and who work to bring the world closer to God's will ("on earth as it is in heaven"). Baptism, for Catholics, is powerfully associated with incorporation into this living community, the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12), such that we consider anyone who has been baptized in water in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to be a Christian and a

[11] Mary E. McGann, *A Precious Fountain: Music in the Worship of an African American Catholic Community*, Virgil Michel Series (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004).

member of Christ's church.[12] At the same time, we have theologies explaining "baptism by blood" (for martyrs) and "baptism by desire" (for those who desire baptism but do not receive it) that recognizes that some have been and continue to be incorporated into Christ's body without having received the rite of water baptism. God's bestowal of grace is not bound to the sacrament, even if we are assured that grace is bestowed in the sacrament. Adults preparing for baptism are also considered Christians eligible for Christian burial even if they die before the rite of baptism.

Incorporation into the church is expressed in the rite by the role of godparents or sponsors (on which the role of Christian parents in infant baptism is based) who are guides to those who are being baptized, by the Litany of Saints, which asks our departed brothers and sisters in Christ to join us in prayer for those being baptized, and by the kiss of peace and the Lord's prayer that follow baptism. The unity of the church, for Catholics, is most fully manifest in sacramental communion, which is most easily seen in the united celebration of baptism, confirmation, and communion in adult baptism. At the same time, children in the Catholic Church do not generally receive holy communion until after the age of seven. This practice developed in the second millennium, whereas the age for first holy communion was lowered from early adolescence to around seven at the beginning of the twentieth century and there has been study of infant communion (still the general practice in the East). The practice of Pentecostal churches that permit children who are members of the church to receive communion would be an interesting topic for further conversation on the interrelated questions of paedobaptism, membership in the church, and faith.

Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Baptism is also closely associated for Catholics with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The incorporation into the body of Christ is accomplished by the Holy Spirit, but the Spirit is even more particularly associated with the cleansing of sins and the ongoing call to holiness. By the Holy Spirit, who is especially represented by water, oil, and fire, Christians are washed from both the guilt of the sins they have committed and from the residual sinfulness that is part of our experience of human nature after the Fall.[13] They are called to a life of holiness that will require continued conversion over the course of a lifetime. Holiness demands the exercise of the human will, but Christians are not abandoned to exercise that will alone. Rather, Christian people choose the good and follow Christ by cooperating with the Holy Spirit who dwells within as the grace of

[12] Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, "Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism" (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), ¶ 99.

[13] That is, "original sin."

God. Although serious sin can compromise this active cooperation with the Holy Spirit, repentance restores the indwelling established in baptism.

Pre-baptismal anointing (with the oil of catechumens) and the prayer over catechumens preparing for baptism during Lent are exorcistic as well as preparatory, meaning they loosen any hold evil spirits have on those preparing for baptism and also weaken the habitual character of human sin itself. The pre-baptismal anointing asks God to "set him (her) free from original sin, make him (her) a temple of your glory, and send your Holy Spirit to dwell with him (her)."[14] The water "touches the body and cleanses the heart," as Augustine put it,[15] representing as well as effecting the interior cleansing from sin. The baptismal garment and the candle represent the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in the soul, conforming her or him more and more to Jesus Christ. Both prayers refer to the call to continuing conversion grounded in baptism and to the eschatological end of baptism:

> My sisters and brothers, you have become a new creation and have clothed yourselves in Christ. Receive this baptismal garment and bring it unstained to the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that you may have everlasting life. . . .

Then the priest says to the newly baptized:

> You have been enlightened by Christ. Walk always as children of the light and keep the flame of faith alive in your hearts. When the Lord comes, may you go out to meet him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.[16]

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, or grace, is primarily associated with the virtues and the spiritual practices of prayer, which are quite varied (often associated with particular religious orders). Catholics recognize the validity of the charismata of the New Testament but tend to think of them as rare (among, for instance, founders of those same religious orders).

Baptism in Ecumenical Dialogue

The mutual recognition of baptism is a fundamental aspect of Roman Catholic bilateral and multilateral ecumenical work. Recognizing the validity of one another's baptismal practices implies, for Catholics, acknowledging that however divided we are from one another, we are members of the single body of Christ and oriented toward the one heavenly kingdom to which he invites us. The final report of the international Pentecostal-Catholic dialogue of 1972–1976 includes several paragraphs of ecumenical reflection upon the differences in Pentecostal/Charismatic and Roman Catholic initiation. I excerpt

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[14] This text is from the rite of baptism for one child.

[15] Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John,* 80.3; trans. John Gibb, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. 7, ed. Philip Schaff (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1888).

[16] These versions of the texts are from the Easter Vigil initiation of adults.

them in full here since there are several issues that are identified for further dialogue. The reports of the most recent rounds of that dialogue (1998–2006 and 2011–2015), "On Becoming a Christian: Insights from Scripture and the Patristic Writings with Some Contemporary Reflections" and "'Do Not Quench the Spirit': Charisms in the Life and Mission of the Church," would also be a good resource for our review. These latter are not officially promulgated documents; they are study documents.

> 18. The Holy Spirit, being the agent of regeneration, is given in Christian initiation, not as a commodity but as he who unifies us with Christ and the Father in a personal relationship. Being a Christian includes the reception of grace through the Holy Spirit for one's own sanctification as well as gifts to be ministered to others. In some manner all ministry is a demonstration of the power of the Spirit. It was not agreed whether there is a further imparting of the Spirit with a view to charismatic ministry, or whether baptism in the Holy Spirit is, rather, a kind of release of a certain aspect of the Spirit already given. An inconclusive discussion occurred on the question as to how many impartings of the Spirit there were. Within classical Pentecostalism some hold that through regeneration the Holy Spirit comes *into* us, and that later in the baptism in the Spirit the Spirit comes *upon* us and begins to flow from us. Finally, charisms are not personal achievements but are sovereign manifestations of the Holy Spirit.
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> 19. Baptism involves a passing over from the kingdom of darkness to Christ's kingdom of light, and always includes a communal dimension of being baptized into the one Body of Christ. The implications of this concord were not developed.
>
> 20. In regard to baptism, the New Testament reflects the missionary situation of the apostolic generation of the Church and does not clearly indicate what may have happened in the second and following generation of believers.
>
> 21. In that missionary situation Christian initiation involved a constellation normally including proclamation of the Gospel, faith repentance, baptism in water, the receiving of the Spirit. There was disagreement as to the relationship of these items, and the order in which they may or should occur. In both the Pentecostal and Roman Catholic tradition laying on of hands may be used to express the giving of the Spirit. Immersion is the ideal form which most aptly expresses the significance of baptism. Some, however, regard immersion as essential, others do not.
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> 22. In discussing infant baptism, certain convergences were noted:
>
> *a)* Sacraments are in no sense magical and are *effective only in relationship to faith.*
>
> 23. *b)* God's gift precedes and makes possible human receiving. Even though there was disagreement on the application of this principle, there was accord on the assertion that God's grace operates in advance of our conscious awareness.
>
> 24. *c)* Where paedobaptism is not practiced and the children of believing parents are presented and dedicated to God, the children are thus brought into the care of the Christian community and enjoy the special protection of the Lord.

25. *d)* Where paedobaptism is practiced it is fully meaningful only in the context of the faith of the parents and the community. The parents must undertake to nurture the child in the Christian life, in the expectation that, when he or she grows up, the child will personally live and affirm faith in Christ.

26. Representatives of the charismatic movement in the historic churches expressed different views on baptism. Some agreed substantially with the Roman Catholic, others with the classical Pentecostal view.

27. Attention was drawn to the pastoral problem of persons baptized in infancy seeking a new experience of baptism by immersion later in life. It was stated that in a few traditions rites have been devised, involving immersion in water in order to afford such an experience. The Roman Catholics felt there were already sufficient opportunities within the existing liturgy for reaffirming one's baptism. Rebaptism in the strict sense of the word is unacceptable to all. Those participants who reject paedobaptism, however, explained that they do not consider as rebaptism the baptism of a believing adult who has received infant baptism. This serious ecumenical problem requires future study.[17]

Confirmation

The historical development of sacramental confirmation is complicated and scholarly knowledge is still incomplete.[18] It certainly originated in the fourth-century post-baptismal rites in Rome, which included the presiding bishop anointing the candidate on the head with chrism, laying hands on the head, and praying for the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit. Bishops were scarce in the rest of Europe, where presbyters (priests) increasingly did the whole rite of initiation, but over the medieval period, many Roman practices, including this one, were adopted all over the Latin West. One adaptation to episcopal scarcity was to have the presbyter perform the whole rite of baptism, including an anointing with chrism on the crown of the head, then give Holy Communion. When the bishop next passed through town, the parents of the baptized child were to take him or her to the bishop, who "confirmed" the baptism (though exactly what he did to do this is not always clear in our documentation). As late as the thirteenth century, liturgical laws were passed stating that this had to be done *before* age one, or age five, or age seven, etc. The age seems to have grown later and later to accommodate parents who chose not to or could not get a confirmation done.

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[17] "Final Report of the Dialogue Between the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity of the Roman Catholic Church and Leaders of Some Pentecostal Churches and Participants in the Charismatic Movement Within Protestant and Anglican Church (1972–1976)," http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-occidentale/pentecostali/dialogo/documenti-di-dialogo/testo-in-inglese3.html.

[18] For this discussion of the history of confirmation and its attendant theologies, see especially Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation*, 2nd ed. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 247–57.

Theological reflection on this now separated anointing and/or hand laying rite, meanwhile, developed several themes that might be interesting for this group. On one hand, it was closely associated with baptism: both were understood to convey the Holy Spirit. On the other, the separation of it from baptism proper (especially as infant baptism became more common) led theologians and bishops to speculate on its distinct purpose. This had several variants, among them: baptism is to birth as confirmation is to maturity; baptism bestows the Holy Spirit and confirmation strengthens its gifts for the work of preaching or evangelization; baptism reflects Christ's baptism (or his Passion) and confirmation his sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

Theologies of confirmation were still very unsettled at Trent, which had little to say on the subject, and historical studies done in the modern period only complicated the theological questions more. The mid-twentieth-century renewal revised the rite thoroughly, as the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy decreed: "The rite of confirmation is to be revised and the intimate connection which this sacrament has with the whole of Christian initiation is to be more clearly set forth; for this reason it is fitting for candidates to renew their baptismal promises just before they are confirmed."[19] In addition, the renewed rite of confirmation doubled down on the rite's association with the Holy Spirit,[20] for example, by choosing an Eastern formula into the new prayer for anointing: "N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit" over the traditional, Western Trinitarian formula. This makes the anointing more closely related to the prayer recited during the hand laying before it:

> All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, By water and the Holy Spirit You freed your sons and daughters from sin And gave them new life. Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their helper and guide. Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of right judgment and courage, The spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.[21]

Since Vatican II, this sacrament has taken on a number of different theological interpretations and pastoral purposes; it has been memorably labeled "a sacrament in search of a theology."[22]

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[19] Vatican II, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," ¶ 71.

[20] Timothy R. Gabrielli, *Confirmation: How a Sacrament of God's Grace Became All about Us* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013), 28–29.

[21] "The Signs and the Rite of Confirmation," https://www.vatican.va/content/catechism/en/part_two/section_two/chapter_one/article_2/ii_the_signs_and_the_rite_of_confirmation.html#:~:text=In%20the%20Latin%20rite%2C%20%22the,Churches%2C%20after%20a%20prayer%20of, ¶ 1299.

[22] Quoted without a specific source in William J. Bausch, *A New Look at the Sacraments* (New London, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1983), 92.

Modern confirmation, then, poses a unique set of challenges for Catholic scholars, ministers, and ecumenists.[23] For many Catholic parishes, it serves as a rite of adolescent maturity, in which children baptized as infants have the opportunity at a particular age to affirm their baptismal vows. This purpose seems to fit an American need for a religious rite of passage, but it is at odds with confirmation's early history. Some dioceses have made an effort to reclaim the earlier sequence baptism, confirmation, communion, by celebrating confirmation just before first communion in the same year. At the same time, the combination of the sacrament's association with the Holy Spirit, with Pentecost, with the act of laying on of hands, and with strengthening or maturity led to adoption of a "baptism of the Holy Spirit" theology for confirmation, drawn directly or indirectly from the Pentecostal/Charismatic movements. At first members of the charismatic Catholic movement "strove to keep baptism in the Holy Spirit distinct from the sacraments of initiation in order to bolster, rather than obstruct or supplant the official sacramental life of the church."[24] Later, however, some theologians and pastoral ministers argued that baptism in the Spirit is the ideal consequence of confirmation or that baptism in the Spirit is a revival of the effects of confirmation. This theology of confirmation remains controversial, but in weaker terms, the association of confirmation with the Holy Spirit, with growth in spiritual maturity, and with strengthening in the spiritual gifts shows a broad influence of the Pentecostal tradition.[25]

Communion as a Sacrament of Initiation

Roman Catholic practice and teaching on the Eucharist or Holy Communion is a massive topic, but here I only want to briefly gesture towards the significance of this sacrament in Christian initiation. Nathan D. Mitchell has persuasively argued for the primacy of table practice in Jesus' own patterns of hospitality and discipleship.[26] Although it is not the beginning of initiation in the usual pattern, Communion continues to be the motive and the measure of the disciple's ongoing transformation and conversion. Even though it is not the end of the contemporary Catholic infant-to-

[23] For instance, ecumenically, the validity of confirmation in the first-generation Protestant communions (i.e. Lutheran and Reformed traditions) is uncertain: "In the present state of our relations with the ecclesial Communities of the Reformation of the 16th century, we have not yet reached agreement about the significance or sacramental nature or even of the administration of the sacrament of Confirmation. Therefore, under present circumstances, persons entering into full communion with the Catholic Church from one of these Communities are to receive the sacrament of Confirmation according to the doctrine and rite of the Catholic Church before being admitted to Eucharistic communion." Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, "Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism" (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), ¶ 101.

[24] Gabrielli , *Confirmation,* 33.

[25] Gabrielli, *Confirmation,* 34–36.

[26] Mitchell, *Eucharist as Sacrament of Initiation.*

adolescent initiation, it is the consummation of the Paschal Mystery, the foretaste of the heavenly kingdom, and the most complete earthly image of the unity of the Body of Christ. This should not be simplified into a picture of first Holy Communion as an initiation rite; rather, Holy Communion is an at-least-weekly renewal and integration of Christian initiation.

Communion is also the rite of Christian initiation that points most clearly towards the renewal of the created order. The consequences of Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection are not restricted to human life and social behavior. The early church saw the Eucharist as the revelation of the new creation, when human and non-human creatures glorify and enrich one another. Creation was made to be nourishment for human creatures, as both the creation narratives in Genesis and the Psalms testify. In response, human creatures were to receive, to steward, to give thanks, and to share that creation. As a part of initiation, whether immediately after adult baptism and confirmation or some years after infant baptism, Holy Communion demonstrates that those who are Christians receive the good gifts of the world from God, recognize and thank God for them, and offer them "for the life of the world."[27]

Conclusion

Worship is always enacted in a tension between acts that are done once and those that are done repeatedly, between what is generally the case and exceptional cases. I have tried to attend to both ends of this spectrum in this brief treatment of Roman Catholic initiation today, with illuminating highlights from history. Roman Catholic theologies of initiation, taken as a whole, reflect a tradition where the effects of God's saving love are not always empirically evident right away (or perhaps in earthly life). There is a substantive amount of apophatic uncertainty in Catholic approaches to initiation. For instance, we recognize that not all who are baptized may be saved, and that some who are not baptized will be saved, but there is a certain hesitance to speculate about particular cases, to set up rules for what are exceptional situations. At the same time, the spirituality of Christian life and evidence of Christian holiness is always taken as stemming from the grace of sacramental initiation, even if it occurs significantly after initiation, as a growth or renewal or revival of the sacramental grace. The Catholic understanding of baptism, "sacramental revival," and continual conversion might be a productive source of further conversation about water baptism and baptism in the Holy Spirit. The deep mystery of God's salvation extended to human beings, and the limits

[27] This quotation from John 6 has been given an indelible liturgical interpretation by Alexander Schmemann in *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (Yonkers, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1973).

of our very human understanding, should guide us to a better appreciation of one another's practices and theologies

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Initiation (Water Baptism) in North American Pentecostalism

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Abstract

As Pentecostal theology grows in appreciation of sacramental theology, this Catholic-Pentecostal dialogue represents an immense opportunity for Pentecostals. Previous iterations of dialogue identified infant baptism and believer's baptism as topics of interest. Through a series of questions, this article identifies several challenges to baptism of both kinds. The complexity of issues is explored through contrasting Pentecostal experiences of water baptism and Pentecostal denominational and constructive theological interpretations of water baptism.

Introduction

Of the three sacraments of initiation, baptism and Eucharist are practiced in Pentecostal churches. Confirmation is not practiced because believers, not infants, are customarily baptized. In Pentecostal churches, baptism is called "water baptism" and Eucharist is called "Lord's Supper" or "Holy Communion." Each is regarded as an "ordinance," not a sacrament. In this article, I focus on water baptism.[1]

There is much to be learned on both sides of the dialogue. Pentecostals are rediscovering sacramental theology and exploring its relevance and application to Christian faith and practice in Pentecostal churches. Pentecostals' high emphasis on Spirit baptism naturally raises several questions about its relation to water baptism. Issues about grace, divine presence, spiritual experience and growth, and belonging to Christ and the church in regard to the Eucharist are similarly raised in water baptism. Catholic canon law, with limited exceptions, places the Eucharist outside of the bounds of fruitful dialogue, at least in this exploratory conversation.[2] My intuition is that our

[1] In past dialogues, the topics of infant baptism and believer's baptism seem to elicit the greatest interest and passion. See Killian McDonnell, "Five Defining Issues: The International Pentecostal-Roman Catholic Dialogue," *Pneuma: The Journal for the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 17:2 (Fall 1995), 177–78.

[2] *The Code of Canon Law*, 844, 908. According to canon law, since Pentecostal congregations and denominations are among Protestant churches that have no valid Eucharist, Catholics cannot receive the

Catholic dialogue partners may be interested in having a conversation about Pentecostal notions of the Holy Spirit's work in the ongoing reaffirmation of baptism, if indeed this act is primarily initiation and not repeatable.[3]

This article has four parts. In part 1, I share a personal recollection of my water baptism. This personal experience is by no means typical. It does, however, represent my engagement with the subject matter of this dialogue and accentuate the Pentecostal emphasis on testimony, the narration of one's life within Christ and the church. My recollection provides contrast to the varied experiences of other Pentecostals. If there is anything that may be called typical, it is the diversity of experiences, thoughts, and perspectives among Pentecostals.

In part 2, I review a few Pentecostal denominational statements on baptism. This section accentuates diversity, identifying the broad parameters but reoccurring themes of Pentecostal belief and practice. This section is significant, not because these statements represent unanimity. Within any Christian community, there are different interpretations. These statements are significant because of the relative uniformity accomplished through the polity structures of these denominations to present their beliefs to external audiences.

In part 3, I survey Pentecostal constructive theologies. Here, I examine the constructive work of Pentecostal theologians, past and contemporary, on water baptism. The recent rise of interest in sacramental theology appears to be predated, by several decades, by early Pentecostal leaders' observance of sacraments within the parent denominations from which they came.

In the final part, I conclude with reflections on the challenges and opportunities in future ecumenical dialogue on initiation through the rite of baptism.

Personal Recollections of Water Baptism

My Experience of Baptism

I was baptized at 13 years of age, about two months before my 14th birthday. It was a Sunday evening. The exact date, recorded on my baptismal certificate, is August 31,

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Eucharist in these churches. Furthermore, by not being in full communion with the Catholic Church, Pentecostals cannot receive the Eucharist through the administration of Catholic priests. Given this deep divide separating Pentecostals and Catholics, an exploratory dialogue should begin with discussion on less controversial matters.

[3] As reported in *For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission*, the 2021–2024 Catholic Synod in North America has trended toward an emphasis on baptism, that is, on the dignity it accords and responsibility it entails for every believer as well as the communion with Christ and one another to which it invites every believer.
https://www.usccb.org/resources/North%20American%20Final%20Document%20-%20English.pdf.

1975. Several persons were baptized on that same day. These baptisms came at the end of two, close to three weeks of the "All Saints Revival," daily worship services open to all Christians in the tri-state area.[4] However, most of the attendees were from Pentecostal churches. I do not recall the total number of baptismal candidates. I do remember the candidates being from all ages, some younger than me, but most were older. Days prior to the baptizing, persons were provided instructions on appropriate dress. The men's dressing room, monitored by the deacons, and women's dressing rooms, monitored by the deaconesses, were at opposite ends of the church facility. The baptismal pool was located in the church sanctuary behind the choir stand. The pastor conducted the worship and offered words to mark the start of the baptismal service. The candidates entered the pool one-by-one. There were deacons helping the candidates to enter and exit the pool. Already standing in the pool were two ordained ministers, one positioned on the left and the other positioned on the right. The water was mild temperature and came about chest-high. The persons seated in the sanctuary sang and, with every candidate, offered praise with clapping and shouts of "Thank you, Jesus" and "Hallelujah." I remember, when my turn came to enter the pool, the nervousness left me. I felt a sense of calm when I heard the words pronounced: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." I gave myself to the care of the ministers who lowered me into the water. When I came up, I sensed "something" had happened to me and that from that moment, I would not be the same. I did not express the same emotion I saw in the other candidates. Some candidates came out of the water shouting with exuberant praise: "Hallelujah," "Thank you, Jesus," "Glory to God." My intuition, in words that I was not capable of expressing as a child of that age, was that I had reached a great milestone in my life and the beginning of a new phase in my Christian experience.

A Contrasting Experience of Water Baptism

My experience is by no means typical for all Pentecostals. For example, Steve Studebaker describes a very different type of experience and likewise acknowledges that his experience is not ordinary. Studebaker says:

> Nestled amid mountains and alpine forests, the cool waters of Medicine Lake in Northern California are where I was baptized. At the time and in the recall of memory, the natural beauty of the surroundings infused the experience with a mystical quality that my Pentecostal theology of water baptism does not. For three years, my family attended a Pentecostal church with a broken baptismal. During

[4] This area includes the regions of southwest Tennessee, eastern Arkansas, and northwest Mississippi.

> the period we were a part of that church, no effort was made to fix the baptismal, no one seems to have missed the use of the baptismal, and to my knowledge no one in the church was baptized there or anywhere else.[5]

Infant Dedication and Programs of Formation

Many experiences led up to my moment of baptism. As an infant (newborn), I was presented to God by my parents in front of a large company of witnesses. They "dedicated" me to God in the sight of the congregation. I grew up within this congregation, which became an extension of family. I was nurtured in the Christian faith by the whole people of God. This nurture included prayer at home and at church services, Sunday school, and youth programs that were educational, recreational, and spiritual.

As far back as I can remember, I never felt alienated from God. I grew into discernment of God's presence with me and in the community. The gatherings for worship were attended with signs of God's presence. I heard adults speak of their spiritual experiences. I heard persons testify to divine healing from disease and sickness. Some of them spoke of lying at the point of death. By the prayer of the "saints," they were raised from their bed of affliction.[6] They spoke of how their lives were spared from great tragedy. They shared experiences of how God miraculously met their financial and physical needs. I heard the testimonies of persons who had been delivered from sin described as "troubled living," "broken homes," addiction to drugs and alcohol, and "hard life" on the streets and in back alleys. These testimonies were stories of radical transformation.

As a child these incidences about which persons spoke were not a part of my life experience, but I was told that if I believed on Jesus Christ, he would save me. I was told that Christ not only saves from sin but keeps persons from sin. This was my decision to come to Christ, believing that he would keep me from sin, and in his doing so, save me. I was growing into an awareness of the freedom given to me as a human being that in my decisions, the future of my life could turn for good or evil. I resolved to make a decision, the choice of Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord, for the turn to good. It seemed like a natural step in my growth to embrace the faith to which I had been exposed from my infancy.

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[5] Steve Studebaker, "Baptism among Pentecostals," in *Baptism: Historical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspectives*, eds. Gordon L. Heath and James D. Dvorak (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 201.

[6] Here, the term "saints" refers to church members who live righteously, aspiring to codes of moral and ethical conduct regarded as imperatives of Christian faith.

My baptism represented the success of the church's programs of formation for children. There were some children who grew up as I did in the church with all of the benefits of nurturing parents, guardians, and church members, and still at adulthood, they did not come to accept the faith. As a child under the care of parents and grandparents who are members of the church, I was allowed, after my dedication, to receive the Lord's Supper.[7]

In my Pentecostal church, the Church of God in Christ, infant dedication functions as an alternative practice to infant baptism.[8] In most Pentecostal churches, baptism is *credobaptism* (believer baptism), not *pedobaptism* (infant baptism).[9] Among the scriptural references cited for justification for dedication is the passage from Luke 2, the story of Mary and Joseph's presentation of the infant Jesus for dedication at the temple (vv. 21–24, 39–40). Pentecostals dedicate their newborn children in public worship services that involve a high degree of ceremony and attract extended family and friends to witness this public confession of parents or guardians presenting the child to God and their solemn oath to rear that child in the Christian faith.[10] Children who have been dedicated are allowed to partake in the Lord's Supper. The International Pentecostal Holiness Church's permit of the practice of infant baptism is not an aberration. Pentecostals are in essential agreement regarding the inclusion and formation of newborns and children in the community of faith.

Denominational Statements on Water Baptism

Established in 1994, the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA) is an interdenominational fellowship of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches and denominations in the United States. The PCCNA is successor to the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA), which was founded in 1948. The

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[7] Children who have been dedicated are included in the membership of the church. Most pastors interpret this to mean that children are allowed to receive the Lord's Supper. See "Children and Church Membership," *Official Manual of the Church of God in Christ* (Memphis, TN: Board of Publication of the Church of God in Christ, 1973), 84–85.

[8] "Baptism and Incorporation into the Body of Christ, the Church: Lutheran-Mennonite-Roman Catholic Trilateral Conversations 2012–2017," *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* 95 (January 2021), 76–77.

[9] In Andrew Ray Williams' "Water Baptism in Pentecostal Perspective: A Bibliographical Evaluation," *Spiritus: ORU Journal of Theology* 4:1 (spring 2019), 78, 82, he shows there is dissenting opinion on believer's baptism. Whereas Stanley Horton, William Menzies, and Michael Dusing argue that only believer's baptism is valid and consequently condemn the practice of infant dedication as an acceptable practice, Simon Tan claims there is very little difference between infant dedication and infant baptism and therefore recommends infant baptism as the better practice.

[10] "Service for the Dedication of Children," *Official Manual of the Church of God in Christ*, 227–31.

more than forty members of PCCNA are mostly denominations and churches, but include ministries, variously defined, and educational institutions. A commonality among the PCCNA members is their affirmation of the Trinity, in contrast to the Oneness organizations that subscribe to a modalist theism. Because Oneness groups are not a part of the PCCNA, I will omit discussion of their beliefs about baptism.[11]

In the section that follows, I review a sampling of official denominational statements on baptism and the relation of these views of baptism to the Lord's Supper. This selection of statements is influenced by the present composition of the Pentecostal team in our dialogue. The statements are from the denominations with which the Pentecostal team members have affiliation and/or membership.

Assemblies of God

In the Assemblies of God's *Statement of Fundamentals of Truths*, it states, "The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded by the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus, they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life."[12] The scriptural references are Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47, 48; and Romans 6:4.

Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee)

The Church of God *Declaration of Faith* states that belief, "In water baptism by immersion, and all who repent should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," for which this doctrinal commitment is supported by scriptural references to Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:9, 10; John 3:22; and Acts 8:36, 38.[13]

Church of God in Christ

The doctrines of the Church of God in Christ states:

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[11] Oneness Pentecostals share in common the nomenclature of ordinance and preference of baptism by immersion. Oneness Pentecostals diverge on the formula for baptism, insisting that the proper administration of the rite must be "in Jesus' name" (Acts 2:28). They also locate baptism as the second part of a tripartite experience of salvation, involving repentance, water baptism (in Jesus' name), and Spirit baptism.

[12] Assemblies of God, "Statement of Fundamental Truths," #6 Ordinances of the Church, https://ag.org/beliefs/statement-of-fundamental-truths#6.

[13] The brevity of these Church of God statements reflects its stance against "abuses and extravagance of ecclesiastical ritualism," as expressed in its self-definition in "The Church of God is . . . ," http://199.191.59.139/beliefs/church-of-god-is/. Statement on Water Baptism: http://199.191.59.139/beliefs/declaration-of-faith/. Scriptural support of doctrine on water baptism: http://199.191.59.139/beliefs/doctrinal-commitments/.

> We believe that Water Baptism is necessary as instructed by Christ in John 3:5, "Unless man be born again of water and of the spirit." However, we do not believe that water baptism alone is a means of salvation, but is an outward demonstration that one has already had a conversion experience and has accepted Christ as his personal Savior. As Pentecostals, we practice immersion in preference to "sprinkling," because immersion corresponds more closely to the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord (Col 2:12). It also symbolizes regeneration and purification more than any other mode. Therefore, we practice immersion as our mode of Baptism. We believe that we should use the Baptismal Formula given us by Christ for all "…in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt 28:19).[14]

International Church of the Foursquare Gospel

The Declaration of Faith, originally compiled by Aimee Semple McPherson, the founder, states:

> We believe that water baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, according to the command of our Lord, is a blessed outward sign of an inward work; a beautiful and solemn emblem reminding us that even as our Lord died upon the cross of Calvary, so we reckon ourselves now dead indeed unto sin, and the old nature nailed to the tree with Him; and that even as he was taken down from the tree and buried, so we are buried with Him by baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life.[15] (The noted scriptural references are Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 2:37, 38, 41, 22:16; Galatians 3:27, 28; Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12; and 1 Peter 3:20, 21.)

International Pentecostal Holiness Church (IPHC)

The *International Pentecostal Holiness Church Manual* states:

> Baptism is intended only for those who have professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a God-given illustration of each Christian's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. Obedience to this ordinance demonstrates the believer's public confession of this fact to others.
>
> 1. All who unite with any local church on profession of faith in Christ should further confess Christ by receiving water baptism, preferably by immersion, as early as possible.

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[14] Church of God in Christ, Inc.,"What We Believe," https://www.cogic.org/about-company/what-we-believe/.

[15] https://foursquaremissionspress.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/445_Declaration_of_Faith.pdf.

2. Baptism shall be administered according to the divine command of our blessed Lord, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]."[16]

Reoccurring Themes on Baptism and Its Relation to The Lord's Supper

Across these statements, there are five recurring themes. The first theme, which is most obvious, is the nomenclature of "ordinance." As ordinance, emphasis is placed on the institution and commandment (instruction) of Christ to which the appropriate response is obedience by all Christians. The second theme is faith. The rite is thought to require faith on the part of the participant and his/her declaration (testimony) of the same in public confession. Baptism is thus an outward demonstration of the participant's believer's baptism, although the IPHC allows infant baptism. A third theme is that of symbolic meaning. Baptism is regarded as a sign, emblem, or illustration (God-given) of death and burial and rising to new life. The fourth theme is on the mode by which baptism is supposed to occur. The mode is immersion, explicitly stated or implied as the proper (or preferred) mode, with IPHC allowing for variance in modes. The fifth theme is Trinity. The formula by which baptism is administered is "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

As with baptism, the Lord's Supper follows the same nomenclature of an ordinance, emphasizing obedience to the command of Christ, of which all Christians are advised to partake only upon self-examination. The Lord's Supper is likewise regarded as sign, symbol, commemoration, and reminder of Christ's death by crucifixion (for cleansing/salvation from sin) and promise of Christ's return (second coming). The theme of symbolism is emphasized for the bread and wine (fruit of the vine), representing Christ's body and blood. Pentecostals believe that Christ is present, but the brief statements do not make clear how Christ is present beyond the meaning of "spiritually" present.

Significance of Denominational Statements

Why examine the denominational statements? They are a gauge of where these denominations are in the development of consensus. These denominational statements are the product of the social processes and polity systems operative within these denominations and churches. In any organization, there is probability of different perspectives, possibly dissenting views to the statements that are produced through the

[16] *International Pentecostal Holiness Church Manual, 2017–2021* (Oklahoma City, OK: International Pentecostal Holiness Church, 2018), 61. https://iphc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/IPHC-Manual-2017-2021-English.pdf.

denominational systems and processes. The statements are not representative of every single person's mind, but they do provide an indication of the consensus forged within these organizations. The statements are fluid in that organizations can revisit, modify as they grow, and learn for new situations that require reexamination of interpretations of Christian faith.

Pentecostal Constructive Theologies of Water Baptism

Denominational statements can be differentiated from what I call "constructive theological interpretations." The constructive theological interpretations are representative of individual thinking. And yet this individual thinking is significant to show how persons within these denominations and churches are on the cutting edge, leading their organizations into deeper reflection on the statements that they have produced. Sometimes the constructive theological interpretations reaffirm these denominational statements. Sometimes the constructive interpretations raise important questions, and point out conflicts and inconsistencies. Sometimes these constructive interpretations nuance and expound upon themes that are otherwise quite vague in these statements. At other times, the theological interpretations represent groundbreaking insights to drive and move forward the theological understanding and ministerial practice of the denominations and churches. Most notable now in Pentecostal history is a warming of Pentecostal theologians to sacramental theology.

Early Pentecostal Thinkers

In Kim Alexander's study of early Pentecostal theology, a careful study of denominational publications, she concludes that there are common emphases among these early Pentecostal thinkers.[17] According to Alexander, all early PFNA-type Pentecostals regard water baptism as an ordinance. Attention and concern about water baptism only arose by virtue of the introduction of what is referred to as "Finished Work" soteriology.[18] The common practice of Pentecostals was simply to focus on Christ and approximate the teachings and practices of the primitive church and evangelize the world with the proclamation of the gospel.

Alexander notes that Acts 2:38 became the paradigmatic formula with this introduction of Finished Work soteriology. She goes on to say that adherence to the

[17] Kimberly Ervin Alexander, "Matters of Conscience, Matters of Unity: Trinity and Water Baptism in Early Pentecostal Theology," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 17 (2008), 69.

[18] In Finished Work Soteriology, the Pentecostal three-stage experience of conversion, sanctification, and Spirit baptism is collapsed into two stages. This nuanced stage, stage one, is that of repentance where sanctification happens within conversion, and the believer subsequently grows in grace to reach the second stage of baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Trinity dogma existed prior to this doctrinal controversy and this firm commitment to the Trinitarian conception of God persisted over time. The mode of baptism was by immersion, although not exclusively, as shown in the history of the International Pentecostal Holiness Church. To Alexander's analysis, James Hogsten notes that prior to the rise of Finished Work soteriology, various Pentecostal groups practiced baptism in Jesus' name, motivated by their Christocentric focus and quest to approximate practices of the primitive church, but eventually gravitated toward the Matthean text (28:19) because of its suggestion that the commandment and formula for baptizing is attributed to Jesus.[19]

Recent Pentecostal Constructive Statements

In Frank Macchia's *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (2006), he describes water baptism as an "eschatological gift," given as an ordinance and sign. As ordinance, water baptism is "obedient response to God's gracious self-giving."[20] Macchia cites Matthew 3:11, with parallels in Luke and Mark, where the prophet John says, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." As sign, John's water rite points to and is fulfilled in Spirit baptism, which represents the transformed believers' empowerment for service and ministry. Macchia goes on to suggest that Spirit baptism fulfills conversion witnessed in water baptism. "Jesus' reception of the Spirit and his baptism is paradigmatic of the connection between baptism and the reception of the Spirit among Christians."[21] Water baptism functions as the fulfillment of the believer's act of repentance and faith.[22] For illustration of how this process of fulfillment works, Macchia uses an analogy of the wedding ceremony to explain the relationship between Spirit baptism and water baptism. "The wedding ceremony confirms and fulfills a commitment between two hearts joined together in love."[23] The ritual of water baptism confirms the relationship between the believer in God; it is not the relationship, only a sign of it.[24] Macchia admits that his interpretation of water baptism and Spirit baptism makes, if not

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[19] James Douglas Hogsten, "The Monadic Formula of Water Baptism: A Quest for Primitivism via a Christocentric and Restorationist Impulse," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 17 (2008), 70–95.

[20] Frank D. Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2006), 65.

[21] Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, 70.

[22] Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, 66.

[23] Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, 227.

[24] Studebaker, "Baptism among Pentecostals," 215.

impossible, very difficult the justification of infant baptism.[25] Spirit baptism is what brought the church into existence, and it will take no less for believers to realize new life in Christ by the same baptism.[26]

In Amos Yong's *Renewing Christian Theology: Systematics for a Global Christianity* (2014), a textbook in systematic theology from a Pentecostal perspective, he devotes a full chapter on "Ordinances and Sacraments." As with any systematic theologian, a major goal is to present the Christian faith in a comprehensive manner. Yong is comfortable using the words "ordinance" and "sacrament," considering that each is a sign of the presence of the Spirit and of the coming reign of God.[27] Each is pointing to something important in the lives of Christians.

Yong's preference is actually for the word "practice." Baptism and the Lord's Supper are practices, symbolic and efficacious, for encountering God in Christ through the Holy Spirit. These practices reposition and resituate persons within a new relationship that is the body of Christ and the fellowship of the Spirit. Yong goes on to note that Jesus' own baptism in water is paradigmatic.

Like Macchia, Yong regards baptism as an eschatological gift and focuses on the prophet John's relation of his practice of baptizing to the coming of Christ. The Spirit descended on Jesus at baptism. Yong says, "Jesus' own Spirit-baptized life is the reality into which his believers are invited through their own baptism in, with, and by the Holy Spirit."[28] Believer's baptism by water is identification with Christ, in his life, death, and resurrection, and solidarity with a fellowship of the community of faith that affirms God's ongoing work of salvation by the Holy Spirit.

A fair characterization of Pentecostal theology is that it is "developing." Two studies make this evident. First, Andrew Ray Williams reviews recent Pentecostal theological work on water baptism. He draws two conclusions. Though Pentecostals taking a descriptive approach have understood water baptism to be mainly symbolic, they have "[noted] a rich sacramentalism embedded in Pentecostal spirituality . . . that is (incoherently) assigned to certain spaces (altar) and not others (table, baptismal)."[29] Those Pentecostals taking a constructive approach to interpretation have likewise intuited a sacramentality on Pentecostal spirituality, either seeking to understand its rooting in the Wesleyan/Holiness tradition or examining it for application to reflections

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[25] Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, 227.

[26] Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, 177.

[27] Amos Yong, *Renewing Christian Theology: Systematics for a Global Christianity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014), 130. Retrieved from https://1lib.us/book/11061533/f6686d/ on September 12, 2021.

[28] Yong, *Renewing Christian Theology*, 126.

[29] Williams, "Water Baptism in Pentecostal Perspective," 90.

(special insight) on the Lord's Supper and baptism.[30] Second, Daniel Tomberlin suggests that future work of Pentecostal theology must address four areas: (1) the distinction but relation between infant baptism and believer's baptism; (2) the relation of water baptism to Spirit baptism; (3) the work of the Spirit in liturgy but the Spirit's freedom to transcend it; and (4) and the question of how water baptism is reaffirmed.[31]

Concluding Reflections on Challenges and Opportunities

I end this article with a set of introductory questions. This set of questions is not an exhaustive list and, by no means, a complete catalog of the issues. However, this set of questions represents what I discern as opportunities for further exploration of what our dialogue partners may contribute toward an understanding of these very important rituals in our church communities.

1. *How can the terms "sacrament" and "ordinance" be reconciled and integrated into a coherent perspective?*

This question deals with nomenclature. Be it named "sacrament" or "ordinance," the ritual is instituted by Christ and practiced by the church. Do the terms refer to a difference of kind or difference of degree or emphasis? If we are dealing with the same reality, how do we reconcile the terminologies and thus harmonize and synthesize the perspectives that emerge from separate nomenclature to promote greater understanding of Christian experience?

2. *How much variation can be accommodated without compromising the integrity of the baptismal event in Christian experience?*

This question deals with formula, mode, and administration. Admittedly there is great diversity in Christianity. This diversity is an occasion for celebration, the wonder of how God brings us into this one body of Christ. With diversity comes the challenging work of building relationships that lead to koinonia, harmony, cooperation, and fairness in a common life. Uniformity in rites does not necessarily mean conformity, but rather a regularity in practice and language that stabilizes the identity of the church as God's sign to the world of God's salvation and coming reign. If consistency in language and practice is desirable, then what does this uniformity look like?

3. *How do facilities and the frequency in administration affect baptism?*

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[30] Williams, "Water Baptism in Pentecostal Perspective," 90.

[31] Daniel Tomberlin, "Believers' Baptism in the Pentecostal Tradition," *The Ecumenical Review* 67:3 (October 2015), 430–34.

This question deals with facilities for and the frequency of baptism. Pentecostals are known for their spontaneity, innovation, and creativity. Pentecostals transform mundane places into sanctuaries of worship. It is not uncommon in the Church of God in Christ for congregations to spring forth from what is called the "storefront" or "house church," buildings originally designed for commercial or residential use but now renovated to become sacred space. These newly created sacred spaces often lack the architectural structure for liturgical worship, although they function very well as places to gather the faithful. I found Studebaker's story of the church facility without an operational baptistery not a little interesting! In such cases, infrastructure impacts the frequency of baptism and the means by which it is administered. It should also be noted that the above denominational statements do not stipulate when water baptism should be scheduled. Weekly, monthly, annually, or upon need? The IPHC does state that the Lord's Supper should be administered at least once each quarter (every three months).[32] Should not water baptism also occur with a frequency paralleling the entry of new persons to the Christian community?

4. *How is baptism reaffirmed in the life and experience of the Christian?*

This question deals with the reaffirmation of baptism. The faith that characterizes the church's belief held individually and celebrated corporately is to be lived out. How do the rituals, whether they be called sacraments or ordinances, strengthen the faith of believers? In addition to the administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper, what programs of formation, for children and adults, does the church develop that promotes conviction, discipleship, moral living, and active participation? The issue underlying this question is how sacramental theology relates to practical theology, and vice versa.

5. *How do our presuppositions about human personhood affect (a) access to the rite of baptism and (b) communal practices of inclusion and belonging?*

In other words, how may baptism be interpreted and administered in a manner that accounts for the broad range of diversity in human experience such that differently-abled persons are fully included and belong in the church? If the model of the person is the rational, abled-bodied adult, not only infants but also other humans who are differently-abled are excluded from participation in the primary ritual for entry into the church. For example, persons with intellectual disabilities (i.e., conditions that limit cognitive functioning and skills) cannot confess faith in a way that conforms to the supposed model of intellectual ability. For reasons of health and safety, some persons cannot experience baptism by immersion because of severe illness, physical injuries, or musculoskeletal disorders. As with baptism, beliefs concerning salvation (i.e., teachings

[32] *International Pentecostal Holiness Church Manual*, 62.

about who can and cannot be saved) may be influenced by our presuppositions about human personhood.

6. How do we discern God's freedom to act beyond prescribed liturgy?

The final question deals with the topics of liturgy and divine freedom. Clearly, and without question, these rituals have been instituted by Christ. After giving these rituals, is there yet freedom for God to act beyond prescribed liturgy? How does God use the ritual, but also transcend it? Would not an omnipotent God be capable of acting, with consistency, in a way we heretofore have not imagined?

It may be that the above questions are without definitive answers. The questions may be philosophical in nature. That is, they interrogate the language of Christian faith and practice of initiation into a fundamentally mystic communion.

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Response to Frederick L. Ware

Kimberly Hope Belcher

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Frederick Ware's essay on Pentecostal water baptism suggests that profound gaps in historical and official approaches to worship and doctrine can be bridged by the way the water is experienced, by both Pentecostals and Catholics, as a significant moment in the Christian's walk with God. Ware begins by highlighting the variance and spiritual depth of Pentecostal experiences of the water. From there, he guides readers through the official documents that ground and interpret that experience, into dialogue with individual Pentecostal theologians reflecting on that experience. In our dialogue, this trajectory was an important reminder to Catholics engaged in dialogue with Pentecostals to foreground reflection on the lived experience of baptism and its variety across Catholic contexts. In fact, Catholic sacramental theology springs from reflection on spiritual experience in the sacraments and on its limits. If we contextualize Catholic sacramental theology in its pastoral and spiritual context, we might be able to develop a differentiated consensus about Catholic sacramental theologies and Pentecostal ordinance theologies of water baptism.[1] This would be a significant step in ecumenical dialogue.

Recent ecumenical developments have often relied on the method of receptive ecumenism, in which each Christian community foregrounds those aspects of their partners' theology and practice that seem especially redolent of our shared experience with Christ. Rather than focusing on what we can demand of our ecumenical partners, we focus on what we can receive from them. Instead of concentrating on the minimum possible agreement necessary on contested issues, we seek out those aspects of our partners' lives of faith on which we recognize the stamp of Christ. Ware argues that Pentecostal theology is "developing" and describes an eagerness for ongoing learning, which suggests the fruitfulness of this approach.

In Ware's synthesis of recurring themes of baptism found in representative denominational statements, we find two aspects ("symbolic meaning" and "Trinity") that

[1] A differentiated consensus is an ecumenical document that articulates continuing differences in teaching on a topic as emphases within the context of a more significant agreement. For a full-length treatment, see Jakob Karl Rinderknecht, *Mapping the Differentiated Consensus of the Joint Declaration* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG, 2016), who notes that the differentiated consensus of the JDDJ is possible only because Lutheran and Catholic claims about theological anthropology that have been taken to be contradictory are both "managing the same eschatological tension in Christian life" (39). Similarly, I have argued that both "sacraments of faith" and *ex opere operato* claims are attending to the mysterious cooperation between God and the human person in Kimberly Hope Belcher, "Ex Opere Operato and Sacraments of Faith: A Trinitarian Proposal," *Worship* 90:3 (2016), 225–45.

are already matters of consensus between Catholics and these Pentecostal statements. I agree with Ware that our understanding of faith in the context of baptism needs further discussion. Future dialogue rounds might explore this, as well as the related question of whether "sacrament" and "ordinance" are reconcilable ideas, especially in the context of an emerging "warming" of Pentecostal theologians to sacramental theology.

On the Catholic side, I am optimistic about cultivating a shared understanding of "sacrament" and "ordinance" that might end in a differentiated consensus. The apparent contradiction between sacrament models and ordinance models arose because theologians in the late Middle Ages were interested in what *distinguishes* sacraments from other forms of Christian worship, rather than what ties them together. While both sacraments and other kinds of prayer were communication with God, only in sacraments was God's activity for human beings considered to be secure (*ex opere operato*). Theologies of sacrament focused on the conditions necessary to be sure of God's grace, and to understand the complexity of pastoral situations in which God's grace was not evident.

Ahead of the Reformation, it was clear that the role of baptism in an individual's life of faith, as for Christians today, could not be summed up in a simple definition. Baptism and the other sacraments were a kind of scaffolding that supported the Christian's entire life with God, and the way that they bestowed grace in a Christian's life was every bit as powerful, nebulous, and complex as Ware's testimony. In contemporary Catholic theology, a closer connection between sacraments and extra-sacramental grace has developed, which might ground a comparison of Catholic and Pentecostal ritual and spiritual life.

Though the Catholic theology of sacrament is sophisticated, its purpose is to honor the "something" that Ware felt in the baptismal font: "I had reached a great milestone in my life and the beginning of a new phase in my Christian experience." In the middle of the twentieth century, Roman Catholic theologians, influenced by historical study and ecumenical conversations with both Orthodox and Protestants, grounded the idea of sacrament in the nature of Jesus, the primordial or Ur-sacrament. Thinking about Jesus as the ground clarifies that sacraments participate in Christ's mediation, and thus they are two-way communication. Just as Jesus is both divine and human, the sacraments include both the divine gift of grace and the human act of worship.[2] The divine gift is not caused by the sacrament as worship, but is, as Edward Schillebeeckx puts it, "by the power of Christ and God," which is promised in the sacraments.[3] This focus on Christ as the source of the sacraments relativizes questions about exactly how many sacraments are recognized in the various churches.

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[2] Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of Encounter with God* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1963).

[3] Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God*, 85.

In dialogue with Protestants, contemporary Catholic liturgical theology identifies every liturgy as having these two elements: downward grace from God (sometimes referred to as the katabatic dimension) and upward worship by humans (the anabatic dimension). Any theology of sacrament must balance the tension between these elements, and the consequent difficulty of explaining under what circumstances the "something" of a sacrament will rise to conscious Christian experience. With Ware, this framework resonates with Frank Macchia's understanding of water baptism as an "eschatological gift," which also contains a tension between what has already been received and what is to come.

One of the most important motivations for this theological change comes from the experience of worship. The focus on divine grace was initially meant to pastorally help Christians who worried about whether they had really been baptized, but in the end it led to minimal liturgical experiences and indifference to whether they had an emotional and spiritual impact on Christians. In contrast, emphasizing the response to God, worship, as an essential part of sacrament means attending to its human dimensions. For Pentecostals, too, perhaps reflection on the significance of water baptism and its links to ongoing discipleship might be fruitful. In our dialogue, such conversation arose, along with reflection on the levels of participation available to young children and those with disabilities.

The emphasis on the human act of worship means that contemporary Roman Catholics are prepared to acknowledge the ordinance dimension of baptism and the Lord's Supper and to receive gratefully reflections on the experience of worship. In the experience of Ware himself, and of other Pentecostals, in how these are reflected in denominational statements, and in the reflections of contemporary Pentecostal theologians, there is an opportunity to discuss the possibility of a shared agreement on the divine action in water baptism, which Catholics understand as sacramental.

Ware provides some starting points for the particulars of a differentiated consensus on sacraments and ordinances. Aimee Semple McPherson's *Declaration of Faith* has language adapted from Romans 6 that could be interpreted sacramentally ("a blessed outward sign of an inward work . . . even as he was taken down from the tree and buried, so we are buried with Him by baptism unto death"). Amos Yong's consideration for the word "sacrament" and his understanding that baptism and the Lord's Supper are "practices, symbolic and efficacious, for encountering God in Christ through the Holy Spirit" likewise gives a strong foundation for dialogue. Finally, the work of Andrew Ray Williams on the "rich sacramentalism" accorded to certain liturgical spaces might also provoke thought in future dialogues. On the Roman Catholic side, it is critical that members of the dialogue be willing to think about pastoral purposes, the Christological and pneumatological foundations, and the practical implications of definitions of "sacrament," past and present. Like all Christian dialogues, this one will clarify for us what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches.

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Response to Kimberly Hope Belcher

Frederick L. Ware

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In Kimberly Belcher's succinct overview of the rites of initiation in the Roman Catholic Church, she not only accentuates the uniqueness of Catholic perspectives and practices but also emphasizes the deep mystery of God's salvation that requires, on the part of both Catholics and Pentecostals, humility at the limits of human understanding and respectful consideration of what various Christian traditions bring to the appreciation of these rites. I too affirm divine mystery. However, we arrive at this destination from two different paths.

My essay is characteristically Pentecostal in style, that is, with the use of testimony for reflection on rites of initiation. This method seems appropriate given the broad diversity among Pentecostals, not to mention the limited liturgical resources of a distinct Pentecostal nature. In addition to a large corpus of theological texts, Belcher notes that Catholics have liturgical books for conducting rites but enjoy some measure of improvisation in performance depending on the ethnicity and cultural tradition of the Catholic Christians gathering for worship. Without a prescribed liturgy, Pentecostal administration of rites (i.e. baptism and the Lord's Supper) is much more improvisational, even spontaneous regarding the timing of the ritual. While baptism can be administered at any time during the year for Catholics, Belcher says it is usually scheduled for the Easter Vigil. More often than not, Pentecostals do not strictly follow the liturgical calendar. In contrast, testimony is a consistent practice that reliably reports how ritual is experienced and perceived in Pentecostal churches.

Belcher subtly asks the question of whether Pentecostals' practice of child dedication is adequate for centering baptism in the life of the church. As Belcher describes the interrelation of infant baptism and adult baptism, the ritual of baptism is administered across the human life cycle, that is, at various ages, from infancy, through childhood, and into adulthood. Whereas infant baptism demonstrates God's love in our adoption before we do anything, adult baptism demonstrates human cooperation in God's plan of salvation. In combination, they show that conversion is a lifelong process. Though my narrative discloses my coming to faith and growing in faith over the course of my life, at least in the early years of my formation, Pentecostals tend to regard conversion as a crisis moment. In Pentecostal churches, the administration of baptism occurs shortly after the resolution of crisis, when a person is said to be converted or "saved." Still, it is possible for Pentecostals to describe their faith development and spiritual formation as a process unfolding over time if child dedication functioned, for

them, like infant baptism to incorporate and nurture them in the church. The question remains regarding the centrality of baptism as the fundamental rite to signify initiation and belonging.

Belcher is unaware of, at least she does not discuss, Pentecostals' affirmation of the symbolism of baptism avowed by Catholics. Adhering to a theology of memorialism regarding the Lord's Supper, Pentecostals are keen on the symbolic meanings of baptism. They can affirm baptism as a sign of grace and tool that God acts graciously in and through. Pentecostals do not make baptism a requirement for salvation. Even Catholics, as Belcher points out, acknowledge that some persons may be saved even if they do not receive baptism.

A promising future lies ahead for Catholics and Pentecostals. Rebaptism, in the strict sense of the term and practice, is unacceptable to Catholics and most Protestant churches. The Catholic Synodal movement emphasizes our common baptism. The mutual recognition of baptism, a place where Catholics are already and where Pentecostals hopefully will come, is essential for multilateral ecumenical dialogue and cooperation.

Varieties of Healing

A Catholic Perspective

Andrew Prevot

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Keywords *Catholic, sacrament, healthcare, charismatic, miracles, reconciliation, anointing, ecumenism*

Abstract

This article contributes to Catholic-Pentecostal ecumenical dialogue by offering a particular Catholic perspective on the shared Christian belief in Christ is the Healer. More specifically, it distinguishes several ways in which humans are called to participate in the healing work of Christ. It considers Catholic approaches to sacramental, charismatic, miraculous, biomedical, psychotherapeutic, social, and ecological healing. It reflects on the historical background, contemporary significance, and interconnections of these diverse areas of healing, while distinguishing such a holistic understanding of healing from the narrower concept of a cure. Acknowledging the problem of unhealed sufferers, it argues against blaming such persons for any alleged lack of faith on their part. It also cautions against false promises of a quick spiritual fix to complex bodily, social, and environmental problems.

Introduction

The created world is rich in the blessings of God, but it is also a place of deep wounds and sorrows. Things break. They fall apart. Our bodies succumb to illnesses and injuries. There are kinds of physical and mental suffering that last a lifetime or even generations: chronic diseases, traumatic losses, experiences of oppression. Many hearts are troubled by difficult emotions such as shame, anger, fear, and despair. Many minds struggle to feel whole and safe. Many wills are divided against themselves, torn between the call to holiness and the temptation to sin. In close connection with such corporeal, psychological, and moral maladies, which take place in the individual, there are fractures and toxicities that occur in larger social and ecological domains. Everything is related. A hurt in one place radiates in many directions. Individually and collectively, the world is crying out for healing.

Because the hurts are multiple, complex, and interwoven, so too are the needed remedies. Even so, many Christian churches and theological traditions hold that these remedies are united in the healing work of Christ. The New Testament reveals manifold

ways that God provides healing through the Spirit-led ministry and redemptive actions of Jesus. As the incarnation of divine wisdom and compassion, Jesus responds to the needs of our bodies, souls, and communities and, indeed, the entire created order. Healing in a comprehensive sense is nothing other than salvation (Latin: *salus*). It is an overcoming of the destructive forces of evil, sin, suffering, and death. That Christ is the Healer is a central Christian teaching. The question for Christians is how to understand and participate in this great mystery.

The Gospels tell many stories of miraculous healings. Consider, for example, Mark's account of Jesus' healing of a hemorrhaging woman:

> Now there was a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians and had spent all that she had, and she was no better but rather grew worse. She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said, "If I but touch his cloak, I will be made well." Immediately her flow of blood stopped, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my cloak?" And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'" He looked all around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."[1]

Many who suffer from chronic health conditions and other types of long-lasting hurt in their lives can relate to the first part of this woman's story. For years they seek help from professionals and other trusted sources, they exhaust all their financial and emotional resources, and they find that their situation is still deteriorating. The next part of the story seems like a fantasy that is not likely to take place in the real world. This suffering person touches the garment of a wonderworker who is passing through town and is instantly cured. Jesus' healing power is so overabundant in him that it saturates even his garment and flows out to anyone who makes the slightest contact with it. The desperate in our world long for this kind of immediately restorative encounter, but it happens so rarely as to seem virtually inaccessible. One cannot count on it, and doing so may nurture unrealistic hopes that will soon be dashed.[2]

Identifying the reason for such healing with one's faith (as Jesus does in this story) can be dangerous for contemporary readers, insofar as it suggests that if such a miracle does not occur, it is one's own fault. Unhealed sufferers would not only be without a cure; they would be at least implicitly accused of lacking faith—adding insult to injury.

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[1] Mark 5:25–34. All biblical quotations in this essay are from the New Revised Standard Version.

[2] Marleen Eijkholt, "Medicine's Collision with False Hope: The False Hope Harms (FHH) Argument," *Bioethics* 34:7 (2020), 703–11.

What first appears as a very consoling Gospel story could do more harm than good if it is not interpreted with care. I mention this concern because Christians and others who associate religious belief with the prospect of healing must face the reality that such connections are not always straightforward. The challenge of unhealed suffering raises difficult questions about the presence and choices of God (i.e., the problem of theodicy) and about the sinful ways some human beings manipulate others by promoting unreliable, quick-fix solutions, which they may even shroud in religious garb (i.e., the problem of charlatanism or "quackery").[3]

Nevertheless, I believe there are good ways to interpret the revealed mystery of Christ the Healer, including interpretations that make room for the ongoing possibility of miraculous and faith-based healings among other kinds of healing. In this essay, I offer a Catholic perspective on the varieties of healing that come directly or indirectly through Christ and that touch different dimensions of our wounded existence. With the word "indirectly," I mean to indicate that human beings are called to use their natural talents, acquired skills, and supernatural gifts (i.e., charisms and other graces) to participate in Christ's healing work, whether as clergy, faith healers, physicians, therapists, social activists, parents, educators, legislators, or whatever they may be.

I find it helpful to distinguish the following modalities of healing: sacramental, charismatic, miraculous, biomedical, psychotherapeutic, social, and ecological. However, I also recognize that the lines between them are porous and that this is not a comprehensive list. Any given experience of suffering might benefit from many of these modalities working in concert. Moreover, each of them addresses multiple levels of humanity's corporeal, spiritual, and relational nature, not just one alone.

Like other scholars, I distinguish the idea of *cure*, understood as a complete resolution of a health problem, from the more open-ended idea of *healing*, which may be interpreted in diverse ways and involve features such as emotional comfort, social inclusion, personal empowerment, holistic care, spiritual wellbeing, and lengthy processes of change and growth. This distinction between cure and healing does not map onto the distinction between the secular and the religious. Secular practices of healing, whether biomedical or otherwise, in many cases (e.g., late-stage cancer, Alzheimer's, schizophrenia, and many more) do not have cures to offer and so must rely on a larger notion of healing. Conversely, religious practices of healing sometimes result in miraculous cures, which cannot be explained by current scientific understanding.

I call what follows "a," not "the," Catholic perspective, because although I strive to be at least somewhat representative, my account of the varieties of healing inevitably reflects my historical context and my particular ways of receiving the doctrines,

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[3] James Harvey Young, *American Health Quackery: Collected Essays by James Harvey Young* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton, 1992).

practices, experiences, and theological insights of the Catholic Church. My hope is that by clarifying a Catholic way of understanding and participating in the healing work of Christ, I can, if only in small ways, enrich the conversation between Catholic and Pentecostal Christians and increase our opportunities for mutual understanding and learning. Such dialogue may itself be a form of healing.[4]

Sacramental Healing

The Catholic Church recognizes seven sacraments. In different ways, all seven mediate the healing work of Christ.[5] The Eucharist symbolizes and enacts this healing work in a particular way. Before receiving communion, the assembly prays with the words of the centurion, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed."[6] However, the healing effect of the Eucharist is not limited to souls. The sacrament is material.[7] It brings comfort to bodies through all five senses of taste, touch, smell, sound, and sight. It knits together communities of faith and strengthens them for greater social action, especially for the poor.[8]

Although all seven sacraments have healing properties in one sense or another, the Catholic Church designates two of them as "sacraments of healing," namely Anointing of the Sick and Penance or Reconciliation. The *Catechism* states,

> The Lord Jesus Christ, physician of our souls and bodies, who forgave the sins of the paralytic and restored him to bodily health (cf. Mk 2:1–12), has willed that his Church continue, in the power of the Holy Spirit, his work of healing and salvation, even among her own members. This is the purpose of the two sacraments of healing: the sacrament of Penance and the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.[9]

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[4] Karen R. J. Murphy, *Pentecostals and Roman Catholics on Becoming a Christian: Spirit-Baptism, Faith, Conversion, Experience, and Discipleship in Ecumenical Perspective* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 10.

[5] Michael Marsch, *Healing through the Sacraments*, trans. Linda M. Maloney (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1989).

[6] This prayer draws from Luke 7:6–7.

[7] Kimberly Hope Belcher, *Efficacious Engagement: Sacramental Participation in the Trinitarian Mystery* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2011), 27–30.

[8] John Hampsch, CMF, *The Healing Power of the Eucharist* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant, 1999); *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 1391–1397; and Enrique Dussel, "The Bread of the Eucharistic Celebration as a Sign of Justice in the Community," in *Beyond Philosophy: Ethics, History, Marxism, and Liberation Theology*, ed. Eduardo Mendieta (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 41–52.

[9] *Catechism*, 1421.

In addition to highlighting the healing ministry of Jesus, the *Catechism* points to other biblical warrants for these sacraments. The classic text for the Anointing of the Sick is from James: "Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up, and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven."[10] For evidence of the apostolic authority to grant absolution in the sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation, Catholics turn to Jesus' saying in Matthew: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."[11]

Although these are important biblical reference points, to understand these sacraments well it is necessary to study their historical development after the time of the New Testament and to consider how they are being experienced and practiced today. The Anointing of the Sick underwent a significant shift in the Carolingian period (eighth–ninth centuries CE). Early Christian practices of praying, blessing with consecrated oil, and laying on of hands for the purposes of bodily and spiritual healing were transformed into an end-of-life ritual meant to prepare the soul for a happy afterlife. By the thirteenth century, scholastic theologians debated the nuances of this "extreme unction" but agreed that a final cleansing from sin was its effect.[12]

Throughout the Middle Ages, such extreme unction was often accompanied by a final act of contrition and a priestly absolution of sins. However, the sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation did not begin as a blessing meant only for one's final moments. In fact, its origins lie in a much more arduous process known as "canonical penance," whose purpose was not to ready one for death but rather to restore one to full (Eucharistic) communion. This was a practice that evolved in the first six centuries of the church. After confessing serious sins to a priest or bishop (sins such as apostasy or adultery), one would receive instructions about how to fast, pray, and discipline oneself for months or even years. After this gradual process, resembling the initiatory path of the catechumenate, one would eventually be welcomed back into the church during the Triduum. Because this process could only be done once, it was increasingly deferred until the end of one's life. Beginning as early as the sixth century CE, Celtic monks developed the sacrament in a new direction by hearing private confessions of both serious and minor (i.e., venial) sins as many times as one liked and by offering

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[10] Jas 5:14–15 and *Catechism*, 1510.

[11] Matt 16:19 and *Catechism*, 1444.

[12] Charles W. Gusmer, *And You Visited Me: Sacramental Ministry to the Sick and Dying* (New York: Pueblo, 1984), 21–32; and Bruce T. Morrill, *Divine Worship and Human Healing: Liturgical Theology at the Margins of Life and Death* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2009), 142–44.

absolution before one performed the required acts of penance. These innovations, which were formally adopted by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, made the sacrament more accessible to ordinary Christians, by which I mean not only mortal sinners or people at death's door. Yet they also brought new challenges such as a detachment from communal worship, a transactional view of grace (wherein, for example, X number of prayers makes up for Y amount of sin), and a temptation toward scrupulosity.[13]

Since the Second Vatican Council, Catholic sacramental practice has been in a period of renewal, and the sacraments of healing are no exception. The "General Introduction" to *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum* (1983) clarifies that the Anointing of the Sick should not be reserved for those who are immediately dying but should be given to any of "the faithful whose health is seriously impaired by sickness or old age." A note indicates that the Latin word translated as "seriously"—*periculose*—strikes a careful balance between restricting the sacrament to the dying and bestowing it indiscriminately on anyone with minor health issues (e.g., a common cold or regular aches and pains). This document emphasizes that the purpose of the sacrament is not merely the remission of sins before death but a reception of the healing work of Christ given through the Holy Spirit acting in the church. It acknowledges that a cure of the body's illness can be part of the grace imparted by this sacrament—that is, "if it will be beneficial to the sick person's salvation." However, the main effects to be expected are an inner strength to remain steadfast in faith, resist evil, and alleviate anxiety.[14]

Bruce Morrill describes these effects in relational terms, arguing that the sacrament responds to sick persons' "desire to know something of God's love and presence and [their] own value and purpose in relation to others and the world around [them]."[15] David Power contends similarly that the main effect of the sacrament is to overcome the various levels of alienation that one experiences in the midst of illness: "from one's own body, from friends and associates, from the doings of society, and from God."[16] Although the sacrament affirms the dignity of the suffering person as an

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[13] Peter E. Fink, SJ, "History of the Sacrament of Reconciliation," in *Alternative Futures for Worship,* vol. 4, ed. Peter E. Fink, SJ (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1987), 73–89, at 79–82; and John T. McNeill and Helena M. Gamer, eds. *Medieval Handbooks of Penance* (New York: Columbia, 1990), 25–30.

[14] *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Introduction and Pastoral Notes* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1983), nos. 1–8; and John C. Kasza, *Understanding Sacramental Healing: Anointing and Viaticum* (Chicago: Hillenbrand, 2007), 75–106.

[15] Morrill, *Divine Worship and Human Healing*, 161.

[16] David N. Power, "The Sacrament of Anointing: Open Questions," in *The Pastoral Care of the Sick*, eds. Mary Collins and David N. Power (London: SCM, 1991), 95–107, at 103.

irreplaceable individual, it does not occur in isolation but rather in the company of loved ones and in connection with the whole church. One rite is designed for use in a relatively private setting such as a home or hospital room, but there are also specific rites for celebrating the sacrament in a large congregation (such as at a pilgrimage site) and in the context of a Mass. The sacrament should be one part of a fuller communal relationship with the sick person. There should be pastoral visits from church ministers (whether ordained or lay), including the distribution of holy communion; loving support from family and friends; and attention from healthcare professionals. The sacrament is not a substitute for these other means of healing but an effective sign of Christ's healing work within and through them.[17] Care for the dying remains part of the Church's sacramental practice, but instead of "extreme unction" the dying person is given Viaticum—that is, the Eucharist, with particular prayers and readings suited for such a weighty, end-of-life circumstance.[18]

Penance, now often called Reconciliation, has similarly benefited from post-conciliar efforts at liturgical renewal. In addition to private confession, there is now a rite for communal reconciliation and a combined form that involves a public liturgy of the Word, a time for individuals to visit a priest one-on-one, and a closing communal prayer of thanksgiving.[19] John Baldovin notes that, although participation in this sacrament has declined, this drop-off may reflect a positive awareness of God's mercy and a shifting understanding of sin, which may largely be good things. Nevertheless, he encourages Catholics to avail themselves of this sacrament in order to combat self-deception, develop a habit of self-examination, and appreciate the grace of God in their lives.[20] Other scholars such as Robert Schreiter and Denis Woods argue that this sacrament could be adapted to respond to social sin and intergroup conflict.[21]

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[17] *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Introduction*, nos. 4, 51, 108, and 131; and Mary Collins, "The Roman Ritual: Pastoral Care and Anointing of the Sick," in *The Pastoral Care of the Sick*, eds. Mary Collins and David N. Power (London: SCM, 1991), 3–18.

[18] *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Introduction*, nos. 175–88; and Morrill, *Divine Worship and Human Healing*, 184–92.

[19] Fink, "History of the Sacrament," 84–85; and *Rite of Penance* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2010).

[20] John F. Baldovin, SJ, "Why Go to Confession?," in *Catholic Sacraments: A Rich Source of Blessings*, eds. John F. Baldovin, SJ, and David Farina Turnbloom (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2015), 99–102. See also Bruce T. Morrill, "Confessing Sin, Proclaiming Reconciliation in Contemporary U.S. Catholic Liturgy," *Liturgy* 34:1 (2019), 30–38.

[21] Robert J. Schreiter, "The Catholic Social Imaginary and Peacebuilding: Ritual, Sacrament, and Spirituality," in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics, and Praxis*, eds. Robert J. Schreiter, R. Scott Appleby, and Gerard F. Powers (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2010), 221–39, at 229–30; and Denis J. Woods, "Reconciliation of Groups," in *Alternative Futures for Worship*, vol. 4, ed. Peter E. Fink, SJ (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1987), 33–42.

Charismatic Healing

Along with the sacraments of healing, Catholic teaching recognizes other ways to participate in the healing work of Christ, including practices called "sacramentals," such as blessings and exorcisms.[22] It also affirms the presence of "charisms," defined as "graces of the Holy Spirit which directly or indirectly benefit the Church, ordered as they are to her building up, to the good of men, and to the needs of the world."[23] Among these, the *Catechism* acknowledges "special charisms of healing" and cites 1 Corinthians 12:9 in support of this claim.[24]

For the past half century or more, there has been a vibrant charismatic movement in the Catholic Church, sometimes known as the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR), encompassing millions of Catholics worldwide. Since Pentecost 2019, its global networks have been assisted by the Vatican-initiated service called Catholic Charismatic Renewal International Service (CHARIS). Although the CCR may have originated in the United States—specifically at a retreat at Duquesne University in 1967 at which Patti Gallagher Mansfield and other Catholics received trances, glossolalia, and Spirit baptism—it is also possible that it emerged concurrently in various contexts under the influence of Pentecostal Christian missionaries and, indeed, the free workings of the Holy Spirit.[25] The CCR has become a major feature of Catholicism in Africa, Latin America, and their diasporas. To some degree, its appeal in these contexts may be related to similarities between charismatic Christian experiences of the Holy Spirit and ecstatic styles of prayer, spirit possession, and faith healing indigenous to Africa and the Americas.[26] These connections may not be surprising given the Black religious background of William J. Seymour's Azusa Street revival.[27] In the global South, inculturated forms of Catholicism often have charismatic features.

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[22] *Catechism*, 1671–1673.

[23] *Catechism*, 799.

[24] *Catechism*, 1508.

[25] Susan A. Maurer, *The Spirit of Enthusiasm: A History of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010), 27–31.

[26] Isidore Iwejuo Nkwocha, CSSp., *Charismatic Renewal and Pentecostalism: The Renewal of the Nigerian Catholic Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2021), 181–217; Laurien Nyiribakwe, SJ, *Faith-Healing Ministry in Africa: A Catholic Bio-Social Ethics* (Chisinau, Moldova: Generis, 2021); Hosffman Ospino, "The Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Hispanic Parish," in *The Holy Spirit: Setting the World on Fire*, eds. Richard Lennan and Nancy Pineda-Madrid (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2017), 141–51; and Stan Chu Ilo, ed., *Pentecostalism, Catholicism, and the Spirit in the World* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2019).

[27] Iain MacRobert, "The Black Roots of Pentecostalism," in *African American Religious Thought: An Anthology*, eds. Cornel West and Eddie S. Glaude, Jr. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 616–28.

The Second Vatican Council encouraged a renewed attention to spiritual gifts and a fruitful interaction with diverse cultures. *Presbyterorum ordinis* states, "While trying the spirits to see if they be of God, priests should uncover with a sense of faith, acknowledge with joy and foster with diligence the various humble and exalted charisms of the laity." *Gaudium et spes* adds that "the ability to express Christ's message in its own way is developed in each nation, and at the same time there is fostered a living exchange between the Church and the diverse cultures of people."[28] Regarding both charisms and cultures, the response from recent Catholic popes and bishops has been supportive, though they have emphasized a need for careful discernment, a maintenance of traditional teachings and structures of authority, and a guiding norm of Christian love and justice for the poor.[29]

On charismatic healing, a committee of US bishops has offered the following words of precaution: "First, even to suggest that failure to secure healing is due to the afflicted person's sinfulness or lack of faith is theologically untenable. Second, nonsacramental anointings sometimes employed in healing services should be very carefully distinguished from the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick." With these provisos in place, this committee of bishops affirms that charismatic healing can be a genuine gift of the Holy Spirit and "a sign that the kingdom of God is present."[30]

Like the sacraments of healing, charismatic gifts of healing are meant neither to replace appropriate medical care nor to guarantee an immediate cure. Although some full recoveries have been reported, they often result from more than spiritual interventions alone. Consider, for example, Susan Maurer's discussion of healing practices in the inaugural days of the CCR:

> Members of the group also came to believe that they had received the gift of healing. Mansfield describes how, upon hearing that her dormitory housemother had been hospitalized with phlebitis, she became convinced that the woman would be healed if Patti went to the hospital, laid hands on her, and prayed for her. After some initial hesitation, Patti did indeed go to the hospital the next day, where she took the woman's right hand and then traced a cross on the woman's forehead.

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[28] *Presbyterorum ordinis: Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, 7 December 1964, www.vatican.va, 9; and *Gaudium et spes: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, 7 December 1965, www.vatican.va, 44.

[29] Committee for Pastoral Research and Practice, *Statement on Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1975); Bishops' Liaison Committee with the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, *Pastoral Statement on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1984); Maurer, *Spirit of Enthusiasm*, 36–43; Cardinal Léon Joseph Suenens and Dom Hélder Câmara, *Charismatic Renewal and Social Action: A Dialogue* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant, 1979); and Austen Ivereigh, "Pope Francis Calls Upon the Catholic Charismatic Community to Work for Justice," *America: The Jesuit Review*, 30 May 2020.

[30] Bishops' Liaison Committee, *Pastoral Statement*, nos. 27–28.

> Patti was astounded, when, a few days later, she saw the housemother back at school, and she attributed the woman's quick healing to the prayers that she had added to the woman's hospital treatment.[31]

In this example, we see that the healing actions (praying and laying on of hands) are analogous to those in the Anointing of the Sick. We also see that these means are not regarded as an alternative to hospitalization but as a help to it. Thomas Csordas observes that most Catholic charismatic healers and supplicants value the work of physicians and clinicians. They are "likely to pray that the results of conventional medical tests will be negative, that the adverse side effects of their medicine will be muted, that an upcoming surgical procedure will have a positive outcome, or that a person who is terminally afflicted will die peacefully."[32]

Positive outcomes of faith healing have been recognized by some medical researchers who do not presuppose the existence of God. For example, Howard Fields emphasizes the mind-body connection and argues that subjective feelings of God's nearness, the love of a religious community, and comforting bodily contact (e.g., laying on of hands) can promote a state of mind that has discernible benefits on material health indicators such as stress levels, inflammation, immune response, and cardiovascular function.[33] Although some researchers who aspire to test the effectiveness of faith healing take great pains to distinguish it from such placebo effects, because they want to know whether a purely supernatural process is at work, Anne Harrington suggests that the natural and supernatural perhaps cannot be so neatly separated. It may be that the healing power of Christ takes advantage of our close mind-body connections and relational constitution.[34] Sarah Coakley recommends St. Thomas Aquinas's theory of secondary causation as a helpful model for explaining how both divine and creaturely mechanisms of healing can be operative simultaneously.[35]

Miraculous Healing

A forthright Catholic perspective on healing must recognize the many instances in which sacramental and charismatic graces do not cure the afflicted and resist the temptation either to blame God or the believer for such disheartening results. Despite

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[31] Maurer, *Spirit of Enthusiasm*, 31.

[32] Thomas J. Csordas, *The Sacred Self: A Cultural Phenomenology of Charismatic Healing* (Berkeley: University of California, 1994), 34.

[33] Howard L. Fields, "Meaning in the Neural Investigation of Pain," in *Spiritual Healing: Science, Meaning, and Discernment*, ed. Sarah Coakley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020), 95–96.

[34] Anne Harrington, "Prayer and Placebo in Scientific Research," in *Spiritual Healing: Science, Meaning, and Discernment*, ed. Sarah Coakley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020), 129.

[35] Sarah Coakley, "Introduction: Spiritual Healing, Science, and Meaning," in *Spiritual Healing: Science, Meaning, and Discernment*, ed. Sarah Coakley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020), 21.

our best medical and spiritual efforts, suffering often continues and increases, and there may be nothing anyone can do to halt its advance. Death comes for us all, and our hopes ultimately have to turn to the promises of eternity. Nevertheless, believing that miracles are possible in this life and that they do sometimes happen is a legitimate and widespread Catholic practice, and no Catholic account of healing would be complete without it. Although miracles may occur because of sacramental or charismatic activity, these are not the only channels through which God's wonders flow.

The veneration of Mary and the saints is a distinctive feature of Catholic popular piety and an area of the Catholic tradition in which the miraculous has figured prominently. Evidence of miracles has been used to determine whether Marian apparitions are authentic and whether a deceased person of exemplary moral character ought to be celebrated as a saint.[36] Many Catholics pray to Mary and to saints such as St. Jude (who is the patron saint of hopeless causes) and St. Margaret of Castello (who is the patron saint of disabled persons) to seek healing for themselves or their families. They visit shrines; say special prayers, including multiday novenas; use tangible objects such as holy cards, holy oil, medals, rosaries, and candles; and ask for intercessions. In some cases, they find that their prayers are answered, whether by inexplicable cures or by the discovery of helpful medical resources.[37]

Mexican and Mexican American Catholics have a particularly strong devotion to the caramel-colored figure of Mary known as Our Lady of Guadalupe. She appeared to an indigenous man named Juan Diego in December 1531; left a miraculous image of herself on his *tilma* (or cloak), which now hangs in the Basilica in Mexico City; and brought healing to Juan Diego's uncle and to countless pilgrims who visited the church that was built on the site of her apparition. Some Latino/a theologians interpret this event as a sacred blending of Spanish Catholic and Nahuatl religious cultures that, even today, helps to heal the wounds of Spanish imperial conquest and genocide.[38]

Such devotions can pose challenges to Christian ecumenical dialogue insofar as they show that Catholics do not offer their positive religious attention exclusively to

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[36] Emma Anderson, "Healing and Ecclesial Response in Nineteenth-Century Catholic France," in *Spiritual Healing: Science, Meaning, and Discernment*, ed. Sarah Coakley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2020), 40–58.

[37] Robert A. Orsi, *Thank You, St. Jude: Women's Devotion to the Patron Saint of Hopeless Causes* (New Haven, CT: Yale, 1996), 167–77; and Robert A. Orsi, "The Cult of the Saints and the Reimagination of the Space and Time of Sickness in Twentieth-Century American Catholicism," in *Religion and Healing in America*, eds. Linda L. Barnes and Susan S. Sered (New York: Oxford, 2005), 29–47.

[38] Lisa Sousa, Stafford Poole, CM, and James Lockhart, eds., *The Story of Guadalupe: Luis Laso de la Vega's* Huei tlamahuiçoltica *of 1649* (Stanford, CA: Stanford, 1998); Timothy Matovina, "Theologies of Guadalupe: From the Spanish Colonial Era to Pope John Paul II," *Theological Studies* 70 (2009), 61–91; and Jeanette Rodriguez, *Our Lady of Guadalupe: Faith and Empowerment among Mexican-American Women* (Austin: University of Texas, 1994).

Christ or, for that matter, the Holy Spirit. While acknowledging this challenge, I want to emphasize that it is precisely the extraordinary intimacy that Mary and the saints enjoy with Jesus and his Spirit that draws orthodox Catholics to them. Mary is Jesus' mother who suffered with him and now participates in his glory; the saints are faithful, Spirit-filled followers of his way of life who remind the church that true Christian holiness is possible and that it occurs in a rich variety of styles and contexts. Grace comes from the triune God through the missions of the Son and the Spirit but is mediated in history through loving relationships among the living and with the dead—relationships in which there is a sharing of sorrows, desires, and gifts. The *Catechism* helpfully distinguishes between *adoration* and *veneration*, arguing that adoration must be reserved exclusively for God. Veneration, by contrast, can be given to persons, images, or things that help us grow in relationship with God.[39]

Since the late sixteenth century, the process of becoming a Catholic saint has required two types of evidence, one to prove a life of exceptional virtue, the other to demonstrate a pattern of miracles (mostly miraculous healings) that can be attributed to this holy person's intercession. Although the first type of evidence is receiving increasing emphasis in recent years, the history of the second type reveals a fascinating synergy between Catholic beliefs in medical science and in the possibility of supernatural intervention. This synergy offers a particular window into the classic Catholic integration of *fides et ratio* (faith and reason).

Jacalyn Duffin's study of the Vatican records of processes of canonization over the last several centuries details the painstaking efforts that have been made to count as miracles only those healings and other salutary happenings that cannot be explained by the science of the day. As modern science advanced, so too did the rigor of the tests applied in cases of canonization. Working as a hemotologist, Duffin herself was asked to evaluate a set of bone marrow samples as part of a blind review process. She was only later informed that this evaluation was for a deliberation about whether to declare someone a saint. Her surprise led her to investigate the records of other such cases. This work led her to write a book on the subject and to gain a deeper appreciation for the truly unexplainable. When asked if she, a scientist and historian, believes in miracles, she now says, "Yes, I do."[40]

Biomedical Healing

According to the introductory chapter of *Incarnate Grace*, a recent publication of the Catholic Health Association of the United States, Catholic hospitals and healthcare

[39] *Catechism*, 2132; see also 2673–78 on Marian prayer and 2683 on praying with saints.

[40] Jacalyn Duffin, *Medical Miracles: Doctors, Saints, and Healing in the Modern World* (New York: Oxford, 2009), 3, 11–35, 183.

facilities treat as many as one-sixth of patients in this country (nearly five million a year) and employ approximately three quarters of a million workers including doctors, nurses, technicians, and other staff. They serve poor communities in rural and urban areas. They offer care for human life from its prenatal beginnings through its last hours. Although Catholic stances on controversial bioethical questions related to contraception, abortion, and euthanasia put Catholic healthcare at the center of divisive political battles and have an outsized impact on public perceptions, these wedge issues do not exhaust the meaning of Catholic healthcare. Between the mysterious processes of birth and death, there is the full span of a person's life, which is sacred and precious without exception. Catholic healthcare is about using medical treatments and holistic patient care to incarnate God's love for persons throughout their life stages, events, and situations.[41]

Neil Ormerod expresses the purpose of Catholic healthcare well when he writes, "Catholic health organizations are called on to reflect the mission of the church, to be the presence of Christ to a suffering person." He goes on to say, "What this means is that each and every moment in health care, no matter how dark or difficult, has the potential to be a moment of grace—counselling grieving parents; passing on the bad news of test results; performing an emergency surgery; or washing bedpans."[42] Striking in Ormerod's description of being Christ for others and mediating God's grace to them is that many of his examples do not involve a medical cure. Rather, they illustrate types of care that take place when no such cure was possible and a patient died, when prospects do not look good, or when someone requires assistance to take care of regular bodily functions. In biomedical contexts, healing means more than a quick fix. It means being with others in their need, serving them with humility, and finding ways to let them know they are loved and valued as persons.

In addition to examining the moral principles involved in particular medical procedures and choices, Catholic bioethicists—informed by Catholic social teaching—study the political, economic, and cultural structures and institutions that affect health outcomes.[43] They confront persistent inequalities in healthcare on both a local and

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[41] Therese M. Lysaught, "Introduction: Incarnating Caritas," in *Incarnate Grace: Perspectives on the Ministry of Catholic Health Care*, ed. Charles E. Bouchard (St. Louis: Catholic Health Association of the United States, 2017), 3–18, at 3, 5, 13, and 17; and Cardinal Joseph L. Bernadin, "The Consistent Ethic of Life: The Challenge and the Witness of Catholic Health Care," in *The Seamless Garment: Writings on the Consistent Ethic of Life*, ed. Thomas A. Nairn (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2008), 109–116. For teachings on contraception, abortion, and euthanasia, see *Catechism*, 2370, 2270, and 2276.

[42] Neil Ormerod, "Health Care and the Response of the Triune God," in *Incarnate Grace: Perspectives on the Ministry of Catholic Health Care*, ed. Charles E. Bouchard (St. Louis: Catholic Health Association of the United States, 2017), 23, 31.

[43] Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Theological Bioethics: Participation, Justice, and Change* (Washington, DC: Georgetown, 2005).

global scale. They analyze challenges such as inadequate public funding for medicines, treatment, and infrastructure; patterns of distribution that favor people of greater economic and racial privilege; and environmental problems such as pollution and water scarcity.[44] Paul Farmer (the co-founder of Partners in Health) and the Catholic ethicist Andrea Vicini articulate some helpful guidelines for a more equitable practice of global public health:

> How do we address such inequalities in health globally? First, we need to be aware that injustice is pervasive. Second, we must avoid desperation or complacent resignation; awareness of unacceptable disparities should animate social engagement to address and eliminate them. Third, it is necessary to make a preferential option for those who bear the brunt of these inequities.[45]

This perspective is very close to the views expressed by Pope Francis in recent encyclicals and public addresses.[46] Healthcare is not just an individual matter between doctor and patient. It is a social good that is only achievable through cooperation and solidarity.

It is easy to take for granted the existence of Catholic hospitals and health systems, but each one had to be constructed from the ground up, often at great sacrifice. Much of the credit for these achievements must go to Catholic organizations of women religious. Living vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, many consecrated women have devoted themselves to the bodily and spiritual care of suffering people. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, they raised funds to build hospitals and orphanages; they brought medical facilities to places where none existed before; and they gave special attention to the underserved: poor people, immigrants, and racially marginalized groups such as Blacks and Native Americans.[47]

Popular narratives about a modern divide between religion and science neglect the ways that religious institutions have facilitated access to modern medicine. Moreover, they overlook the significant contributions that Catholics such as Gregor Mendel, Louis Pasteur, and Jérôme Lejeune have made to medical science, specifically to the study of genetics, microbiology, and disabilities such as Down Syndrome.[48] Although the healing

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[44] Philip J. Landrigan and Andrea Vicini, SJ, eds., *Ethical Challenges in Global Public Health: Climate Change, Pollution, and the Health of the Poor* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2021).

[45] Paul Farmer and Andrea Vicini, SJ, "An Ethical Agenda for Global Public Health," in *Ethical Challenges in Global Public Health: Climate Change, Pollution, and the Health of the Poor*, eds. Philip J. Landrigan and Andrea Vicini, SJ (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2021), 193.

[46] Pope Francis, *Fratelli tutti: Encyclical Letter on Fraternity and Social Friendship* (3 October 2020), www.vatican.va, nos. 35 and 109; and Hannah Brockhaus, "Pope Francis: Lack of Basic Health Care Access Is a 'Social Virus,'" *Catholic News Agency*, 28 August 2022.

[47] Suzy Farren, *A Call to Care: The Women Who Built Catholic Healthcare in America* (St. Louis: The Catholic Health Association of the United States, 1996).

[48] Filip Mazurczak, "Ten Catholic Scientists," *The Catholic World Report*, 21 July 2022.

work of Christ is not limited to those biomedical practices that can be devised with the use of natural reason, these are apertures through which the image of the divine *Logos* can be seen in human history. Health-related research continues today at the Pontifical Academy of the Sciences and at Catholic universities throughout the world.

Psychotherapeutic Healing

The Catholic tradition has long recognized that it is not only bodies but souls that cry out for healing. Although emotions, desires, memories, perceptions, choices, and other phenomena associated with the soul are deeply shaped by what happens to and within the body, biomedical interventions, such as those provided by psychiatry, are not the only helpful means of addressing maladies of the soul. Sacramental anointing, charismatic faith healing, and even praying for a miracle may be beneficial avenues to pursue in some cases of mental distress, and one should not underestimate the positive effects that changes to one's social and natural environment can have on psychological health.[49] Nevertheless, psychotherapeutic healing is a distinct modality of care warranting specific attention. This is a growth area for Catholic reflection and practice.

For much of its history, Catholic spirituality has attributed the soul's suffering to the harmful effects of sin and vice and the struggles to overcome them. From St. Augustine to St. Teresa of Avila, there is a rich tradition of Catholic introspection, which seeks to give comfort and happiness to the soul by helping it detach from worldly values of pride, lust, wealth, and honor and conform to the will of God that is revealed in Christ's humility and self-giving love. Augustine, Teresa, and many other saintly guides in this tradition understand that the journey of spiritual transformation may be painful, but this is the pain of healing not destruction, and it is infinitely preferable to the bottomless misery of estrangement from God. What they ultimately seek and find on this path is the joy of being renewed in the likeness of Christ and the bliss of being wedded to him as one's Bridegroom.[50]

Although even secular authors have discovered genuine psychological insights in the classic sources of Catholic spirituality,[51] the modern field of psychology, with its various clinical and therapeutic methods, proceeds on a different set of assumptions. Its basic picture of the interior human drama does not focus on a conflict between sin and

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[49] Kasza, *Understanding Sacramental Healing*, 153–59; Csordas, *Sacred Self*, 33; Duffin, *Medical Miracles*, 96–99; and Phillis Isabella Sheppard, *Self, Culture, and Others in Womanist Practical Theology* (New York: Palgrave, 2011).

[50] Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (New York: Oxford, 2008); and Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, OCD and Otilio Rodriguez, OCD (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1979).

[51] Julia Kristeva, *Teresa, My Love: An Imagined Life of the Saint of Avila*, trans. Lorna Scott Fox (New York: Columbia, 2015).

grace but rather on a bundle of diagnosable conditions, described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), that may benefit from therapist-facilitated practices of communication, self-narration, behavior modification, and in some cases medication.

In 1953, Pope Pius XII gave an address to the Fifth International Congress of Psychotherapy and Clinical Psychology, in which he revealed a characteristic ambivalence in the Catholic response to this field. On the one hand, insofar as psychotherapy is a branch of science that seeks to help people, he applauded it as a proper use of reason. On the other hand, pushing back against the paradigm shift that it represented, he was clear that the woes of the human soul cannot be addressed without overcoming sin and entering into relationship with God.[52]

In recent years, there have been more robust engagements with mental illness and mental health from Catholic theologians, ethicists, and clinicians. Instead of feeling bound to choose between traditional spirituality and modern therapy, scholars now attempt to reconcile and integrate the two.[53] They respond in holistic, interdisciplinary ways to the psychological suffering of people living with trauma, depression, and suicidal ideation.[54] They avoid ascribing all psychological troubles to sin or vice and instead recognize that there may be biological, social, and personal factors at play that do not imply any deficiency of moral character. They emphasize the tender mercy of God who draws near to those in pain and brings comfort.

A particularly difficult area of needed healing in the Catholic Church stems from the crisis of clergy-perpetrated child sexual abuse (CPCSA) and sinful efforts on the part of clergy and laity to conceal, deny, or minimize this problem. Jennifer Beste gives an overview of psychological literature on the uniquely severe type of wounding that is caused by CPCSA. Although sexual abuse of children is always extremely damaging, when clergy do it, it has extra weight. Because priests act *in persona Christi* in the context of the Eucharist and take on a paternal role within the local Catholic community, children who are sexually abused by a priest can feel like they have been

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[52] Pope Pius XII, "On Psychotherapy and Religion," 1953, www.papalencyclicals.net/pius12/p12psyre.htm.

[53] Joann Wolski Conn, *Spirituality and Personal Maturity* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994).

[54] Elizabeth L. Antus, "'The Silence of the Dead': Remembering Suicide Victims and Reimagining the Communion of Saints," *Theological Studies* 81:2 (2020), 394–413; Jessica Coblentz, *Dust in the Blood: A Theology of Life with Depression* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2022); Lynn Bridgers, "Resurrected Life: Roman Catholic Resources in Posttraumatic Pastoral Care," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 15 (2011), 38–56; and Aaron Kheriaty, *The Catholic Guide to Depression: How the Saints, the Sacraments, and Psychiatry Can Help You Break Its Grip and Find Happiness Again* (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute, 2012).

violated by God and by their father simultaneously. The long-lasting effects of CPCSA include disassociation, flashbacks, hyperarousal, self-blame, anxiety, depression, chronic physical pain, impaired cognitive function, difficulty forming trusting relationships, and loss of positive connection with the church and God.[55]

Beste argues that part of the healing process for the Church must be a willingness to seek a "deep empathetic understanding of the embodied, psychological, and spiritual harm of clergy sexual abuse."[56] To do this, Catholics must listen to victims and survivors, learn from their journeys of therapeutic discovery and healing, and draw on the work of psychologists who study this type of post-traumatic stress. Only then can their solidarity have the emotional weight and focus that is required. At the same time, Beste emphasizes that this solidarity must also find expression in concrete actions and reforms that prevent further CPCSA. To heal and safeguard the embodied souls of all people, including children, it is necessary to confront the injustices that are embedded in the social structures of this fallen world, including injustices that have taken root in certain parts of the Catholic Church.

Social Healing

The healing work of Christ is inseparable from the work of justice. The revelation of the saving God through Jesus' ministry of healing is not only meant to touch the lives of individuals. It is meant to spark transformations in communities and whole societies and to bring them closer to the reign of God. The meaning of this reign is encapsulated in the words from Isaiah that Jesus attributes to himself: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18–19). The messianic anointing of the Spirit that Jesus bears is made manifest through his liberation of the impoverished, the incarcerated, and the oppressed, as well as through his healing of a physical ailment (blindness). These modes of deliverance are not set apart from each other but rather united in his single mission and identity as the Christ.

It is important to acknowledge that some persons with disabilities such as blindness (whether partial or full and whether from childhood or adulthood) do not want to be "cured" or fixed. Instead, they want to be loved and accepted in their embodied and cultural differences. They want an end to the social stigmas that frame them as inferior simply because they do not meet the ableist norms of society. They want everyone to recognize that living with various kinds of limitation is an important

[55] Jennifer Beste, "Envisioning a Just Response to the Catholic Clergy Sexual Abuse Crisis," *Theological Studies* 82:1 (2021), 35–38.

[56] Beste, "Envisioning a Just Response," 41.

part of what it means to be human, that we all depend on one another, and that our institutions and infrastructure should foster greater inclusivity and respect. This perspective does not necessarily imply a refusal of Gospel healing narratives, but it does encourage Christians to read them with a "disability hermeneutic" that emphasizes personhood, agency, and social healing and that overcomes oppressive theological associations of disability with sin and defect.[57]

In addition to resisting ableism, the Catholic Church must work to free itself from other "isms"—social sins such as imperialism, racism, and sexism—that mark this world's distance from the reign of God and wound people not just as individuals but as groups. It must do this work in order to remain an effective sign of Christ's healing presence in history. In the fifteenth century, the Catholic countries of Spain and Portugal, with blessings from the pope,[58] persecuted Jews and Muslims for lacking "pure blood"; conquered Native peoples of the Americas, subjecting them to slavery, rape, and deadly diseases under the pretext of evangelization; and inaugurated the transatlantic slave trade (the commercial sale of African persons as chattel). How is healing possible from such historical horrors?

Developments in Catholic teaching on Judaism and Islam that promote interreligious understanding, Pope Francis's recent "Penitential Pilgrimage" to Canada in which he acknowledged crimes against indigenous nations (including abuse at residential schools), and promises from the Society of Jesus to raise one hundred million dollars in reparations for African American descendants of enslaved people are signs pointing in the right direction.[59] However, the level of expenditure directed toward social healing—measured in terms of financial investment, collective action, and physical and spiritual commitment—needs not only to match but to exceed the accumulated sins of the last five centuries or more if the Catholic Church is really going to meet the challenges that lie before it.

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[57] D. A. Caeton, "Blindness," in *Keywords for Disability Studies*, eds. Rachel Adams, Benjamin Reiss, and David Serlin (New York: NYU, 2015), 35–37; Bethany McKinney Fox, *Disability and the Way of Jesus: Holistic Healing in the Gospels and the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019); Mary Jo Iozzio, "Solidarity: Restoring Communion with Those Who Are Disabled," *Journal of Religion, Disability & Health* 15:2 (2011), 139–52; and Amos Yong, *The Bible, Disability, and the Church: A New Vision of the People of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011).

[58] Pope Alexander VI, *Inter caetera: Division of the Undiscovered World between Spain and Portugal*, Papal Bull, 1453, https://www.papalencyclicals.net/alex06/alex06inter.htm.

[59] *Nostra aetate: Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*, 28 October 1965, www.vatican.va; Kevin P. Considine, "Pope Francis' Apology to Indigenous Canadians Opened Door to Reconciliation," *National Catholic Reporter*, 2 August 2022; and Carol Zimmerman, "Jesuits Pledge $100 Million in Reparations to Descendants of Enslaved People," *National Catholic Reporter*, 17 March 2021.

The work that remains to be done cannot be finished overnight. There will not be an immediate cure to social sin. Although the moral demands of crucified peoples cannot wait,[60] the building up of a new human community characterized by comprehensive justice, repentance, and forgiveness will take time. In this regard, Robert Schreiter argues that "social healing has to take into account the lingering, toxic presence of the past in society; it must diagnose and mobilize the energies of the present; and it must sketch out a vision for the future."[61]

M. Shawn Copeland interprets the Eucharist as an effective symbol of such social healing. She affirms the Catholic teaching, formulated by St. Augustine in Sermon 272, that communicants who receive the Eucharistic real presence under the outward signs of bread and wine become what they already are: the body of Christ. She explains, "As *his body*, we embrace with love and hope those who, in their bodies, are despised and marginalized, even as we embrace with love and forgiveness those whose sins spawn the conditions for the suffering and oppression of others."[62] Although the sacrament symbolizes and enacts Christ's double embrace—namely, of victims in need of justice and victimizers in need of conversion—its work is not complete until those who receive, and *are*, Christ's body take up an authentic praxis of discipleship in the world. She calls this work "Eucharistic solidarity."

There is one kind of social healing that must be sought between the oppressed and the oppressor. For such reconciliation to constitute a genuine (not superficial or counterfeit) peace, it must be grounded in the liberation of the oppressed from their unjust situation.[63] For example, there can be no true accord between the enslaved and the enslaver until slavery is abolished, efforts are made to atone for the grievous harms done, and all are able to greet one another as equal human beings. Pharaoh must yield, and the captives must be set free. There is another kind of social healing that must be sought between antagonists that are of similar moral standing—that is, cases in which no side is obviously more righteous or mistreated than the other and where what is needed is an end to rivalrous factions (as St. Paul reminds the Corinthian church). As a more recent example, consider the competing ethnic nationalisms that, in the 1990s,

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[60] Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from Birmingham City Jail," in *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, ed. James Melvin Washington (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1986), 289–302.

[61] Schreiter, "A Practical Theology of Healing, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation," in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics, and Praxis*, eds. Robert J. Schreiter, R. Scott Appleby, and Gerard F. Powers (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2010), 377.

[62] M. Shawn Copeland, *Enfleshing Freedom: Body, Race, and Being* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010), 127.

[63] James H. Cone, *God of the Oppressed* (New York: Seabury, 1975), 226–46.

brought unspeakable violence to the Balkans.[64] Conflicts as small as interpersonal spats and as large as wars may call for the former (liberationist) or the latter (conflict-resolution) type of social healing and, in many cases, both. Ernesto Valiente's account of the oppression, civil war, and reconciliation processes in El Salvador exemplifies such a combined case.[65] Catholic peacebuilding employs and interweaves both models by prioritizing the perspective of the victims and by seeking a healing that embraces all.[66]

Ecological Healing

As I bring this Catholic reflection on the varieties of healing to a close, I want to highlight that we live at a time when there is a need for healing not only of human bodies, souls, and societies but also of humanity's relationship with other species and the earth. Pope Francis's papacy and particularly his encyclical *Laudato si'*, which was given on the feast of Pentecost in 2015, have developed the Catholic Church's understanding of Christ's healing work with respect to the whole of creation and the present ecological crisis.[67]

One dimension of this crisis is the harm caused to non-human animal and plant life. The pope addresses this under a section called "Loss of Biodiversity." He laments, "Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which we will never know, which our children will never see, because they have been lost forever. The great majority become extinct for reasons related to human activity."[68] Although such losses may negatively affect human beings by diminishing our supplies of food, medicine, and other resources, Pope Francis is adamant that we should not view other created things merely as instruments for our use but as possessing inherent dignity and value. To some degree, ecological healing means sustaining the conditions under which non-human life can flourish and give glory to God in its own right.

However, *Laudato si'* is not just a document about environmentalism. It is a plea for environmental justice. It expresses a concern for the wellbeing of the natural world that is at the same time a concern for the lives of other human beings, especially the

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[64] Michael K. Duffey, *Sowing Justice, Reaping Peace: Case Studies of Racial, Religious, and Ethnic Healing Around the World* (Franklin, WI: Sheed & Ward, 2001), 94–103.

[65] O. Ernesto Valiente, *Liberation through Reconciliation: Jon Sobrino's Christological Spirituality* (New York: Fordham, 2016).

[66] Schreiter, "Practical Theology of Healing," 371–72.

[67] Vincent J. Miller, ed., *The Theological and Ecological Vision of Laudato Si': Everything Is Connected* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017); and Daniel P. Castillo, *An Ecological Theology of Liberation: Salvation and Political Ecology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2019).

[68] Pope Francis, *Laudato si': On Care for Our Common Home*, 24 May 2015, www.vatican.va, no. 33.

poor and excluded. According to Pope Francis, ecological healing and the various aspects of human healing necessarily go together. He contends that "environmental impact assessment . . . should be linked to . . . possible effects on people's physical and mental health."[69] He is especially attentive to health problems that are caused by polluted skies, water ways, and urban centers and by droughts and diseases that are connected to the warming of the planet.[70] He also warns that the changing climate will bring disproportionately high amounts of suffering and political instability to the poorest regions of the world and aggravate already egregious levels of social inequality.[71] More generally, he insists that "we cannot presume to heal our relationship with nature and the environment without healing all fundamental human relationships."[72] Ecological healing depends on all aspects of human healing and, at the same time, is necessary for them.

Pope Francis ends his encyclical with two prayers.[73] The first one, which is addressed to "All-powerful God," includes the lines, "Bring healing to our lives, / that we may protect the world and not prey on it, / that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction." Although he believes we need to take responsibility for our actions, he places his greatest hope in the healing power of God—a power that enables us to care for the world and bring forth beauty from it. The pope's second prayer begins as a hymn of praise to the triune God. It is offered "with" all of creation, much like St. Francis of Assisi's "Canticle of Brother Sun." After acknowledging that "the poor and the earth are crying out," the prayer asks, "O Lord, seize us with your power and light, / help us to protect all life, / to prepare for a better future, / for the coming of your Kingdom / of justice, peace, love and beauty." Although the term "healing" is not mentioned in this prayer, the words that the pontiff chooses vividly depict what healing in a comprehensive sense involves: the safeguarding of life and a future shaped by the coming of God's reign.

Conclusion: That All May Be Well

In this essay, I have outlined a Catholic perspective on sacramental, charismatic, miraculous, biomedical, psychotherapeutic, social, and ecological healing, while observing some connections between them. I have drawn on Catholic magisterial teachings, historical figures, and constructive theological and ethical projects to formulate what, I

[69] Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*, no. 183.

[70] Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*, nos. 20, 28–29.

[71] Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*, nos. 25, 48–52.

[72] Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*, no. 119.

[73] Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*, no. 246.

hope, is a useful survey of various ways that Catholics strive to understand and participate in the healing work of Christ. Going beyond the narrow notion of a cure, healing takes on many different meanings and forms in Catholic tradition and practice.

However, such a flexible and capacious sense of healing does not imply that cures never happen—whether thanks to science, grace, or both—or that desiring a cure is necessarily something naïve or misguided to do. In the midst of serious unhealed suffering, it makes sense that many people would want—like the bleeding woman in Mark's gospel—to reach out to touch Christ's cloak and find their bodies, souls, societies, and entire worlds revived. If we can help make such desires a reality, through ministry, medicine, activism, or prayer, then we ought to do so. We ought to become what we already are: Christ's body, or at the very least his garment—an imperfect membrane through which some contact with him might occur.

To heal and be healed in all the ways that are required of us as followers of Jesus, it seems we must develop a mature awareness of our gifts and vulnerabilities, while maintaining a childlike trust that indeed nothing is impossible for God. This is the sort of trust that the blessed Julian of Norwich displays when she welcomes Christ's reassuring yet counterintuitive words: "alle shalle be wele, and alle shalle be wele, and alle maner of thinge shalle be wel."[74] In the midst of seemingly inescapable suffering, violence, and death, this message may appear naïve or even insensitive. Yet to believe in Christ the Healer—in the bold and unapologetic ways that Catholic and Pentecostal traditions do—is to embrace something like this incredible notion. It is to proceed with the conviction that holistic healing is possible and already actual in our world, even if we cannot always see it, and even if there is still much required of us, as persons and communities, to bring it to light. The healing work of Christ has been given, and it is ours to receive and put into practice.

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[74] Julian of Norwich, *A Revelation of Love*, in *The Writings of Julian of Norwich*, eds. Nicholas Watson and Jacquelin Jenkins (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2006), Thirteenth Revelation, Twenty-Seventh Chapter.

Healing in the Pentecostal Tradition

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Abstract

This essay provides a historical and theological overview of the Pentecostal experience of divine healing. The essay argues that, for Pentecostals, the experience of divine healing carries a paramount significance to the "heart" of their spirituality and theology. Like the experience of Spirit-baptism and speaking in tongues, Pentecostals experience healing as a foretaste of God's eschatological reign. The essay traces the development of healing practices among early and modern Pentecostals historically and theologically. Pentecostal practices of divine healing emerged out of various healing movements rooted in the earlier Holiness traditions, but they were later firmly developed into a doctrinal understanding associating healing with the atonement work of Jesus Christ. For Pentecostals, this move coincided with their promotion of the so-called "Full Gospel." For Pentecostals, healing is a vivid manifestation of the "holistic" nature of God's salvation wherein the atoning work of Jesus Christ not only frees individuals from their spiritual bondage to sin and death but also assures them of its overcoming power to experience freedom from the bodily bondage of sickness and disease. Delving into a "holistic" view of the life in salvation, the essay further offers a sanctificationist reading of healing while observing the challenges and problems that the "Word of Faith" movement generated over the years. In conclusion, the essay accentuates a strong eschatological impulse embedded in various Pentecostal practices of divine healing.

Introduction

Pentecostals are often identified with the experience of Spirit-baptism and speaking in (unlearned) tongues as the outward manifestation to warrant such experience. This experience is so prominently associated with Pentecostals, it has been described as the

"crown jewel" of Pentecostalism.[1] Paralleling in significance is, however, the Pentecostal experience of divine healing. Like the phenomena of speaking in tongues for Spirit-baptism, Pentecostals would also consider the practices of laying on hands, anointing with oil, and/or using anointed handkerchiefs to be the distinctive liturgical acts through which divine healing occurs.[2]

It is also evident for Pentecostals that the experience of divine healing generates crescendo effects on their eschatological faith that dialectically juxtaposes the "already" and the "not yet" dimensions of the salvation journey (i.e., *via salutis*).[3] The healing occurrences were/are not merely attesting to the "charismatic" presence of the Spirit here and now; rather, they represent the inbreaking of the future of God into present realities allowing all the participants to be enraptured into the ecstatic moment of foretasting the glory of the coming reign of God. The upshot of this is that healing assures and even emboldens their eschatological faith that, soon, Jesus Christ is coming again and will usher in the Kingdom of God.

Seminal works by Donald Dayton and Steven J. Land capture well how the experience of divine healing cultivates eschatological impulses in Pentecostal spirituality.[4] As both Dayton and Land articulate, this is clearly evidenced in the promotion of the "Full Gospel." In pursuing the Full Gospel, Pentecostals emphasized a wholehearted devotion to God and a passionate longing to be one with Christ, which are rooted in and entailed the believer's dynamic participation in the workings of the Spirit. For Pentecostals, salvation involves more than grasping, and giving assent to, an abstract concept, but that which generates real and tangible traces in and through their faith experiences. Healing, for Pentecostals, provided tangible expressions of God's salvation in and through the Spirit.[5] So decisively prominent were the healing

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[1] Drawing from the previous works from Donald Dayton and William Faupel, Frank Macchia argues for a broader reading on the Pentecostal experience of Spirit-baptism: "Spirit baptism for Pentecostals is the experience that brings to realization personally what the eschatological latter rain of the Spirit brings corporately to an era of time." *Baptized in the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 40.

[2] Steven J. Land, "Pentecostal Spirituality: Living in the Spirit," in *Christian Spirituality: Post-Reformation to Modern*, eds. Louis Dupré and Don E. Saliers (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 484–85.

[3] It is important to note that, for Pentecostals, healing is a matter of salvation. That is, healing is essentially related to the work of God's salvation insofar as it demonstrates God's intervening power to restore and make whole the broken realities humanity faces in the present.

[4] Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1987); see also Land's "Pentecostal Spirituality: Living in the Spirit," and *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 1993).

[5] Allan Anderson, "Pentecostal Approaches to Faith and Healing," *International Review of Mission*, 91 (2009), 523–24. Anderson interestingly notes the restorationist motif embedded in the Pentecostal practices of divine healing: "Pentecostals responded to what they experienced as a void left by rationalistic Western forms of Christianity which had unwittingly initiated what was tantamount to the destruction of ancient spiritual values" (532).

occurrences for modern Pentecostals, Dayton notes, "even more characteristic of Pentecostalism than the doctrine of the baptism of the Spirit is its celebration of miracles of divine healing as part of God's salvation and as evidence of the presence of divine power in the church."[6]

Tracing historically, Pentecostal practices of divine healing were largely influenced by the North American Holiness movements. As A. B. Simpson notes, the Holiness tradition generally identified divine healing as one of its "four great pillars in the temple of truth."[7] Some would trace further to the Wesleyan renewal movements of the eighteenth century and other Pietistic movements.[8] Although these threads of influence from prior movements are significant to note, and they are indeed woven into the fabric of modern Pentecostalism, it should also be noted that Pentecostals would distinctively characterize themselves as the "Latter Rain" movement with a strong restorationist motif. Identifying themselves closely with New Testament spirituality, Pentecostals readily embraced all of the powerful manifestations of the Spirit recorded in it and considered them to be readily available for now. As noted, for Pentecostals, the demonstratable experiences of the Spirit provided tangible glimpses of the future hope that is even now breaking into the suffering conditions of the present. Believing in and anticipating the divine intervention to heal represent more than a temporal restoration of the person's body; it demonstrates the gospel's redemptive power to make the person whole again. Each and every occurrence of divine healing manifests the truth that the Kingdom of God is already here, having been inaugurated in Christ's first advent, and is even now making its presence known in this broken world. Therefore, for Pentecostals, healing is closely intertwined with salvation and the journey it takes. Divine healing is a demonstratable benefit of the gospel's redemptive power as it concurrently forecasts the coming Kingdom.

This writing offers a broad Pentecostal reading on healing and Pentecostal practices associated with it. We will begin by reviewing how Pentecostals articulate healing in their ecclesial statements in which healing is closely identified with the atonement work of Christ. We will further investigate how Pentecostal doctrines and

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[6] Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism,* 115.

[7] Frederic H. Senfit, "Introduction," in the 1925 edition of A. B. Simpson's writing, *The Fourfold Gospel* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Alliance Publications, 1925), 4.

[8] Dayton's work, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, is particularly helpful in this regard. See also Kimberly Ervin Alexander, "Three Hundred Years of Holiness and Healing," *The Asbury Theological Journal* 58:2 (2019), 57–77, as well as her monograph titled, *Pentecostal Healing: Models in Theology and Practice*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series (Blandford Forum, UK: Deo Publishing, 2006). Tracking in a similar vein, Land makes a broader claim about the crucial convergence between the Wesleyan tradition and Pentecostalism: "The Wesleyan tradition is vital for the present understanding and the future development of the [Pentecostal] movement" ("Pentecostal Spirituality: Living in the Spirit," 480).

practices of healing represent the outgrowth of an intertwined past with the Holiness movement. We will also point out some distinctive ways that Pentecostals develop their own understanding of healing and healing practices. As we shall observe, for Pentecostals, healing has been deeply embedded in their salvation grammars and spiritual (ecclesial) practices. In the process, Pentecostals had to confront some notable challenges, such as the oppositional stance over the use of medicine or medical professionals among the early Pentecostals and the rise of the "Word of Faith" movements. Finally, we will examine how the eschatological tension of living "between the times" (i.e., between "the already" and the "not yet" dimensions of the Kingdom of God) informs the foundational understanding of Pentecostal healing and its practices.[9] We will further reflect on the Pentecostal practices of laying on of hands, anointing with oil, and using anointed handkerchiefs, as well as the significance of gathering at the altar while a worshipping community pray and tarry together in the Spirit.

Divine Healing and the Atonement

Modern Pentecostalism represents multifarious and complex histories and theological roots. When it comes to expressing doctrinal commitment to the practices of divine healing, however, Pentecostals show a remarkable unity in affirming the doctrine and its practices, while tracing its scriptural and theological foundation to the atonement work of Jesus Christ. To begin with, the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) in its Declaration of Faith succinctly states: "[we believe] divine healing is provided for all in the atonement."[10] The Statement of Fundamental Truths for the Assemblies of God similarly affirms the practices of divine healing and also relate them to the salvific work of Christ's atonement: "[D]ivine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided in the atonement, and is the privilege of all believers."[11] The statement cites Isaiah 53:4–5, Matthew 8:16–17, and James 5:14–16 as the supporting scriptural references. The official statement from the International Pentecostal Holiness Church shows almost no variation: "we believe in divine healing as in atonement (Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matthew 8:16, 17; Mark 16:14-18; James 5:14-16; Exodus 15:26)."[12] As a

[9] Steven J. Land, "A Passion for the Kingdom: Revisioning Pentecostal Spirituality," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 1 (1992), 19–46. Characterizing Pentecostal spirituality as being essentially "apocalyptic," Land states that their eschatological passion was "the unifying center of the [Pentecostal] movement" (41).

[10] "Church of God (Cleveland, TN) Declaration of Faith," accessed 30 November 2023, https://churchofgod.org/beliefs/declaration-of-faith/.

[11] "Assemblies of God Fundamental Truths," accessed 30 November 2023, https://ag.org/Beliefs/Statement-of-Fundamental-Truths#12.

[12] "International Pentecostal Holiness Church Articles of Faith," accessed 30 November 2023, https://iphc.org/beliefs/.

whole, the scriptures referenced in these statements clearly accentuate the atonement motif for healing. They also highlight spiritual and ecclesial practices such as confessing sins, praying fervently with faith, laying on of hands, and anointing with oil on the sick.

The United Pentecostal Church follows a similar theological trajectory in their ecclesial statement: "God has made Himself known through the ages by miraculous healings and has made special provisions in the age of grace to heal all who will come to Him in faith and obedience. Divine healing was purchased for us by the blood of Jesus Christ, especially by His stripes."[13] The reference to "faith" and "obedience" in the statement accentuates the co-operant nature of grace by which believers are invited to "participate" in the healing miracles of God. The Declaration of Faith by the Foursquare Church also traces healing Christologically (i.e., "the power of the Lord Jesus Christ"), while also connecting it explicitly to the believer's "active faith" and "obedience":

> we believe that divine healing is the power of the Lord Jesus Christ "to heal the sick and the afflicted in answer to believing prayer," that He who is the same yesterday, today and forever has never changed but is "still an all-sufficient help in the time of trouble," able to meet the needs of, and quicken the body into newness of life, as well as the soul and spirit in answer to the "faith of them" who ever pray with submission to His divine and sovereign will.[14]

The statement is also supported by the oft-cited scriptures: Matthew 8:17; 9:5; Mark 16:17–18; Acts 4:29–30; and James 5:14–16. The largest classical Pentecostal denomination in North America, i.e., the Church of God in Christ, also affirms the practices of divine healing, although their statement relates healing more closely to the "commandment" and "teaching" of Jesus:

> The Church of God in Christ believes in and practices Divine Healing. It is a commandment of Jesus to the Apostles (St. Mark 16:18). Jesus affirms his teaching on healing by explaining to His disciples, who were to be Apostles, that healing the afflicted is by faith (St. Luke 9:40–41). Therefore, we believe that healing by faith in God has scriptural support and ordained authority. St. James' writing in his epistle encourage Elders to pray for the sick, lay hands upon them and to anoint them with oil, and that prayers with faith shall heal the sick and the Lord shall raise them up. Healing is still practiced widely and frequently in the Church of God in Christ, and testimonies of healing in our Church testify to this fact.[15]

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[13] Terry Cross, "The Doctrine of Divine Healing," in *Transforming Power: Dimensions of the Gospel*, ed. Yung-Chul Han (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 2001), 180.

[14] "Foursquare Church Declaration of Faith," accessed 30 November 2023, https://foursquaremissionspress.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/445_Declaration_of_Faith.pdf

[15] "What We Believe" (The Church of God in Christ), accessed 30 November 2023, https://www.cogic.org/about-us/what-we-believe/. It is interesting to note that the common scriptural text

It is interesting to note that their statement makes explicit reference to the distinctive ecclesial practices such as laying hands on the sick and using the oil from the altar to anoint them. This is in keeping with what was scripturally commanded in the epistle of James. When one overlays these official statements by classical Pentecostals, what emerges is a strong, and shared, understanding that healing is intricately woven with the atonement work of Christ and the power of salvation it generates in the present workings of the Spirit. Furthermore, juxtaposing healing with "active faith" and "obedience," as well as Christ's "commandment" and "teaching," Pentecostals tend to accentuate the co-operant nature of grace by which believers are enabled to participate in the working out of salvation.

The Intertwined Pasts: Holiness and the Pentecostals on Healing

Donald W. Dayton's work, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, traces how the Pentecostal doctrines and practices of divine healing represent the confluence of the Wesleyan renewal movement, the Pietistic emphasis on effectual prayer and faith, and the broad network of "faith healing" movements among the nineteenth-century Holiness leaders in North America.[16] Drawing on the "faith principles" of George Müller, Dayton notes, Charles Cullis published *Faith Cures* in 1879, which initiated the development of the doctrine of faith healing. Cullis took James 5:14–15 in particular as the key text to support a believer's need to seek earnest and effectual prayer for the healing of the body.[17] Following the trajectory set by Cullis, W. E. Boardman would eventually make the theological connection between divine healing and the forgiveness of sins. For Boardman, Jesus who bore our sins and pardoned us from them was/is the Great Physician who heals: "The new light that then opened upon my soul was marvelous . . . one of the things that came to me with great force and sweetness was the office work of our gracious Lord as the Healer."[18] Correlating the restoration of souls with the healing of the body was further carried out by *Triumphs of Faith*, the magazine that Carrie Judd Montgomery published. Citing Matthew 4:23, wherein Jesus not only preaches the gospel of the Kingdom but also heals the sick, she concluded: "Those who went to Jesus could not have thought of asking Him to restore their souls, and leave

noted in all of these official statements is Jas 5:14–16. We will discuss this text closely in the later section of the article.

[16] Given the limited scope of this article, the study will selectively highlight only a few significant Holiness leaders and their contributions to the development of the doctrines of divine healing.

[17] Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, 123–24. See also Alexander, "Three Hundred Years of Holiness and Healing," 65.

[18] Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, 124. See also Cross, "The Doctrine of Divine Healing," 181.

their bodies full of disease. . . . Why should they, why should we—when Christ is able and willing to give us both?"[19]

As the Holiness doctrines of divine healing began to spread, it would take another turn to arrive at the Pentecostal teaching that "healing is provided in the atonement." It coincided with the promotion of a Full Gospel by the Holiness leaders like A. B. Simpson who included divine healing in the "four distinctive motifs" of the Holiness tradition: salvation, healing, holiness, and the second coming of Jesus Christ.[20] Simpson reasoned: "If sickness be the result of the Fall, it must be included in the atonement of Christ which reaches 'as far as the curse is found.'"[21] For Simpson, the atonement of Christ effectively reversed the effects of the curse of sin and provided the foundation for a holistic recovery for human beings—the restoration of both one's soul and her/his body. The push to preach the Full Gospel meant then claiming the full benefits that Christ's atonement provides, which cannot be envisaged without the inclusion of bodily healing.[22]

Perhaps, one of the clearest expressions in this trajectory is found in R. Kelso Carter's *The Atonement for Sin and Sickness; or a Full Salvation for Soul and Body*. Alexander cites Carter who states: "sickness is a trace of man's inherited depravity and is from the devil. The vicarious atonement of Christ is explicitly for all depravity, including sickness."[23] The correlation between sin and sickness was also clearly evident in the writings of Asa Mahan. Mahan appealed to Matthew 8:16–17 and stated: "If the fact that Jesus bore our sins in His own body on the tree, is a valid reason why we should trust Him now to pardon our sins, the fact that 'He bare our sicknesses' is an equally valid reason why we should now trust Him to heal our diseases."[24]

Around the turn of the twentieth century when modern Pentecostalism had emerged, the doctrine and practices of divine healing were already widely accepted. The holiness rhetoric and impulse were already deeply embedded in the doctrinal understanding and the ecclesial practices of divine healing. The inaugural issue of the Azusa Street paper, *The Apostolic Faith*, thus included an explicit doctrinal statement expressing a firm commitment to divine healing with sermons on healing in the

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[19] Carrie Judd, *The Power of Faith* (Buffalo, NY: Carrie F. Judd, 1880), 65.

[20] Cross, "The Doctrine of Divine Healing," 180–81.

[21] A. B. Simpson, *The Gospel of Healing*, rev. ed. (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing, 1915), 34.

[22] Anderson, "Pentecostal Approaches to Faith and Healing," 524–25.

[23] Alexander, "Three Hundred Years of Holiness and Healing," 61. See R. Kelso Carter, *The Atonement for Sin and Sickness; or a Full Salvation for Soul and Body* (Boston: Willard Tract Repository, 1884).

[24] Asa Mahan, "Faith-Healing," *Earnest Christian* 48 (September 1884), 76.

atonement.[25] Since the inception of their movement, therefore, Pentecostals understood and practiced divine healing as God's redemptive remedy to the full range of effects sin had caused and considered this divine remedy to be less than complete if the healing of the body is not in view.

Correlating healing with the atonement work of Jesus Christ, Pentecostals tended to support a dynamic view of Christ's atonement such as the Christus Victor theory by Gustaf Aulén.[26] Their belief and practices of divine healing would then stand firmly on the foundation that Christ is the "victor" over sin and sickness. A believer should have a confidence in the God who heals and, therefore, participate in the demonstration of God's healing power through a prayer of active faith. This does not mean that Pentecostals are triumphalist. Pentecostals are always cautious to acknowledge that "the triumphal procession has not yet been marched . . . we have the victory over death, but we still bury our loved ones."[27] Instead of being triumphalist, Pentecostals understand divine healing in terms of the "spirit-body correspondence" wherein the salvation of Christ is envisaged to be holistic, delivering us from both the spiritual and the bodily bondage.[28]

Pentecostal Healing: A Sanctificationist Reading

Like the preceding Holiness movements, Pentecostals also promoted the Full Gospel with some variations around the doctrines of sanctification and Spirit-baptism. Some Pentecostals held a "fourfold" gospel motif in which the Pentecostal experience of Spirit-baptism replaced the Holiness emphasis on sanctification. For these Pentecostals, sanctification was viewed as a gradual movement in the life of salvation, not a post-conversion crisis experience. On the other hand, Pentecostals with a strong Wesleyan leaning held the "fivefold" gospel motif. The Pentecostal experience of Spirit-baptism was added to the "four distinctive gospel motifs" of the Holiness tradition. Like the Holiness movements, their understanding of the Full Gospel included sanctification; however, they understood sanctification to be characteristically both a gradual movement and an instantaneous work (i.e., "crisis experience") of God's salvific grace.[29]

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[25] Alexander, "Three Hundred Years of Holiness and Healing," 65–66.

[26] See (David) Sang-Ehil Han, "Weaving the Courage of God and Human Suffering: Reorienting the Atonement Tradition," in *Passover, Pentecost and Parousia: Studies in Celebration of the Life and Ministry of R. Hollis Gause*, eds. John Christopher Thomas, Rickie D. Moore, and Steven J. Land (Blandford Forum, UK: Deo Publishing, 2010), 171–90.

[27] Cross, "The Doctrine of Divine Healing," 191.

[28] Land, "Pentecostal Spirituality: Living in the Spirit," 484.

[29] Much of the distinction between the proponents of the fourfold and the fivefold gospel motifs had to do with whether the experience of sanctification can be instantaneously experienced. The proponents of the fivefold gospel motifs held the view of the "crisis and development" dialectic. That is, sanctification can be instantaneously experienced in the present life of a believer while effecting her/his

The Full Gospel then entailed a seamless progression in the salvation journey that coalesced a believer's salvific initiation (i.e., conversion experience) with the ongoing, post-conversion workings of the Spirit—sanctification, Spirit-baptism, healing, and the eschatological longing for the soon-coming of Jesus Christ. Regardless of the differences between the fourfold or the fivefold gospel proponents, it is important to note that the pursuit of holiness has been the overriding thread for all expressions of Pentecostalism.[30]

The upshot of all this is that the Pentecostal doctrine and practices of divine healing are intricately aligned with their grammars of salvation, especially the doctrine of sanctification. Insofar as sanctification represented the possibility of the eradication of sin in one's heart and life, healing became the visible sign of God's redeeming power to eliminate disease from the body.[31] This was particularly in keeping with the "two-fold" nature of salvation (i.e., justification and sanctification) that the Wesleyan soteriology emphasized.[32] As Vinson Synan notes, early Pentecostal leaders like Charles Parham correlated sanctification with divine healing: "Carrying the idea of sanctification and perfection to its ultimate conclusion, he [Parham] taught that 'sanctifying power reached every part of our body, destroying the very root and tendency to disease.'"[33] Inasmuch as the promotion of the Full Gospel compelled Pentecostals to pursue a sanctified life, they were also led to anticipate and expect God's gracious intervention to make believers whole in and through the healing of their bodies.

Tracking the parallelism between sanctification and divine healing, Pentecostals with the Wesleyan leaning would draw from Wesley how he integrated the ideas of holiness and wholeness, advocating a therapeutic understanding of salvation. That is, Wesley often equated sin with "plague" or "diseases" and regarded human beings in need of a cure. Wesley was more focused on the effects of sin on human beings than the

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ongoing development in the way of salvation. For the Wesleyan Pentecostals, sanctification as a post-conversion experience certainly represents the eradication of sin in the heart and life of a believer, but it also provides the infusion of a wholehearted love for/with God.

[30] See the unpublished presidential address of R. Hollis Gause at the Society for Pentecostal Studies (1970). While noting variegated roots and development among Pentecostals, Gause argues with clarity that all expressions of Pentecostalism in North America were birthed in the holiness milieu.

[31] Alexander, "Three Hundred Years of Holiness and Healing," 60. Alexander notes that the eradication of sin did not mean that a believer would be free from the *presence* of sin in this life although s/he can be freed from the *power* of sin instead of being perpetually struggling with it. Relatedly, healing provides the tangible evidence of the overcoming power of God's grace over the effects of sin, such as sickness and diseases. The co-operant nature of God's grace calls for a believer's ongoing participation in the enabling work of God's grace, both in the sanctifying work of God's grace and the healing miracles.

[32] Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, 119.

[33] Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 192.

question of the origin of sin, and how grace enables us, believers, to participate in the divine work of salvation.[34] For Wesley, "we are pardoned in order to participate."[35]

Following this soteriological trajectory, Pentecostal doctrine and practices of divine healing unveil a few distinctive characteristics. First, Pentecostals understand the experience of healing in dialectical terms. While a believer can trust God to bring about healing at any moment, the individual is in no way removed from the present and future possibilities of suffering sickness. Although all instances of healing are temporary and, hence, provisional in nature, each and every instance of healing nevertheless provides a foretaste, and an assurance, of final healing at the eschaton.[36] Second, insofar as grace enables human participation in the work of salvation, Pentecostals actively participate in the prayer of faith and expect it to effect healing. In both instances, grace and human participation are understood to be dynamically intertwined with one another.[37] Third, juxtaposed with sanctification, healing envisages a holistic restoration.

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[34] Randy Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994), 74.

[35] Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, 168.

[36] The early Pentecostal literatures such as *The Church of God Evangel* share stories that describe the eventual death of believers as "dying in the faith" or being "victorious but in death." Sometimes, they were also critiqued for printing death notices as if they represent ineffectual prayers of faith. In response, the January issue (1920) of *The Church of God Evangel* includes a statement: "Our critics say we ought to give incidents of healing instead of notices of death. . . . It is like this: We are working to get people saved and ready for heaven, then when they have gone to heaven and our work has been thus far successful, where is there any reasonable objections for publishing it abroad. . . . No one objects to telling of one going to Europe, Africa or South America, then why object to telling of one who has gone to heaven" (*Church of God Evangel*, 11.5, 31 January 1920, 2).

[37] See the following testimony of a Pentecostal missionary on healing: "What seemed like an even greater act of divine intervention occurred . . . when my wife Olwen and I were travelling in Zambia towards Malawi with a van and trailer. A partial head-on collision with a large truck resulted in us both being at death's door. I lost a lot of blood from external injuries. A Catholic priest gave me the rite of extreme unction and a Polish nun stayed at my side in the small mission hospital, holding my hand, and imparting incredible strength. The Australian doctor said that it would be 'a miracle' if I were still alive the next morning. Lutheran nuns from Darmstadt came to assist the Catholics. We were flown to hospital in South Africa by air ambulance. I was released from hospital within two weeks. Olwen, however, went into a coma after two days, which was to last for seven weeks. People all over the world prayed. I believe that I had received divine assurances that Olwen would recover. One afternoon, after she had been comatose for four weeks, the German healing evangelist Reinhard Bonnke (who lived in South Africa at that time) came to pray for her and rebuke the 'spirit of death' that gripped her. She was in a deep coma with a 'decerebral' response to stimuli. The neurologist had pronounced his opinion that she would not recover from her vegetative state. The next day, the nurse reported that she had smiled, and three weeks later she was beginning to talk. Everyone, the neurologist included, admitted that this was an event that had exceeded all expectations. Although Olwen's injuries were extensive and she remained in hospital for six months, we are now the parents of two children, our oldest born eighteen months after the accident that changed our lives. That is another miracle and another story. I relate these stories because the issues that are discussed here have profoundly affected me and are taken very seriously. God used a Catholic priest, Catholic and Lutheran nuns, medical professionals, a German evangelist, and the prayers of many people to bring about our healing. I will not pretend that everything has been perfect thereafter. Olwen and I continue to suffer physical consequences from our injuries, but we know that we are still alive because of

Practices of healing are constant reminders to affirm that human beings are only made whole when both their spiritual and bodily needs are brought to bear and met with nourishment.[38] Alexander thus cites Andrew Murray who stated: "In heaven, even our bodies will have their part in salvation. Salvation will not be complete for us until our bodies enjoy the full redemption of Christ. Shouldn't we believe in this work of redemption here below? Even here on earth, the health of our bodies is a fruit of the salvation which Jesus has acquired for us."[39]

Challenges in Pentecostal Practices of Healing

It is true that Pentecostal practices of divine healing have had some challenges. To note, the early Pentecostals considered the use of medicine or seeking help from medical professionals to be either unnecessary or a sign of lacking faith. A. J. Tomlinson, the founding presiding bishop of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), is known to have said: "There is no other way provided for the healing of the body except through Jesus Christ. To resort to other means and remedies is to transgress and disobey God."[40] To note further, F. J. Lee, who followed Tomlinson as presiding bishop, is also known to have characterized germs and flies as "allies to Satan" and even attributed some medical conditions such as rheumatism and swelling to demons. Tracing the stories of rebellious Israel in the wilderness, certain illnesses were also characterized as punishment for sin. Although the usefulness of medicines was not categorically dismissed, they were expected to be used only for those outside the church.[41] This extreme approach of denying or devaluing the use of medicine, as well as avoiding to seek the help of medical professionals, has been certainly toned down over the years. As a matter of fact, contemporary Pentecostals would count on the use of medicine and medical professionals as they pray for God's intervention to heal.

As Pentecostalism rapidly grew with the emergence of mass healing evangelists, another serious challenge arose with the spread of the "Word of Faith" movement. Notable representatives of the movement such as Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, and Frederick Price trace their teaching to Galatians 3:13–14, arguing that believers are

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God's miraculous intervention and answer to prayers" (Anderson, "Pentecostal Approaches to Faith and Healing," 523–24).

[38] Anderson thus writes: "This holistic function, which does not separate the 'physical' from the 'spiritual', is restored in Pentecostalism, and people see it as a 'powerful' religion to meet human needs ("Pentecostal Approaches to Faith and Healing," 525).

[39] Alexander, "Three Hundred Years of Holiness and Healing," 61.

[40] A. J. Tomlinson, *The Last Great Conflict* (Cleveland, TN: White Wing, 1984; reprint of 1913 edition), 99.

[41] Alexander, "Three Hundred Years of Holiness and Healing," 67.

no longer bound by the curse of the Law. Hence, they concluded that "sickness and disease in the body of the believer is a reflection of how little of the word of faith that you have confessing over your own body."[42] Drawing largely from the writings of Essek W. Kenyon (1867–1948), a Baptist pastor who taught "the positive confession of the Word of God" and a "law of faith" working by predetermined divine principles, Hagin and others began to teach that any and all physical symptoms of sickness should come under the authority of the spiritual word of faith. With "positive confession" of, and "faith" in, the Word of God, believers should be able to live in divine health whatever circumstances or symptoms may be. For proponents of Word of Faith movements, the ground for healing was not a matter of dynamic engagement between God's enabling grace and human participation but, rather, exerting one's positive will to "name" and "claim" her/his desired outcome.[43] Against this kind of deviation on Pentecostal healing, Land rightly criticizes: "The crucially important gift, sign and ministry of healing, under the influence of an overly realized eschatology, showed symptoms of a much broader tendency toward human as opposed to divine sovereignty, technique as opposed to waiting upon the Lord, and inducement as opposed to gift."[44]

Eschatological Passions and Bodily Practices

Speaking out of the tradition, Pentecostal scholar John Christopher Thomas reminds us that various scriptural narratives on healing make clear that the curse of the present age is multifaceted and complex.[45] Certain instances of illness are attributed to God who may use it to teach, to punish, or to spread the gospel. At other times, illness is attributed to the evil spirits (Luke 13:10–17) or shown to be an attack by "sinister forces" (e.g., snake bite on Malta in Acts 28:1–6). It can also be attributed to natural causes or "infirmity" wherein sickness is spoken of in neutral terms. Reflecting through these scriptural narratives, Pentecostals would consider the occurrences of healing in the "promise and fulfillment" trajectory. This is closely aligned with how Pentecostals believe that the promise of the Spirit's outpouring in Joel 2:28 was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Again, the Spirit's outpouring in Acts 2 was only a "foretaste" of the coming Kingdom of God. As a foretaste, the experience of Spirit-baptism yields an eschatological longing for the day when God will be "all in all." The fulfillment of the

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[42] Cross, "The Doctrine of Divine Healing," 194.

[43] Cross, "The Doctrine of Divine Healing," 195–97. Critiquing the movement, Cross notes that, for these evangelists, healing was "as simple as *deciding to be well*" (197).

[44] Land, "Pentecostal Spirituality," 27.

[45] For a discussion on the full range of healing and deliverance from the New Testament perspective, see John Christopher Thomas, *The Devil, Disease and Deliverance: Origins of Illness in New Testament Thought* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010).

promise in Acts 2 becomes yet another promise that awaits its ultimate fulfillment at the final consummation of all things.

Likewise, Pentecostals understand and practice divine healing with a profound sense of eschatological longing. It is true that healing instances provide the fulfillment of what was promised of the redeeming power of Christ's atonement here and now. They represent only a promissory assurance that God can and will bring about the ultimate healing at the end. Pressing toward claiming the Full Gospel, Pentecostals see divine healing as experiencing the foreshadowing of the trumpet sound expected at the return of Jesus Christ. Divine healing provides for the believers "perceptible" (i.e., "to see, smell, and taste") traces of eternity's wholeness. Allan Anderson is right to note that, for Pentecostals, healing represents "a holistic salvation that encompassed all of life's problems . . . the realization of the coming of the kingdom of God."[46]

For Pentecostals, healing makes explicit the correlation between Christ's redemption (Passover) and Christ's reign (Parousia). The scriptures that are usually referenced to support the doctrine and the practices of divine healing underscore this point. Scriptures such as Isaiah 53:4–5 and Matthew 8:16–17 clearly affirm the claim that Christ's redemptive suffering is the foundation for the present possibilities of healing, whereas other scriptural references such as Mark 16:17–18 and James 5:14–16 attest to the manifestation of the Kingdom's presence that effects divine healing. In the latter texts, the disciples of Christ and the early Christians alike are encouraged to lay hands on the sick and anoint them with oil. Of a particular note, all of the official statements of classical Pentecostal denominations appeal to James 5:14–16. This is the only text where we are given a description of a specific procedure to follow. It should be also noted, however, that the text carries a strong reminder of Christ's eschatological reign. Prior to verses 14–16, James repeatedly reminds the readers that the coming of the Lord is near (see vv. 7–11) and that they are to be patient in the face of suffering and persecution. Thomas thus rightly asserts: "the role of elders as representatives of the community, and the significance of the anointing itself all suggest that to anoint 'in the name of the Lord' meant to act in conformity to the Lord's directives and on his behalf as eschatological agents."[47]

With a strong eschatological impulse interlaced with their healing practices, Pentecostals engage in bodily (and ritual) practices that they consider being mandated in the Scriptures. It is of critical importance to Pentecostals that these bodily practices often take place at the altar where the saints are expected to pray and tarry in the Spirit.

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[46] Anderson, "Pentecostal Approaches to Faith and Healing," 525.

[47] Thomas, *The Devil*, 17–18. Thomas makes a compelling case for the eschatological emphasis in the James text as he discusses in detail the use of the phrase, "in the name of Jesus," in both Jas 5 as well as in Mark 6:12–13 where Jesus sends the Twelve to preach conversion and lay hands on and heal, all owing to nearness of the Kingdom of God.

When healing occurs, it is then not merely a private affair of the individuals affected but an occasion to rejoice by the entire community of faith that participated in prayer. Land correctly observes: "They are healed together, and they rejoice together . . . there has always been an emphasis on healing as part of the ongoing, ordinary liturgy of the local body."[48] In and through healing, the individuals affected and the congregation are conjoined in prayer to experience together the inbreaking of the coming reign of Christ.

Prayer for the sick by anointing with oil and laying on of hands has been central to the Pentecostal practice of healing. Laying on of hands and the anointing with oil, as instructed in James 5 and elsewhere in Scripture, are often practiced together, although, in the absence of oil, one may simply lay hands on the sick. The laying on of hands is a visible sign by which the whole faith community is being identified with the sick, for whom the prayer of faith is being offered. Pentecostals understand that the use of oil is largely symbolic in nature since the power to heal does not originate in the oil itself. Though symbolic it may be, its significance cannot be ignored. For Pentecostals, the anointing with oil is associated with the inauguration of the Kingdom of God. By anointing the sick with oil, believers are invoking the inbreaking of the Kingdom's presence here and now. The early Pentecostals also considered the Spirit-filled believers themselves as another visible means to effect divine healing.[49] In other words, as they lay hands on, anoint the sick with oil, and offer a "prayer of faith," the physical touch of Spirit-filled believers carries with it the significance of a "sacramental ordinance." It is a visible means that is understood to be efficacious when it is observed in faithful obedience to the scriptural mandate by the sanctified church.

The anointed handkerchief was another means of grace by which the sick may be healed. Oil was often used to anoint handkerchiefs so that they could be sent to the sick. Sometimes, sick individuals would send a handkerchief to the church to be anointed and returned. This practice was common among Pentecostals from Azusa Street in Los Angeles to those in the Appalachian Mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina, as well as some other parts around the world. William J. Seymour, the founder of modern Pentecostalism, offered the following report from the Azusa Street revival:

> The Lord is graciously healing many sick bodies. People are healed at the Mission almost every day. Requests come in for prayer from all over. They are presented in the meeting and the Spirit witnesses in many cases that prayer is answered, and

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[48] Land, "Pentecostal Spirituality," 485.

[49] It is interesting to observe that, as to the question of "who" can lay hands and anoint the sick with oil, A. J. Tomlinson (the first presiding bishop of the Church of God) responded: "We do not consider that men who are ordained as ministers are the only ones to pray, but anybody can pray. And often a few of the members pray for the sick and anoint them with oil and the sick are healed just as well as when the minsters pray" (Alexander, "Three Hundred Years of Holiness and Healing," 70).

> when we hear from them they are healed. Handkerchiefs are sent in to be blest, and are returned to the sick and they are healed in many cases. One day nine handkerchiefs were blest, another day sixteen.[50]

Providing an exegetical study of Acts 19:11–12, where Paul's handkerchiefs and aprons were used to heal the sick and to cast out evil spirits, Thomas thus asserts that "observations about the superstitious nature of such a practice and questions about whether or not Paul gave his approval to this action miss the point that for the reader these events indicate the powerful presence of God in Paul's ministry."[51] In their use of anointed handkerchiefs, Pentecostals are demonstrating a complete dependence and trust in the power and presence of God who can and will heal the sick through the prayer of Spirit-filled believers.

Conclusion

As we examined Pentecostal beliefs and practices on healing, there seem to emerge some significant and unifying features. First, for Pentecostals, healing is closely associated with their salvation narrative. Healing is a *redemptive experience* insofar as its provision is grounded in the atonement of Jesus Christ. Believing in, and practicing, healing miracles is to affirm that the redemptive power of God is operative in the lives of believers yielding tangible evidence to trace. Second, healing attests to the holistic nature of God's salvation. As a visible demonstration of God's grace, healing miracles evidence that the salvation of God brings a holistic restoration of both one's soul and body. Third, Pentecostal healing takes a sanctificationist approach in which the divine work of God's grace is co-operant in nature. Inasmuch as healing represents the inbreaking of God's grace onto the broken realities of human life, grace induces and enables believers to participate in the work of God through their active faith in prayer. It is likened to how sanctification, for Pentecostals, involves both the provision of God's grace as the foundation but also our co-operation with, and response to, the enabling power of God in the Spirit. Fourth, like the experience of Spirit-baptism, healing in the Pentecostal tradition is characteristically eschatological in nature. For Pentecostals, healing miracles vivify their eschatological vision

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[50] *The Apostolic Faith*, January 1907, 1. Alexander cites a similar story found in *The Evangel*: "We pray for the sick every day, but on Sunday about 12:30 we have special prayer and every Sunday we have from twenty to forty handkerchiefs to pray over besides quite a number of requests. When this time comes, we spread the handkerchiefs out on the altar and the saints gather around and the prayers are offered upon in the earnestness of our souls. We are often reminded of the experience of the apostles when the sick folks were brought in on couches and beds and placed in the streets with a hope that even a shadow of Peter might fall upon them" (Alexander, "Three Hundred Years of Holiness and Healing, 71).

[51] Thomas, *The Devil*, 276. See further Martin W. Mittelstadt, "Nothing to Sneeze At: Receiving Acts 19:11–12 in the Pentecostal Tradition," in *Reading St. Luke's Text and Theology: Pentecostal Voices: Essays in Honor of Roger Stronstad,* ed. Riku Tuppurainen (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2019), 73–83.

of the coming Kingdom of God. Pentecostals understand that any and all healing instances are temporary and provisional in nature; however, when they occur, they point to the ultimate healing anticipated at the eschaton. Each instance of healing then generates a crescendo effect to the sounding of the last trumpet that would usher in the coming reign of God and his Kingdom.

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Response to David Han's "Healing in the Pentecostal Tradition"

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The second phase of the exploratory dialogue between the PCCNA and the USCCB that took place at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma, helped me appreciate many similarities between Pentecostal and Catholic approaches to healing. Although differences remain, I now see that our two Christian faith communities are much closer in their understanding of this theme than I had previously recognized. These similarities include worship of Christ as Healer; affirmation of a close connection between salvation and healing; reference to biblical passages such as James 5; a holistic approach that encompasses soul and body; an anticipation of final eschatological healing; and a set of ritual practices involving prayer, laying on of hands, and anointing with sacred oil. These similarities demonstrate a common faith in a saving God who rescues us from sin, suffering, and death and invites our active participation and cooperation in the work of sanctification.

David Han's essay encapsulates all of these theological points, while highlighting some of the distinctive features of the Pentecostal tradition. He gives a great overview of the historical roots of this tradition in Holiness and Wesleyan movements and very helpfully clarifies how a once-stark opposition between spiritual and medical forms of healing, which was salient in some early sources, has been significantly softened over time. Han's emphasis on the centrality of healing to Pentecostal experience is quite striking. His contention that healing may even rival glossolalia and Spirit-baptism in its level of importance prompts me to wonder whether the Catholic Church has placed enough emphasis on this essential aspect of Christ's saving work.

Put more positively, I think Catholics could benefit from further dialogue with Pentecostals on this topic. Through such conversation and relationship, Catholics could learn to be more attentive to the promise of healing that is an integral part of the gospel. Although some Catholics, particularly in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, have incorporated faith healing into their everyday religious practice, this is not standard for all Catholics. The two traditional Sacraments of Healing—namely Anointing of the Sick and Penance or Reconciliation (which offers healing from sin)—are a regular part of Catholic ministry. These sacraments powerfully mediate the healing grace of Christ to suffering people in the Catholic Church, using prayers, touch, and oil in ways that resemble Pentecostal practice to some degree. Nevertheless, my sense is that many Catholics would do well to learn more about the biblical origins, subsequent developments, and profound meanings of these sacraments and to take greater

advantage of them in their daily lives. Further Catholic-Pentecostal dialogue could, in this way, spur Catholics to gain a deeper understanding of vital aspects of their own sacramental tradition, even while helping them grow in knowledge and love of their Pentecostal brothers and sisters.

One curiosity I have is whether Pentecostal Christians will find any value in the Catholic emphasis on *fides et ratio* (faith and reason). More specifically, I am interested in the way this principle suggests a fundamental compatibility between healing practices that are rooted in Christian belief and those that are grounded in scientifically-backed medical practice. While Catholics arguably could and should increase their appreciation of faith-based healing, they have been keen to prioritize reason in their healing efforts and to recognize it as a gift from God. Many Catholics have been leaders in the fields of bioethics, social ethics, public health, and medicine. They have developed major healthcare institutions that serve the needs of diversely religious and secular populations. They have not regarded this work as something in tension with their faith but rather as one concrete means of authentically practicing it. An open question for me is to what extent Pentecostal traditions share this sense of a deep synergy between faith and reason, particularly in the domain of healing. Although Han points out that earlier views presupposing a contradiction between the two are no longer dominant, I am intrigued to see what a positive Pentecostal articulation of the faith-reason connection might look like.

Finally, I would like to comment on the practice of blessing handkerchiefs and using them as a conduit of healing grace, particularly in cases where a more direct physical laying on of hands or anointing with oil is not possible. This practice reminds me of the way many Catholics venerate the relics of saints, including even items of clothing. Our two traditions share a belief that some mode of sanctifying human presence is communicable through non-human, tangible objects. We both intuit that things that have been blessed by a holy person, someone doing Christ's work in the world, are able to hold and transmit some measure of Christ's saving power. In neither tradition is faith merely an intellectual activity. It is a holistic experience that includes the body, the community, and the surrounding world. Faith is expressed not only in words but in rich material cultures. It is a way of perceiving the "sacramentality" of things, to use a Catholic word. Learning more about the material cultures of Pentecostalism has been one of the great gifts of this dialogue for me.

In closing, I want to thank David Han for his highly illuminating and engaging paper. It opens up many fruitful avenues for further conversation between Pentecostals and Catholics. Moreover, although I am certain this was not its main purpose, it also offers a helpful nudge to Catholics, who might otherwise neglect the parts of their own tradition that affirm the healing power of Christ. Are Catholics sufficiently mindful of the fact that healing is one of the core motifs of the gospel? Have they really opened themselves to receive such grace in their lives? These are good questions for Catholics to ponder.

A Pentecostal Appreciation of Andrew Prevot's "Varieties of Healing: A Catholic Perspective"

Harold D. Hunter[1]

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It is a privilege to respond to a paper with impeccable scholarship by a scholar who marshals incredible resources to advance the conversation. Andrew Prevot designed a brilliant theological scheme tailored to the Roman Catholic-Pentecostal exploratory dialogue in the USA. The footnotes alone are worth the price of admission, in this case reading the entire paper and then investing hours in unpacking this treatise.

This masterpiece also reveals many convergences between our two traditions in terms of theological intent. Pentecostals start with Scripture, and despite restorationist impulses among some early Pentecostals, we read patristic mothers and fathers in original languages, albeit with differing hermeneutics.

It is also difficult for Pentecostals to recognize what they see with their eyes on Sundays, illustrating a sharp contrast between the two traditions. Yet after first reading Prevot's paper, I needed a moment of silence to soak in the presence of the living God.

What follows are Pentecostal historical theological reflections. Sadly, it will not be possible to cover all the categories utilized in Prevot's article, not even social justice. References to Pentecostals intend to refer to Pentecostal churches that are members of PCCNA. Except for the predominantly African American Church of God in Christ, the core group goes back to PFNA.[2] All these churches self-identify as being less than 150 years old.

Prevot's opening volley calls on liturgical language that when contextualized sounds very Pentecostal. Setting aside Pentecostal evolving definitions of the phrase "healing in the atonement," global Pentecostal scholars rightly affirm a *via media*. Prevot's appropriation of Neil Ormerod is a welcome invitation.

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[1] David Han was not available to respond to the paper by Andrew Prevot. It then became the responsibility of co-chair Harold Hunter to write this article.

[2] See Harold D. Hunter, "Attacking Systemic Racism for the Common Good: Excerpts from the 'Racial Reconciliation Manifesto,'" in *The Politics of the Spirit: Pentecostal Reflections on Public Responsibility and the Common Good*, eds. Daniela Augustine and Chris Green (Lanham, MD: Seymour Press, 2023), 39–50. This article explains why Church of God in Christ was deliberately shunned by white PFNA leaders.

Observers must realize that emphasizing Pentecost far too easily accounts for almost a monolithic story about the triumph of the resurrection rather than the trial of the cross. Although twentieth-century Pentecostals sang for hours hymns about the cross that moved everyone to tears, such teaching was primarily left to the likes of J. H. King, who wrote *From Passover to Pentecost* in 1914.

Even traditional Pentecostals who eschew the notion of a fixed liturgy much less *ex opere operato* sacraments can see, with the aid of theological translation, the pastoral intent of sacraments like Penance or Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick.

Consider the nexus of mediated grace illustrated in the Pentecostal practice of anointed handkerchiefs and Roman Catholic relics. Oral Roberts' famous healing campaigns started with the established Pentecostal practice of "healing lines," where he laid hands on the heads of those who sought physical healing. When Roberts moved to a weekly television broadcast, he would invite those watching to touch their television as a point of contact.

Marie Griffith provides insights about Pentecostals anointing handkerchiefs for the physical healings of those who were unwell, like the following.

> Q. This also inverts our understanding of Protestants as having no forms of mediated grace.
>
> A. Yes, that is exactly what these objects were. Like saints and prayer cards in the Catholic tradition, the handkerchiefs were a manifestation of mediated grace. You see that in the letters people send to the periodicals after they receive them. This is just a typical letter of gratitude: "I received the letter with the anointed handkerchief and wonderful blessings I received after I placed one to my body. I surely do feel so much better." Writers explain how they took this object, put it to the part of the body that had been ill, and felt the healing taking place in their body just from using the handkerchief. The handkerchiefs are most important, but there are other objects of mediated grace. People often used the periodicals themselves. We have a lot of accounts of people praying and putting copies of these denominational newspapers on some part of their body that was ill and feeling the healing take place.[3]

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[3] Marie Griffith, "Material History of Religion Project: Prayer Cloths," https://www.materialreligion.org/journal/handkerchief.html. See also *Diary of AJ Tomlinson: 1901–1924*, compiled by Hector Ortiz and Adrian Varlack (Cleveland, TN: White Wing Publishing House, 2012), 235, 236, 237.

> "We were deprived of having the Assembly on account of the Influenza epidemic that has been raging for more than two months. Thousands and thousands have died of the plague. Some of our people succombed [sic] but not many."
>
> "We have had cases in our home for about six weeks. Only Iris and Milton have been down of our own family, but six or more friends that came in and took down [sic]. I have prayed for at their homes as high as thirty a day. Many handkerchiefs have been prayed over and anointed sent to the sick." (November 13, 1918)

Charismatic Healing

I first attended Mass at age 19 while a student at a Pentecostal college in Cleveland, Tennessee. Nineteen-year-old me (1968), living in a closed community, could never have conceived that I would read about charismatic healing from a premiere Roman Catholic scholar in my lifetime. However, since the 1980s, I have participated in various international bilaterals with traditions that have also changed their trajectory in this regard.

After sharing a healing story associated with Mansfield, Prevot goes on to note that most Catholic "charismatic healers" value the work of physicians and clinicians. The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel's legendary Angelus Temple still has canes and crutches in its museum. Unfortunately, the debate among some early Pentecostals led to divisions of communities. One example is the 1921 creation of the Congregational Holiness Church break from the Pentecostal Holiness Church due, in part, to the question over the use of physicians and medications.

Miraculous Healing

Pentecostals who venerate twentieth-century founders are in no position to disparage the elevated place of Mary present among Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics. Pentecostal scholars affirm not only the virgin birth but also honor Mary as Theotokos.[4]

Pentecostals have been so anti-Roman Catholic as to allow slander from the pulpit fed by dispensational eschatologies that many fail to preach about what is right before their eyes in Scripture. Pentecostals must embrace Mary rather than tearing out pages from their Bibles that teach us about her. Pentecostals who have worn as a badge of honor being called "people of the book," wearing out multiple Bibles from frequent readings, must not simply erase what the biblical text says about Mary.

Some may scoff at stories of uncircumspect practices among Pentecostals related to testimonies of miraculous healing along with current Pentecostal leaders who would ignore them. However, these stories often illustrate a primitive faith in unusual circumstances that deserve not to be ridiculed due to cultural sensitivities. That is to say, the unusual means not unique in their circumstances were employed to enable their faith. In fairness to both traditions, the official positions of the churches and PCCNA

. . . "A few more students entered the Bible School. One of them, Mrs. Bennie Terrill, was taken sick about a week ago and only lived about four days. She died in our home." (December 27, 1918)

[4] Lisa P. Stephenson, "Truly Our Sister?: Pentecostal Readings of Mary," in *Receiving Scripture in the Pentecostal Tradition: A Reception History,* eds. Daniel D. Isgrigg, Martin W. Mittelstadt, and Rick Wadholm, Jr. (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2021), 112–24. While Stephenson affirms Mary as a "Pentecostal sister," she notes the resistance of an average Pentecostal to any notion that Mary is responsible for the divinity of Jesus.

leaders do not support extreme deviations from the norm. It is worth noting that some of the criticism leveled at these cultural idiosyncrasies rivals what would have been associated with Roman Catholic relics.

Consider how a typical Pentecostal responds when they get to the sarcophagus under the high altar inside St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican in Rome. The tourist guide suggests those bones might be those of St. Peter. The irony is lost on those Pentecostals who loudly protest and often turn around and venerate places associated with their founders.

On the other hand, this spotlights the Pentecostal schism between tradition and Tradition. It is so keen for Oneness Pentecostals who missed the Enlightenment that they continue to view Trinitarian dogma as primarily a post-apostolic development. In the face of Nicaea 2025 commemorations where we are reminded about those who challenge Empire, this is not a question just for Pentecostals.[5]

Biomedical Healing

Given the youth of Pentecostal churches, it is difficult to fairly judge the question of biomedical healing. When I lived in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, I most often went to Mercy Hospital. However, when Andrew Prevot read his paper, he did so on the Oral Roberts University campus in full view of Oral Roberts' City of Faith in Tulsa, Oklahoma. I have been a patient at City of Faith and always stop to look at the "healing hands" of faith and science that stand tall at the entrance to ORU.

Remember also the Azusa St. Mission in Los Angeles. During the heat of the Azusa Street Revival, the Upper Room in Los Angeles, led by Elmer Fisher, boasted an African American physician. Another sister location included Dr. Henry Keyes. One cannot tell the Azusa story without referencing the Pisgah Homes founded by Dr. Finis E. Yoakum. Yoakum imbibed the ascending Pentecostalism spirituality while using medical training for biomedical healing and social justice. The practice of revivalist Pentecostals at that time was to pray around the clock at the bed of a seriously ill person and remain in place regardless of the outcome.

In terms of the question of contraception, some may not know about the early Pentecostal teaching of "marriage purity." On the one hand, a Pentecostal presiding bishop can join Roman Catholic hierarchs leading the March for Life in Washington, DC. However, one of the first murders of a physician who did abortions was gunned

[5] See Harold D. Hunter, "Contrasting Pentecostal Models of Apostolicity: Embrace or Erase the Council of Nicaea," at "Towards Nicaea 2025: Exploring the Council's Ecumenical Significance Today," WCC Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, November 4–8, 2024. For more about Nicaea 2025, see https://www.oikoumene.org/events/nicaea-2025.

down by a Pentecostal. This tragic episode occurred while it was being said of white Pentecostals in the USA that they were not active in the political sphere.

Ecological Healing

To Prevot's question about faith and reason, it may help to look at the numbers of Pentecostal ecologists who have embraced faith and science along with the Pentecostal universities and conferences that bring this intersection to life. The implications for the health of humans in a day of climate refugees from the Global South are obvious. It should come as no surprise that the Pentecostal surge starting no later than the 1950s now goes around the world led by indigenous peoples from the Global South.

During the exploratory phase of the Roman Catholic-Pentecostal dialogue in the USA, both traditions drew attention to their commitment to climate justice, including the degree program in global environmental sustainability at ORU. An echo of this reality is that Kimberley Belcher and Harold Hunter are formally part of the ecumenical effort to foster an annual festival called Season of Creation that runs from September 1 to October 4.[6] A May 2025 conference in Assisi involving not only the Laudato Si' Movement but also various Vatican dicasteries nicely links the Season of Creation events with Nicaea 2025 projects.[7] Hunter created and chairs the Pentecostal World Fellowship (PWF) Creation Care Task Force and is partnering with the WCC for various ecumenical Nicaea 2025 events and publications.

Publications about and activism for ecological healing among Pentecostals are growing. The president of PCCNA is David Wells. Wells is also the general superintendent of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC). PAOC has formally adopted a statement about ecology and their commitment to refugees including those ravaged by global warming. Wells and Hunter represented the PWF in the 2021 Faith and Science series that brought together global leaders of all religions. The group met with Pope Francis at the Vatican on October 4, 2021, and delivered our message to His Eminence Alok Sharma, President of COP26. The first member church of the PCCNA to adopt a formal statement about ecology was the Church of God in Christ, having accomplished this in 2013.[8]

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[6] See https://seasonofcreation.org/. See Jeffrey S. Lamp, *Geoliturgy and Ecological Crisis: The Spiritual Practice of Caring for Creation* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2024).

[7] While the Roman Catholic Church did not officially co-sponsor the Season of Creation event in Assisi 2024, it participated through various Vatican observers (Dicastery for Divine Worship, but also other dicasteries) and with contributors to the systematic theology panels (Dicastery for Doctrine of the Faith and International Theological Commission), as well as various continental bishops' conferences.

[8] Harold D. Hunter, "Pentecostal Climate Justice: Ecological Activism Meets Restitution," in *Pentecostal Missiology & Environmental Degradation*, eds. Eugene Baron and Amos Yong (Carlisle, UK: Langham Global, 2025).

A Brief Consideration of the Sacrament of Marriage

from a Catholic Perspective for Pentecostal Christians

Walter F. Kedjierski

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Abstract

In this article Kedjierski attempts to highlight areas of convergence between Pentecostal and Catholic understandings of the covenant of marriage while at the same time explicating the divergences of their respective theologies of marriage. He begins with a personal testimony as to why it is important, particularly for Pentecostals and other Christians, to understand why the ritual associated with marriage is important to Catholics. Then he proceeds to explain the Catholic view of marriage as a sacrament that could be intelligible to Pentecostal audiences, including the place of the Holy Spirit in the ritual and living out of marriage. Subsequent to this explanation Kedjierski explores three ways in which marriage is unique among the sacraments in the Catholic Church and then concludes with a consideration of three challenges to living out Christian marriage today that impact both Catholic and Pentecostal congregations.

Contextualization

This dialogue of representatives from the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches of North America and the US Conference of Catholic Bishops now concludes its reflections on ritual/liturgy/sacraments with a consideration of the final traditional grouping of sacraments in Catholic theology, the "Sacraments of Vocation or Service." This topic connotes an emphasis on Christian discipleship that has been a constant ancillary theme throughout all of our discussions. All of our conversations have included respectful efforts by both Catholics and Pentecostals to aid each other in our attempts to follow the Lord Jesus in our contemporary contexts. Hence it is fitting to conclude this round of dialogues with a consideration of the sacraments that, according to a Catholic perspective, confer the grace necessary for discipleship in the context of two vocations: the vocation to formalized and official church service as a member of the clergy, and the

vocation to serve the Church and the world as husband and wife in the context of what Catholics refer to as the domestic church, the family.

While Martin Mittelstadt has chosen to consider this topic as a whole, representing the Pentecostal tradition, Leonardo Gajardo and I have divided up the Sacraments of Vocation/Service, with Leo taking on the Sacrament of Holy Orders, leaving me to offer these brief reflections on the Sacrament of Marriage in the life of the Catholic Church. Although I am an ordained priest who has promised to live in celibate chastity as a way to proclaim the kingdom of God, I write this article from the perspective of one who not only has witnessed numerous marriage liturgies in my over twenty years of priestly service, but has also grown up in a Catholic Christian family and witnessed, as a son, the living out of the Sacrament of Marriage by my parents. I look forward to the dialogue that will aid me in widening my perspectives and humbly hope for an openness from others to ways in which this article might enrich their own awareness of other points of view.

Introduction

Much ink has been spilled by Catholic theologians and canonists on the ethics and canonical dimensions of marriage and human sexuality. Given the synthetic nature of Catholic belief and practice it is not possible to ignore these essential elements of a Catholic understanding of marriage, yet the major emphasis of this article will be on the overall topic of our dialogue, our understanding of ritual and sacraments, as they relate to marriage. This topic will be developed through a) a personal testimony that will underscore the importance Catholics place on the use of what the Church deems to be valid rituals for marriage; b) a basic explanation of a Catholic understanding of marriage as a sacrament; c) a consideration of three aspects of the Sacrament of Marriage that make it unique from the other sacraments; and finally d) a brief exploration of contemporary challenges the Catholic Church faces in regard to current practices related to marriage. This topic will surely be the impetus for a lively exchange.

Personal Testimony

Pentecostals generally find great value in personal testimony and witness to the working of God in the lives of Christians. Hence, I wish to begin this paper with an account of a personal experience that impacted members of my family and demonstrates why it is important for Pentecostals and Christians from other traditions to recognize the importance Catholics place on the proper matter and form of the Sacrament of Marriage. My mother's parents met while working at factories in Detroit during the Second World War, both of them motivated by the war effort to do their parts for the nation. My grandmother was an active member of the Church of Christ in Tennessee, a

daily Bible reader ardently in favor of her strand of the Stone-Campbell movement's prohibition of the use of instrumental music in worship. My grandfather, on the other hand, was a Brooklyn-born son of Italian immigrants and a nominally practicing Catholic. Soon after, they fell in love and were married before a Justice of the Peace. My grandfather moved back to Brooklyn with my grandmother and a promise that he would help her to keep in touch and visit her family down in Tennessee and Kentucky. Regrettably, early in their marriage my grandfather almost lost his life, and his family members urged my grandmother to call a priest to his side to offer him the last sacraments. Yet upon learning that my grandparents were not married with the blessing of the Church the priest called upon quickly left their home without offering any prayers. My grandfather did recover from his injuries, and then he and my grandmother approached the Church to seek a blessing on their marriage. The Catholic marriage of my grandparents did not take place with the pomp and circumstance usually associated with Catholic rituals. Instead, a very simple, quiet ceremony was held, not in the church building, but in the rectory, the office and home of the parish priests.

This was the ordinary manner in which the Catholic Church treated ecumenical couples before the expansion of horizon[1] precipitated by the Second Vatican Council's documents on the Church *(Lumen Gentium*) and Ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*) that enabled Catholics to develop a far more positive view toward relations with Christians of other denominations. Joseph Champlin, one of the most well-known authors of materials for couples preparing for their weddings in the Catholic Church,[2] has noted the progression of the manner in which ecumenical couples preparing for Catholic marriage have been treated, at least here in the United States.

> The celebration of interreligious or mixed marriages, i.e., the wedding of a Catholic and one who is not a Catholic, has undergone significant modifications within the past half-century. For example, in the 1940s, the exchange of vows took place in the rectory or outside the church, in the 1950s, such weddings might be celebrated in the church, but outside the sanctuary; in the 1960s these moved inside the sanctuary; in the 1970s, they might include a previously prohibited

[1] Bernard Lonergan's *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press for Lonergan Research Institute of Regis College, Toronto, 1971) explains the epistemological concept of "horizon" and offers an accurate description of what one could consider the shift in emphasis in the Catholic Church with the Second Vatican Council on other Christian traditions and in fact the nature of dialogue with the outside world in general: "A vertical exercise [of freedom] is the set of judgments and decisions by which we move from one horizon to another. Now there may be a sequence of such vertical exercises of freedom, and in each case the new horizon, though notably deeper and broader and richer, none the less is consonant with the old and a development out of its potentialities" (237).

[2] Champlin authored a book entitled *Together for Life* that laid out the Second Vatican Council's revision of the marriage liturgy and enabled the couples to choose options for Scripture readings and prayers. My parents used the earliest version of this book for their wedding in 1971 and it is still, in a form that has been updated numerous times, used frequently.

> nuptial Mass and blessing. This gradual change represents the church's attempt to balance two pastoral concerns: the church wishes to encourage marital unions in which both share the same faith and religious practice, but it also wishes to show great solicitude for the many couples who enter interfaith marriages.[3]

When I consider this event from my family's history, my thoughts regularly turn to how my grandmother must have interpreted the way they were treated by clergy from the Catholic Church. In the context of her faith tradition there was nothing unusual nor immoral about being married before a civil official. The walking out of that priest during the family's hour of need must have been a perplexing and heart-wrenching experience for her. By the grace of God matters have changed, and I do not believe there are any couples today who would experience what my grandparents experienced so many decades ago. Nevertheless, undoubtedly there are still some individuals alive today who carry emotional wounds associated with similar experiences. While the likelihood of being treated similarly is practically impossible (I hope) today there is great value to other Christians coming to appreciate and understand the importance Catholics still place on couples entering into marriages that have the recognition of the Catholic Church, and in the cases of those who are baptized, sacramental marriages.

Marriage as a Sacrament?

Admittedly, there have been moments in the historic relations between Protestants and Catholics when the notion of marriage as a sacrament was highly polemical, spanning back to the origins of church divisions in the sixteenth century.[4] Some of these polemics may have been rooted in distinct understandings of what constitutes a sacrament[5] and, despite some real theological divergences that remain (which in some

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[3] Joseph Champlin, "Marriage," in *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 800.

[4] Martin Luther repudiated the idea of marriage as a sacrament in his *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520) and in his *Small Catechism* (1529) described marriage as worldly business that the Church should not govern nor order but could subsequently bless. Meanwhile the Council of Trent declared: "If anyone says that matrimony is not truly and properly one of the seven sacraments of the evangelical law, instituted by Christ the Lord, but has been devised by men in the Church and does not confer grace, let him be anathema" and "If anyone says that the Church cannot establish impediments dissolving marriage, or that she has erred in establishing them, let him be anathema" (Twenty-Fourth Session).

[5] While the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* defines a sacrament, in accord with the writings of St. Augustine, as "a sign of a sacred thing" (De. Civ. Dei, lib. x. c. 5), and St. Bernard of Clairvaux as "a visible sign of an invisible grace, instituted for our justification" (Serm. De Coen. Dom. C. 2) (Rockford, IL: Tan Publishers, 1982). One should note that these definitions from Trent have undergone significant development since the sixteenth century. Philip Melanchthon defined sacraments as "rites, which have the command of God and to which the promise of grace has been added" (*Apology of the Augsburg*

cases might be more related to ecclesiology than sacramental theology), these past 500 years have brought with them greater clarity and the exposure of some merely linguistic differences as opposed to distinctions of belief. The language of marriage as "covenant" or "covenantal relationship" to describe Christian marriage is now readily accepted by most Protestant and Catholic theologians.[6] Instead of revisiting the controversies of the past, this section is going to develop how official Catholic teaching (limiting itself to the West although Eastern Christian theology also recognizes marriage as a sacrament) came to understand and embrace the marriage of baptized men and women as one of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church.

There are clear indications from as early as the dawn of the second century that Christians understood marriage to be holy and, in some way, raised up by Christ from its purely natural state.[7] Marriage was the last of the seven sacraments to be designated as such by the Catholic Church.[8] The first indication of its official recognition as a sacrament is from the Council of Verona in 1184, considerably late in the two-

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Confession) and John Calvin defined a sacrament as "an earthly sign associated with a promise of God" *(Institutes of the Christian Religion).*

[6] Catholic theologian Michael Lawler highlights the Catholic Church's official acceptance of the language of covenant in reference to marriage in its document on the Church in the modern world (*Gaudium et Spes*) in his book *Secular Marriage—Christian Sacrament* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1992): "Marriage is described in that Constitution as a 'community of love' (n. 47), an 'intimate partnership of conjugal life and love'" (n. 48). The council's position could not be clearer. In the face of strident demands to downplay the conjugal love of the spouses, it declared that love to be of the very essence of marriage. The intimate partnership of life and love is rooted in a "conjugal covenant of irrevocable personal consent" (n. 48). Again, when faced with demands to retain the juridical and Gasparian word *contract* as a precise way to speak of marriage, the council demurred, and chose instead the more biblical word *covenant.* This choice firmly locates marriage as a personal, rather than an exclusively legal, reality and brings it into line with the covenant relationship between Christ and his church. The interpersonal character of the marriage covenant is further underscored by the choice, again in the face of a chorus of demands to the contrary, of a way to characterize the formal object of the covenanting." Given the language of marriage as covenant is biblically rooted it is ubiquitous in Protestant scholarship. Protestant authors who have written on marriage as a covenant include Paul F. Palmer, "Christian Marriage: Contract or Covenant," *Theological Studies* 33:4 (1972), 639–65; Jack O. Balswick and Judith K. Balswick, *A Model for Marriage: Covenant, Grace, Empowerment and Intimacy* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006); Gary D. Chapman, *Covenant Marriage: Building Communication and Intimacy* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003); and the Episcopal *Book of Common Prayer* (New York: Seabury Press, 1979) states "Christian Marriage is a solemn and public covenant between a man and a woman in the presence of God" (422).

[7] "From the beginning the Fathers regarded marriage as a religious affair. St. Ignatius of Antioch (+ about 107) demands the cooperation of the Church in the contracting of marriage. 'It befits the bridegroom and the bride to enter the nuptial relationship with the approval of the bishop so that the marriage may be according to the Lord and not according to concupiscence' (Pl. 5, 2). Tertullian also attests that marriage was contracted before the Church: 'How shall I be able to describe the happiness of a marriage which the Church performs, the offering of the sacrifice ratifies, and the blessing seals, to which the angels assent, and which the Heavenly Father recognizes?'" (*Ad Uxoreum* II 9), taken from Dr. Ludwig Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma* (Rockford, IL: Tan Publishers), 401.

[8] A. M. Roguet, *Christ Acts through the Sacraments* (Melbourne, Australia: Hassell Street Press, 2021)*,* 126.

thousand-year history of the Church. Two particular issues proved challenging to the Church's officially embracing marriage as a sacrament. The first was the influence of schools of thought that denigrated the material and flesh and the second was the question of whether or not Christian marriage actually involves a conferral of grace (which, to Catholics, is an essential quality of each of the seven sacraments).

Matthew Levering has acknowledged that a significant factor in the Church's discernment of the sacramentality of marriage "was the Church's reaction to the twelfth century spread of Catharist and Albigensian rejection of the goodness of marriage."[9] For those who reject the value of materiality, the goodness of an institution, which many times results in the co-creation of new, enfleshed life, is problematic. There were also strains of thought prior to the twelfth century that questioned the inherent goodness of marriage, such as St. Jerome's notion that marriage was established subsequent to the fall[10] and interpretations of 1 Corinthians 7 that taught Christian marriage is meant to be a kind of "concession" for those who are unable to control their concupiscence. Abstinence, therefore, was understood to be a more "spiritual," and hence, holier state.[11] Thus, inclusion of marriage among the sacraments of the Church emphasizes its divinely ordained goodness and combats Gnostic tendencies to reject the sacredness of the material. As David William Antonio has written, ". . . Matrimony is a way of cooperating in the love and work of God, the Creator. This theological concept has very important implications. It is a break with theology's earlier insistence on the tainting of marriage with sin."[12]

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[9] Matthew Levering, *Engaging the Doctrine of Marriage: Human Marriage as the Image and Sacrament of the Marriage of God and Creation* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2002), 200.

[10] St. Jerome would explain in his letter to Eustachia: "For you know that virginity is natural to man while marriage is a result of the fall, consider that marriage produces virgins, returning in the fruit what it has lost in the root" (Available at https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001022.htm). "Under the influence of Platonic spiritualism, St. Gregory of Nyssa (De opif. Hom. 17) declared the sexual differentiation of mankind, and the marriage which is founded on it, to be a consequence of sin, foreseen by God. St. Thomas rejected the teaching of St. Gregory (S. th. I 98, 2)." (Ludwig Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma* [Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, 2013], 460).

[11] For example, "Tertullian does not understand 7:2 to be an approval of marriage but rather an indulgence. He argues the 'good' of marriage is undermined because it is preferable only in comparison to burning (7:9)." Meron Tekleberhan, "The Reception and Appropriation of 1 Corinthians 7:1–9 in Selected Ethiopic Texts," *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 12 (2015), 235. Contrast these negative views of marriage with the official Catholic teaching articulated by the *Catechism of the Catholic Church:* "Both the sacrament of Matrimony and virginity for the Kingdom of God come from the Lord himself. It is he who gives them meaning and grants them the grace which is indispensable for living them out in conformity with his will. Esteem of virginity for the sake of the kingdom and the Christian understanding of marriage are inseparable, and they reinforce each other" (1620).

[12] David William Antonio, *An Inculturation Model of the Catholic Marriage Ritual* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2002), 8.

Peter Lombard (1096–1160) included marriage in his own account of the sacraments and defined it in this way: "the marital union [*coniunctio*] of a man and a woman, between legitimate persons, holding together an indivisible way of life."[13] In the sixteenth century the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* would define the Sacrament of Marriage as "the conjugal union of man and woman, contracted between two qualified persons, which obliges them to live together throughout life."[14] Conspicuously, there is no mention of the conferral of grace in either of these definitions. This should lead one to ponder, why was there a struggle in the Church's history with understanding marriage as bearing Christ's grace to the couple and how was the ambiguity resolved?

An aspect of marriage that sets it apart from the other sacraments offers a reason why its grace has not always been at the forefront of the minds of theologians, which even led to some classifying marriage as a "lesser sacrament" than the rest.[15] This is the fact that marriage, unlike all of the other sacraments of the Church, is not a purely Christian phenomenon. Marriage existed before there were Christians and still exists in various forms in every human society. Theologian Bernard Häring once wrote, "I recognize marriage, then, first of all as a secular, earthly reality which Christians have in common with the inhabitants of our pluralistic world, even if we have not the same ideas about its origin and ultimate good."[16] Originally, the rituals Christians used to enter into marriage were officiated at by the civil authorities just like all other marriages of the time, and subsequently blessed by the clergy.[17] The Catholic Church has always recognized the legitimate rights of the state to regulate and register marriages due to their public, legal ramifications, such as the right to inherit property or access to health care information.[18] While acknowledging the secular dimensions of marriage, it would be incorrect to assume that Catholics believe that marriage was totally conceived and developed by human beings alone. *Gaudium et Spes* articulates this clearly:

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[13] Peter Lombard, "Treatise on Marriage," *Sentences,* Book IV.

[14] *Catechism of the Council of Trent* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, 1982), 362.

[15] Philip L. Reynolds, *How Marriage Became a Sacrament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 8.

[16] Bernard Häring, *The Sacraments in a Secular Age: A Vision in Depth on Sacramentality and its Impact on the Moral Life* (Boston: St. Paul Publications, 1976), 185.

[17] As Häring observed, "Before the Council of Trent, the validity of a marriage between Christians was never made dependent on a certain canonical celebration. When the Church evangelized the ancient world, she did not change the customary form of marriage, but she was present with the light, the comfort and the pedagogy of the Gospel, and with her prayer and support" (*Sacraments in a Secular Age*, 198).

[18] "The state is entitled to regulate the purely civil legal consequences of the contract of marriage (right of name and state, marital rights of property, right of inheritance), and to settle disputes about these matters" (Ott, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, 469). Refer to the 1917 *Code of Canon Law* canon 1016.

> The intimate partnership of married life and love has been established by the Creator and qualified by His laws, and is rooted in the conjugal covenant of irrevocable personal consent. Hence by that human act whereby spouses mutually bestow and accept each other a relationship arises which by divine will and in the eyes of society too is a lasting one. For the good of the spouses and their offspring as well as of society, the existence of the sacred bond no longer depends on human decisions alone. For God Himself is the author of matrimony, endowed as it is with various benefits and purposes.[19]

The Creator authored marriage as a means whereby husband and wife are invited to live more fully in the image and likeness of their Creator: "In the design of the Creator, matrimony has always, in all time and all places, had this fundamental sacramental value of freeing the human person from isolation, from imprisonment in selfishness, and committing him or her to the main dynamic of history, which is the growth of love and discernment."[20]

How did the Catholic Church come to understand that through the Sacrament of Marriage Christ confers grace on the couple? Scripturally, Paul's letter to the Ephesians, chapter 5, has been claimed as a foundational text to understanding marriage as a sacrament, especially given Paul's use of the word *μυστήριον,* translated into the Latin *sacramentum.* While it is true that prelates like Cardinal Donald Wuerl have gone so far as to claim that St. Paul referred to marriage as a "sacrament,"[21] at the same time one should be cautious about assigning contemporary understandings of terms to ancient texts. Catholic theologians of the past many times emphasized the term "mystery" as referring to marriage itself, while Protestant theologians instead emphasized the term referring to the relationship of Christ with the church. Scripture scholar Margaret Y. MacDonald reminds us that such interpretations need not be mutually exclusive:

> There is some uncertainty as to what exactly constitutes the mystery here. Does it refer to marriage between man and woman, only to Christ and the church, or to both? The apparent lack of clarity may be due to the close association between the two in the author's own mind. Given the use of the marriage metaphor throughout 5:22–33, it seems best to assume that the term "mystery" encompasses both human marriage (seen as a reflection of divine reality) and the relationship between Christ and the church.[22]

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[19] ¶ 48.

[20] Häring, *Sacraments in a Secular Age*, 188.

[21] Donald Wuerl, *The Marriage God Wants for You: Why the Sacrament Makes all the Difference* (Frederick, MD: Word Among Us Press, 2015), 39.

[22] Margaret Y. MacDonald, *Colossians/Ephesians,* Sacra Pagina Series (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 331.

Paul, more than likely influenced by the plethora of marital imagery in the Old Testament related to the Lord's relationship with Israel, believed that married Christian couples are called to symbolize and proclaim with their lives the relationship of Christ with the church. Undoubtedly, it would be impossible for human beings to fulfill this calling without an abundance of God's grace.[23] Jesus' prohibition of divorce in Matthew 19:10 is another indication of the special grace necessary for Christian marriage:

> The alarmed protest of Jesus' disciples against his strict doctrine (Matt 19:10) shows that a special grace is needed for people to live out the truth of Christian marriage. This special grace, Jesus implies, will come to those who have married each other as Christians, that is, within the context of the inaugurated kingdom, the Church. Since people will need a special grace to live out marriage in the way that Jesus intends it to be, Christians who marry will receive this grace.[24]

How exactly does this grace work in the lives of the couples? The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* describes it in this way: "Christ dwells with them, gives them strength to take up their crosses and so follow him, to rise again after they have fallen, to forgive one another, to bear one another's burdens, to 'be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ,' and to love one another with supernatural, tender and fruitful love."[25]

The Catholic Church's marriage rituals have undergone numerous revisions throughout recent centuries amidst calls for the grace of the sacrament to be clearly signified and the duties of the spouses to be more emphasized.[26]

> In the judgment of the [Second Vatican] Council Fathers, the Roman Rite promulgated by Pope Paul V in 1614 and still in use before the council did not adequately express the grace of the sacrament and the obligation of the spouses in spite of the modifications introduced by Popes Benedict XIV (1752), Pius IX (1872), Leo XIII (1884), Pius XI (1925) and Pius XII (1952). It was considered too juridical in orientation since it viewed marriage primarily as a contract.[27]

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[23] Cardinal Ouellet offers this fine explanation: ". . . because the sacraments effect that of which they are made signs, one must believe that in this sacrament a grace is conferred on those marrying, and that by this grace they are included in the union of Christ and the Church, which is most especially necessary to them, that in this way, in fleshly and earthly things, they may purpose not to be disunited from Christ and the Church." See Marc Ouellet, *Mystery and Sacrament of Love: A Theology of Marriage and the Family for the New Evangelization* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015), 50.

[24] Levering, *Engaging the Doctrine of Marriage*, 205.

[25] ¶ 1642.

[26] *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, "The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," *Documents of the Second Vatican Council,* 77.

[27] Antonio, *An Inculturation Model of the Catholic Marriage Ritual*, 1–2.

One of the recent developments in theology that precipitated a more explicit connection to the conferral of grace in the ritual has been a greater emphasis on the importance of pneumatology in our understanding of the sacraments:

> . . . the rediscovery of the Holy Spirit in Western theology opens new perspectives for sacramental theology in general and the theology of marriage in particular. The concern to establish the divine institution of the sacrament in the explicit, historical will of Christ in fact resolves a forgetfulness of the Spirit that has impoverished the theology of the sacraments in the West. The Holy Spirit's role is precisely that of confirming and universalizing the whole truth of Christ. This mission of the Spirit consists in causing the Church, Christ's body and bride, to co-exist as his "helpmate" in giving life to the world.[28]

Liturgically, at the nuptial Mass, which is the rite clearly preferred by the Church for Catholics to enter into the Sacrament of Marriage,[29] a triple epiclesis is invoked. The first and second, which occur at every Catholic Mass, are the invocation of the Holy Spirit over the gifts of bread and wine, that "they may become for us the Body and Blood of Christ," and another over the people, that by partaking of the gifts they might also be transformed into the Body of Christ, bringing his presence to the world. These are found in the Eucharistic prayers. The third epiclesis, which is particular to the nuptial Mass, is invoked over the husband and wife during the nuptial blessing. David William Antonio notes:

> In speaking of the modifications introduced in 1991 on the formulas of the nuptial blessing . . . [the] more significant change is the addition of an epiclesis, not only to underline the indispensable role of the Holy Spirit but also to transform this formula into a genuine epicletic prayer. This is intensified by the kneeling posture of the spouses and the extension of hands by the ordained presider over them.[30]

The epicletic elements of the nuptial blessing are expressed in the prayers of the rite in these ways:

> Look now with favor on these, your servants, joined together in Marriage, who ask to be strengthened by your blessing. Send down on them the grace of the Holy Spirit and pour your love into their hearts, that they may remain faithful in the Marriage covenant. May the grace of love and peace abide in your daughter (n), and let her always follow the example of those holy women whose praises are sung in the Scriptures. May her husband entrust his heart to her, so that, acknowledging

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[28] Ouellet, *Mystery and Sacrament of Love*, 27.

[29] *Sacrosanctum Concillium*, 78.

[30] Antonio, *An Inculturation Model of the Catholic Marriage Ritual*, 68.

her as his equal and his joint heir to the life of grace, he may show her due honor and cherish her always with the love that Christ has for his Church.[31]

May your abundant blessing, Lord, come down upon this bride (n), and upon (n), her companion for life, and may the power of your Holy Spirit set their hearts aflame from on high, so that, living out together the gift of Matrimony, they may be known for the integrity of their conduct and be recognized as virtuous parents.[32]

Graciously stretch out your right hand over these your servants (N. and N.) we pray, and pour into their hearts the power of the Holy Spirit.[33]

It is also interesting to note that in the case of the ritual used in what is considered a non-sacramental marriage, the Holy Spirit is still invoked upon the couple: ". . . may the power of the Holy Spirit set their hearts aflame from on high . . . ."[34] Hence just because a marriage might not be considered "sacramental" does not mean Catholics believe that the Holy Spirit is necessarily absent from it. This brief survey into the challenges to the Catholic understanding of marriage highlights how through the centuries the Church has come to more clearly understand and express it as a sacrament.

The Essentials of the Sacrament of Marriage

Although the emphasis on the Holy Spirit just mentioned is a welcome addition to the rite that more clearly articulates how marriage is grace-filled, the decision to incorporate an epiclesis into the nuptial blessing was not devoid of some controversy. Liturgical theologian Adrian Nocent wrote about his concern that this incorporation of an epiclesis into the nuptial blessing might make it appear as if the nuptial blessing is an essential moment in the Rite of Marriage for the sake of its validity.[35] Such an idea would be a departure with Western Christianity's understanding of what to Roman Catholics is the essential matter and form of marriage. This begs the question, what to the Catholic mindset is essential for the Sacrament of Marriage?

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* succinctly describes what is essential for the couple to enter into a marriage: "The Church holds the exchange of consent between the spouses to be the indispensable element that 'makes the marriage.' If consent is lacking there is no marriage."[36] While the blessing of a member of the clergy and the expression of the outpouring of grace by the Holy Spirit are cherished by Catholics,

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[31] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 73.

[32] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 209

[33] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 207.

[34] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 139.

[35] Adrian Nocent, "La nouvelle edition du ritual du marriage," *Ecclesia Orans* 8 (1991), 330–34.

[36] ¶ 1626.

ordinarily sought out and not to be omitted in Catholic rites,[37] what is essential for a marriage to take place in the Roman Catholic Church is the expression of consent of the couple. Of course, this consent needs to be freely given. Any form of coercion would render the marriage invalid. Another important point for validity is that the individuals who contract marriage must be free to marry. The canonical basis for determining freedom to marry is outside of the scope of this article but could certainly be included in further discussion.

Catholics understand that while some marriages are sacramental there are other marriages that are certainly legitimate unions yet not sacramental. What is it that Catholics understand makes marriage a sacrament? The *Code of Canon Law* specifies it:

> The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life and which is ordered by its nature to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring, has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament between the baptized. For this reason, a valid matrimonial contract cannot exist between the baptized without it being by that fact a sacrament.[38]

Hence, when a man and a woman, as baptized Christians, choose to enter into the covenant of marriage, should they do so in a valid manner, Catholics understand their marriages to be a sacrament. "Since they have already been baptized, they already participate in Christ's filiation in the Spirit; but now they participate as a couple, as the union of man and woman, in the community of the Trinity, which is essentially one, fruitful and indissoluble."[39] A baptized person and an unbaptized person, or two unbaptized persons, can certainly enter into a legitimate marriage but given Catholics understand baptism to be the gateway to the other sacraments those marriages are not technically considered sacramental.[40]

Contemporary society espouses a multiplicity of views on forms of family life and definitions of marriage. In the above quotation Cardinal Ouellet makes note of the

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[37] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 24, 34, 42.

[38] Canon 1055.

[39] Ouellet, *Mystery and Sacrament of Love*, 63.

[40] Antonio also offers a good explanation of the importance of the baptismal identities of those entering into marriage: "By reason of baptism, the sacrament of faith, a man and a woman are once and for all brought into the covenant between Christ and the Church, so that their marital communion is assumed into Christ's own love and enriched by the power of his sacrifice. As a sacrament of initiation, baptism radically inserts us into the mystery of the covenant relationship between Christ and the Church. In marriage the couple acts out of the covenantal relationship already established in baptism. This is the so-called baptismal foundation of marriage. The reason why marriage is a sacrament is that it is the act of two persons who through baptism have already entered the paschal and covenantal relationship with Christ. The universal call to holiness is given concrete expression in marriage" (*An Inculturation Model of the Catholic Marriage Ritual*, 9–10).

three Augustinian principles about marriage that have been maintained as a part of the Catholic Church's understanding of marriage for many centuries. Augustine's treatise, *On the Goods of Marriage,* describes three necessary elements: *proles, fides, and sacramentum*—procreation, fidelity, and the sacrament.[41] More contemporary language used by Catholics renders these terms as: openness to children, unity, and indissolubility. In the *Rite of Marriage,* before the bride and groom offer their consent, they are ceremonially asked if they agree to accept Augustine's three elements of the "good of marriage":

> N. and N., have you come here to enter into Marriage without coercion, freely and wholeheartedly? [unity – the couple is freely choosing to unite]
>
> Are you prepared, as you follow the path of Marriage, to love and honor each other for as long as you both shall live? [indissolubility]
>
> Are you prepared to accept children lovingly from God and to bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church? [openness to children][42]

These questions, publicly asked by the officiant during the liturgy, would have already been asked privately when the bride and groom were given their mandatory prenuptial investigation to determine their freedom to marry. That moment of preparation is an opportunity not only to engage in a technical interview but is also a pastoral outreach to the couple, an attempt to aid its discernment of entering into such a serious, lifelong commitment. The questions manifest a Catholic view of the nature and purpose of marriage to all present and a public testimony of the couple's personal belief in the nature of Christian marriage.

Three Aspects of Marriage That Make It a Unique Sacrament

One of the ways in which one can come to better understand a Catholic view of marriage as a sacrament is to isolate those qualities that make marriage unique from the other six. While this is not an exhaustive list, and the Catholic theologians present might wish to bring up others in the conversation, this article will confine itself to three distinct aspects of marriage as a sacrament.

1. From the Secular to the Sacred

It was previously acknowledged that marriage stands out from the other sacraments in as far as it existed as a non-sacramental reality since the dawn of creation. How, therefore, did this pre-Christian reality take on a sacramental character? To begin with

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[41] Augustine, *De bon. coni*. 28.32.

[42] *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 60.

an image, directly across from St. Peter's Basilica in Rome one finds an Egyptian obelisk brought to Rome by the Emperor Caligula in AD 37. The obelisk is crowned with a metal cross that an old tradition says contains relics of the true cross of Christ. This method of taking realities and/or traditions outside of Christianity and "Christening" them was a regular part of early church life. Some scholars suggest that traditions such as the celebration of Christmas at the end of December may have had their roots in pagan festivals. The basilicas of ancient Rome like the Pantheon, which were formerly used to honor pagan gods and goddesses, were transformed into places of Christian worship. The sacraments have in and of themselves this principle of the ordinary being transformed for a far higher purpose. Water is consecrated and used in baptism and bread and wine in the Eucharist. Marriage falls in line with a civil union becoming something far more meaningful and sanctifying in light of Christ's presence in the lives of the couples.

One can discern how the Church came to recognize that Christ instituted the state of marriage as a sacrament, taking a former reality and transforming it into something renewed, through a brief survey of some of the Scripture texts of the New Testament related to marriage. A text that is frequently used at Catholic marriage liturgies describes the sign of the changing of water into wine by Jesus at the wedding feast of Cana.[43] Through the transformation of the water used for Jewish ceremonial washing into the festive wine, which could be understood as an allusion to the Eucharist as well as the festive rejoicing to be found in the kingdom of God, one could find an intimation to how Christ builds upon the Jewish roots of marriage to create a Christian institution. This brings to mind a related passage of Scripture when Jesus was challenged by the Scribes and Pharisees about the legality of divorce.[44] In this passage Jesus says: "Because of the hardness of your hearts Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. I say to you, whoever divorces his wife (unless the marriage is unlawful) and marries another commits adultery." There has been a longstanding interpretation of this passage in the Catholic tradition related to Jesus returning marriage to what God originally designed marriage to be. Cardinal Ouellet explains:

> As a consequence of sin, the sacred institution of marriage was not always respected in the history of the Old Testament. From the time of the patriarchs and the spread of polygamy, Scripture records innumerable transgressions against the holiness of marriage (Gen. 16:1–4; Sam. 1:6; Deut. 21: 15–17). King David,

[43] John 2:1–12.

[44] Matt 19:1–10.

> though highly praised in the Bible, had his harem (2 Sam. 16: 20–22) as did Solomon (1 Kings 11:1–13).[45]

Catholic teaching contends that Jesus fully restored marriage to its original dignity and instituted it as a sacrament.[46] John Paul II described it in this way:

> The communion between God and his people finds its definitive fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom who loves and gives himself as the Savior of humanity, uniting it to himself as his body. He reveals the original truth of marriage, the truth of the "beginning," and, freeing man from his hardness of heart, he makes man capable of realizing this truth in its entirety.[47]

Christian marriage becomes distinct from any other form of marriage, because the first relationship husband and wife enter into, through their baptisms, is their relationship to Christ. Subsequent to receiving the Sacrament of Marriage, they relate to Christ, not as individuals, but together as a couple united in him.

2. Marriage Can Become Sacramental without Use of the Marriage Ritual

Catholic marriage rites are used when at least one member of the couple is a baptized Catholic. As was previous mentioned, any validly contracted marriage between a baptized man and a baptized woman is considered by Catholics to be sacramental. In those instances when a baptized person and unbaptized person marry, or two unbaptized persons marry, the marriages they enter into are not considered sacramental. However, should the unbaptized persons choose Christ and become baptized, even without the use of a marriage ritual, their marriages instantaneously become sacramental. This is a very unique quality of the Sacrament of Marriage that demonstrates its connection to the Sacrament of Baptism.

3. Bride and Groom as Ministers of the Sacrament

Quite particular to the Sacrament of Marriage in Roman Catholic theology is the notion that the proper minister of the sacrament is not the clergy who officiate but the

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[45] Ouellet, *Mystery and Sacrament of Love*, 34.

[46] Regarding the idea of Christ instituting the Sacrament of Marriage, Cardinal Ouellet makes this important point: "Vis-à-vis the scholastic tradition, contemporary theology understands the institution of the sacraments from a new angle. Christ is the author of the sacraments, but not because he specified in detail the matter and form of each sacrament. The institution of the particular sacraments appears today, rather, as fundamentally present in the birth of the Church from the paschal mystery" (Ouellet, *Mystery and Sacrament of Love*, 27).

[47] *Familiaris Consortio*, 13.

husband and wife. The officiant functions in the role of an official witness of the Church. One of the reasons for the Catholic Church becoming involved in regulating and recording marriages was to remedy the problems associated with widespread clandestine marriages before the Council of Trent, which led to individuals, particularly women, being deprived of rights to property and inheritance, and the legitimacy of children being questioned, due to no proof of the marriages taking place.[48] The liturgy is a public event[49] filled with witnesses. The responsibility of the officiant is, on behalf of the Church, to "receive the consent," in other words, to ensure that the couple freely and properly offers their consent to enter into what bride and groom understand to be a Christian marriage. No one else has the right to give the bride's or groom's lives to anyone else; husband and wife must do so themselves. Given that the husband and wife are the ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage, the Catholic Church even permits them, under extreme circumstances (including the absolute impossibility of securing a member of the clergy or laity authorized by the bishop) to marry each other without an officiant, provided that at least two witnesses are present.[50] This is in major contrast with Eastern Christianity, which understands the minister of the Sacrament of Marriage to be an ordained priest.

These three points, marriage has been transformed by Christ into a sacrament, marriage can become sacramental without use of the marriage ritual, and the bride and groom are the ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage, make Holy Matrimony a unique sacrament in the life of the Catholic Church.

Challenges

As we conclude this consideration of the Sacrament of Marriage from a Catholic perspective, this article will present four contemporary challenges. Once again, this is not an exhaustive list, and our discussion could expose other areas that some might consider to be even more important challenges than the ones I will bring up to conclude this brief survey.

[48] More information on this can be found in Jutta Sperling's article "Marriage at the Time of the Council of Trent (1560–70): Clandestine Marriages, Kinship Prohibitions, and Dowry Exchange in European Comparison," *Journal of Early Modern History*, January 8:1–2 (2004), 67–108.

[49] Although there are certain rare circumstances in which Canon Law allows for the "secret celebration of marriage" there are still requirements for the recording of the marriage so that there is some type of proof that it was contracted.

[50] Canon 1116.

1. Helping Couples Understand Marriage Is Not Just a Day, It Is a Lifetime

Although one can clearly observe that the Rite of Marriage is sacred, most especially because it is conferred in a church setting, couples should recognize the entirety of their married lives as sacred. The Sacrament of Marriage is not only meant to be received, it is meant to be lived by both husband and wife. John Paul II described the importance of this contention well:

> . . . the gift of Jesus Christ is not exhausted in the actual celebration of the sacrament of marriage . . . just as husbands and wives receive from the sacrament the gift and responsibility of translating into daily living the sanctification bestowed on them, so the same sacrament confers on them the grace and moral obligation of transforming their whole lives into a "spiritual sacrifice."[51]

The faithfulness and fidelity of married couples signifies the faithfulness and fidelity of Christ to his bride, the Church. Marriage is a sacrament that is "lived into," one in which the couples continue to grow in holiness as they exchange self-sacrificial, Christ-like love with each other. Husband and wife carry the graces of the sacrament with them every day of their married lives. Cardinal Ouellet points out how Pope Pius XI compared the grace of the Sacrament of Marriage, which remains with the couple throughout their married lives, to the Eucharist, which, according to Catholic belief, remains the Body and Blood of Christ well after the celebration of the liturgy:

> Bellarmine was cited in a key passage of *Casti Cannubii,* where Pope Pius XI compares the visible sacramental sign of marriage to the Sacrament of the Eucharist. In the Eucharist, the real presence continues under the sacred species, even after the celebration of Mass; similarly, the grace acquired during the wedding celebration continues under the species of the married life even after the celebration is over.[52]

This invocation of a relatedness to the Eucharist is a powerful reminder of the presence of God in the Sacrament of Marriage. Hence it is most appropriate that after the consent of two baptized Catholics in which they become husband and wife, the first action of the newly married couple is sharing at the table of the Lord in the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the food for their journey together as husband and wife as they live out the Sacrament of Marriage.

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[51] *Familiaris Consortio*, 56.

[52] *Familiaris Consortio*, 68.

2. The "Baptized Unbeliever"

At times Pentecostals might find it perplexing that some Catholics lack fervor or knowledge of even the basics of the faith. A situation that poses a particular quandary for Catholic theology, what one might even call a theological oxymoron, is the "baptized unbeliever." There are Catholics who consider the faith as an element of their cultural identity as opposed to a phenomenon that is meant to offer direction to their whole lives. While many have different theories as to why this is such a widespread reality in Catholic circles there is none who can question this fact. These individuals who are baptized, and yet may not actively practice their faith or find meaning in it, unless they formally renounce their faith, have an obligation to be married in the Catholic Church (as was mentioned at the beginning of this article). At the same time, however, there is an important sacramental principle that it is essential to have faith in order to receive God's grace.[53] When the bride and groom approach the Church for marriage, if they are baptized, it is presumed that they have some type of faith. Unfortunately, it is sometimes due to social pressure that they choose to have their weddings in the Church. I am not suggesting that one should judge the faith of the couples, but there have been some who have been honest enough to openly admit this to their clergy. Perhaps it would be wise at some point to include in marriage preparation a greater emphasis on the central role of faith and one's relationship with Christ to Christian marriage. To assist with this, in addition to the usual marriage preparation, the priest or deacon might inquire about their views of the faith and its importance in their lives, as well as make greater efforts to evangelize those couples who find the gospel foreign to their experience.

3. "Lack of Due Discretion"

The third challenge I offer for our reflection is that at this point approximately 50 percent of Catholic marriages, in line with the rest of society, do not end with the death of one of the spouses. When those who seek to remarry in the Catholic Church appeal to church tribunals in order to secure an annulment, the vast majority of declarations of

[53] A good exploration of this issue was made by the International Theological Commission, "The Reciprocity Between Faith and the Sacraments in the Sacramental Economy," 3 March 2020, www.vatican.va. Pope Benedict XVI said: "Marriage is linked to faith, but not in a general way. Marriage, as a union of faithful and indissoluble love, is based upon the grace that comes from the triune God, who in Christ loved us with a faithful love, even to the Cross. Today we ought to grasp the full truth of this statement, in contrast to the painful reality of many marriages which, unhappily, end badly. There is a clear link between the crisis in faith and the crisis in marriage. And, as the Church has said and witnessed for a long time now, marriage is called to be not only an object but a subject of the new evangelization." "Holy Mass for the Opening of the Synod of Bishops and Proclamation of St. John of Avila and of St. Hildegard of Bingen as 'Doctors of the Church,'" 7 October 2012, https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2012/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20121007_apertura-sinodo.html).

nullity are granted due to a "lack of due discretion" on the part of the groom, the bride, or at times both. This situation should cause the Catholic Church to pause and discern how to better educate couples on the rights, duties, and obligations of marriage. It may be that secular mentalities about marriage, especially questioning the possibility of making a life-long commitment, are so ubiquitous in our society that they are having an influence on couples preparing for marriage who may not even be conscious of this reality. Perhaps a greater emphasis on the theology of marriage, more time to discern with the couple the obligations they are about to undertake, and even a more vigorous insistence that couples delay their marriages until they demonstrate the necessary maturity to enter into marriage, could assist with this challenge. An effort has been made by the Dicastery of Laity, Family and Life to facilitate such an emphasis. In June 2022 it released a document entitled "Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life,"[54] which models marriage preparation after the process of Christian initiation. It suggests the use of three stages in the preparation of couples for marriage: evangelization and discipleship, accompaniment, and catechesis. While such practices might not be popular with couples preparing for marriage due to the commitment of their time during an already busy moment of their lives it could save them a great deal of pain later.

4. Ecumenical and Interreligious Marriages

The final challenge for our reflection brings us back to the beginning of the article, the greater frequency of "mixed marriages"—marriages between Christians of different denominations or even between Christians and individuals of other faith traditions. The Catholic Church, as a faithful mother to her children, requires Catholics to exchange consent in a certain way. As has been demonstrated, this is because as the baptized, their commitment to each other impacts their commitments to Christ. They are called to relate to Christ as a couple. Due to challenges in the past, i.e., clandestine marriages, this requirement is taken most seriously. Yet for those who are not in the Catholic Church this can seem a foreign concept. Catholics should seek to better educate themselves and their non-Catholic partners on these practices and help them to understand the reasoning and history behind it. Doing so will only help to make the Sacrament of Marriage a truly grace-filled pathway to richer discipleship in Christ. Perhaps couples who live out their relationships to Christ together, as Pentecostal and Catholic wife and husband, might offer our faith communities the riches of their experiences to give even greater depth to dialogues like this one.

[54] Available at http://www.laityfamilylife.va/content/dam/laityfamilylife/amoris-laetitia/OrientamentiCatecumenatomatrimoniale/Catechumenal%20Pathways_ENG.pdf.

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Lex Orandi, Lex Serviendi

Roman Catholic Theology of Ordained Ministry in Select Texts from the Rites of Ordination

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Abstract

This article will explore the understanding of ordained ministry within the Roman Catholic Church. The article proceeds by examining the prayer and homily from the rites of ordination for Bishops, Priests, and Deacons in order to observe the biblical foundations of ordained ministry, the role of ordained ministry within salvation history, the functional and ontological dimensions of ordained ministry, the living out of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and the role of the Holy Spirit in ordained ministry.

Introduction

One of the important tenets of recent Roman Catholic liturgical theology is the principle *lex orandi, lex credendi*.[1] This adage, whose origin can be traced back to Prosper of Aquitaine in the fifth century, can be loosely translated as, "The law of praying [is] the law of believing." Since the time of the liturgical renewal called for by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council (1962–1965), the axiom *lex orandi, lex credendi* has contributed to a fuller appreciation of the theological meaning and significance of the liturgical rites by which the Christian faithful are sanctified by God and offer themselves as a spiritual worship to God (cf. Rom 12:1).[2]

More recently, some liturgical theologians have expanded the expression *lex orandi, lex credendi* to include a third element, *lex vivendi*, or "the law of living."[3] This extension is meant to highlight the intrinsic connection between what the faithful pray,

[1] For a recent and thorough discussion of this principle and its application in the revised rites after Vatican II, see Kevin W. Irwin, *Context and Text: A Method for Liturgical Theology*, rev. ed. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2018), 3–60.

[2] For two examples of this, see Aidan Kavanaugh, *On Liturgical Theology* (New York: Pueblo, 1984); and David W. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima: What is Liturgical Theology?* 2nd ed. (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2004).

[3] Irwin, *Context and Text*, 81.

believe, and live out. In the spirit of that fuller recognition of the links between worship, belief, and life, this article will examine certain texts from the rites of ordination currently in use in the Roman Catholic Church, in order to enumerate some aspects of current Roman Catholic theology of ordained ministry, or what can be called the *lex serviendi* or "the law of serving."

The rites of ordination of a Bishop, of Priests, and of Deacons[4] are rich and complex liturgical celebrations, containing both ancient elements and recent adaptations.[5] Because these liturgical rites contain so much material that is theologically significant, this article will limit itself to examining and commenting on two elements contained in each of these rites: 1) the model homily and 2) the prayer of ordination. These liturgical texts are particularly important for understanding the nature and purpose of ordained ministry in the Catholic Church.

Following the structure of *De Ordinatione Episcopi, Presbyterorum et Diaconorum*[6] (*Ordination of a Bishop, of Priests, and of Deacons*), the texts from the rite of ordination of a Bishop will be examined first, followed by those from the rite of ordination of Priests, and then the texts from the rite of ordination of Deacons. After the examination of all these texts, five brief observations will be offered on the theology of ordained ministry that emerges from them. These observations will consider the biblical foundations of ordained ministry, the role of ordained ministry within salvation history, the functional and ontological dimensions of ordained ministry, the living out of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and the role of the Holy Spirit in ordained ministry.

The Rite of Ordination of a Bishop

The Homily

The ritual for the ordination of a Bishop indicates that, immediately after the proclamation of the Gospel, which "constitutes the high point of the Liturgy of the

[4] In order to be consistent with the current official English editions of liturgical books, references to Bishops, Priests, and Deacons will be capitalized. Also, the Latin edition of the ritual uses the term "presbyteri" (presbyters) in reference to the second rank of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, while the current official English translations uses the term "Priests." Accordingly, this article will use the term "Priest(s)," rather than "Presbyter(s)."

[5] Antonio Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti, vol. 6, Ordine* (Rome: Pontificia Università della Santa Croce, 2010), 111–248. English translations are mine.

[6] *De Ordinatione Episcopi, Presbyterorum et Diaconorum, editio typica altera* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1989). English translations from *Ordination of a Bishop, of Priests, and of Deacons* (Washington: USCCB Publishing, 2021). Hereafter, *OBPD*. When referencing ritual books, the citations given refer to paragraph or section numbers, rather than page numbers.

Word,"[7] the hymn *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, or another suitable hymn, is sung.[8] Then the candidate to be ordained Bishop (Bishop-elect) is presented to the ordaining Bishop. The ordaining Bishop then asks that the mandate from the Apostolic See authorizing the ordination be read. After the reading, all the assembled give their assent to the ordination of the Bishop-elect.[9]

It is then that the ordaining Bishop preaches the homily. Basing himself on the readings from Scripture that have already been proclaimed, the ordaining Bishop may preach a homily that he has composed, he may use the model homily included in the ritual book, or he may combine parts of the model homily with his own words.[10]

The model homily proposed (see Appendix One[11]) is inspired by the teaching on the episcopate proposed in paragraphs 19–27 of the dogmatic constitution *Lumen Gentium* of the Second Vatican Council.[12] The homily is presented in six paragraphs, each developing some aspect of the nature and purpose of episcopal ministry.

The first paragraph grounds episcopal ministry in the ministry of Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the mission of the apostles. It states that the purpose of the apostles' ministry was the preaching of the Gospel and the gathering of all into one flock, whom they were to sanctify and govern. The apostles chose successors to continue their ministry, laying hands on them so that they might also receive the gift of the Spirit. Through this gift of the Holy Spirit, Bishops receive "the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders."

The second paragraph indicates that, through the person and ministry of the Bishop, surrounded by his Priests, Christ himself is present to the faithful, continually proclaiming the gospel, administering the sacraments, gathering new members, and leading the faithful on their pilgrim journey to the Kingdom. The third paragraph encourages the faithful to receive and honor the Bishop-elect "as a minister of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God." The task entrusted to the new Bishop is described as "bearing witness to the truth of the Gospel and the ministry of the Spirit and of justice."

In the fourth paragraph, the ordaining Bishop directly addresses the Bishop-elect, reminding him that he has been chosen by the Lord, in order to act on behalf of human beings "in those things that pertain to God." He goes on to say, "For the title of Bishop

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[7] *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 60.

[8] *OBPD*, 35.

[9] *OBPD*, 38.

[10] *OBPD*, 39.

[11] *OBPD*, 39. In each section, the citation from *OBPD* will be footnoted in the reference to the corresponding appendix only. To avoid unnecessary repetition, quotations from the same reference in a particular section will be marked with quotations marks, but they will not include a separate footnote.

[12] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 128–29.

signifies a task, not an honor; a Bishop must strive to benefit others rather than to lord it over them." In the fifth paragraph, the ordaining Bishop exhorts the Bishop-elect to "be a faithful steward, moderator, and guardian of the mysteries of Christ." The Bishop-elect is also urged to "be mindful always of the Good Shepherd, who knows his sheep and is known by them, and who did not hesitate to lay down his life for them."

In the sixth paragraph of the homily, the Bishop-elect is exhorted to have the love of a father and brother for "all those whom God places in [his] care," especially Priests and Deacons, who are his "co-workers in the ministry of Christ." In addition, he should have a special love for the most vulnerable, should collaborate with all the faithful, and should care "for those who are not yet gathered into the one fold of Christ." He is reminded that as a member of the College of Bishops, he should have a concern for all the Churches and for "the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit places [him] to govern the Church of God." He is to do this "in the name of the Father whose image [he] represent[s] in the Church; and in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, whose office of Teacher, Priest, and Shepherd [he] will discharge, and in the name of the Holy Spirit, who enlivens the Church of Christ and, by his power, strengthens us in our weakness."

The Prayer of Ordination

The General Introduction of *Ordination of a Bishop, of Priests, and of Deacons* states, "Sacred Ordination is conferred by the Bishop's laying on of hands and the Prayer of Ordination by which the Bishop blesses God and calls upon the gift of the Holy Spirit for the fulfillment of ministry."[13] As a result, the Prayer of Ordination is theologically significant for understanding the nature and purpose of ordained ministry in the Catholic Church.

After the homily, the Bishop-elect makes a series of promises with regard to the ministry he is about to assume. The ordaining Bishop then leads all those gathered in the Litany of Supplication, praying for an outpouring of God's grace on the Bishop-elect. The litany concludes with a prayer offered by the ordaining Bishop. Then the Bishop-elect kneels and all the Bishops present lay hands, one by one, without saying anything. When the laying of hands is concluded, two Deacons hold an open Book of the Gospels over the head of the Bishop-elect.[14]

Then, with all Bishops standing near the ordaining Bishop, the latter extends his hands and says or sings the Prayer of Ordination (see Appendix Two[15]). The current Prayer of Ordination is based on the very ancient prayer of ordination contained in the

[13] *OBPD*, 6.

[14] *OBPD,* 40–46.

[15] *OBPD*, 47.

Traditio Apostolica, with some minor stylistic changes.[16] The structure of the prayer is that of invocation, anamnesis, epiclesis, and doxology, which is typical of important liturgical prayers.[17]

The prayer begins with the invocation of God the Father, "amplified by two appositions and two relative clauses."[18] The amplifications are all taken from Old and New Testament texts and make general references to the attributes of God. The invocation grounds the entire prayer in the revelation of the mystery of God and of his salvific will. The invocation is further amplified and concretized by the anamnesis, which, in five subordinate clauses, recalls specific events in salvation history in which God provided for the needs of his people through ministers.

Then the ordaining Bishop, together with the other Bishops present, says the epiclesis of the prayer. They ask that God "pour forth upon this chosen one the power that is from you, the governing Spirit, whom you gave to your beloved Son Jesus Christ and whom he gave to the holy Apostles, who established the Church in each place as your sanctuary, to the glory and unfailing praise of your name." These words are essential for the validity of the ordination and highlight that the ministry of the new Bishop is grounded in the Spirit given to Christ and the Apostles. What is asked of God in these words is the bestowal of the Spirit upon the Bishop-elect.[19]

The epiclesis continues with a series of intercessions, which the ordaining Bishop alone says. These intercessions ask for the grace necessary for the new Bishop to exercise faithfully the various aspects of episcopal ministry. These aspects include nourishing God's flock and the exercise of the High Priesthood without reproach, exercising his new authority with meekness and purity of heart.

The whole prayer ends with a doxology, asking that all that has been asked of God the Father may be brought about through Christ and "with the Holy Spirit in the holy Church." That last part highlights what had been mentioned in the homily, namely, that the ordination is not for the sake or honor of the new Bishop, but for the good of the Church and the glory of God.[20]

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[16] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 140–41.

[17] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 142.

[18] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 143.

[19] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 146.

[20] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 151.

The Homily

The ritual for the ordination of Priests indicates that, immediately after the proclamation of the Gospel, the candidates be presented to the ordaining Bishop. The ordaining Bishop then asks that testimony be offered regarding the worthiness of the candidates, and a Priest offers the necessary testimony. The Bishop then accepts the testimony and chooses the candidates for ordination. All the assembled then give their assent to the ordination of the candidates.[21]

As was the case with the rite of ordination for a Bishop, the ordaining Bishop then preaches the homily, either of his own composition, the model one offered in the ritual book, or a combination of the two. The model homily (see Appendix Three[22]) includes themes and expressions taken from *Lumen Gentium,* 28, as well as the decree *Presbyterorum ordinis*, on the ministry and life of Priests, of the Second Vatican Council.[23] It is presented in nine paragraphs, which highlight various aspects of priestly ministry.

The model homily "first affirms the common royal priesthood of all the baptized people of God, relying on 1 Peter 2:9,"[24] but then affirms that "our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, chose certain disciples to exercise in his name" the priestly office in the Church. This refers above all to Bishops, who share in Christ's office of Teacher, Priest, and Shepherd, but that "Priests are established as co-workers of the Order of Bishops with whom they are joined in the priestly office and with whom they are called to the service of the People of God."

In the third paragraph, the homily explains that the candidates are "to be ordained to the Priesthood in the Order of the Presbyterate," and that "[b]y the priestly ministry, [Christ's] Body, that is the Church, is built up and grows into a holy temple, the People of God." The next paragraph indicates that, through ordination, the candidates will "be configured to Christ the eternal High Priest and joined to the Priesthood of the Bishops," as Priests of the New Testament. As such, they will have the responsibility of preaching the Gospel, shepherding God's people, and celebrating the Eucharist and the other sacraments.[25]

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[21] *OBPD*, 121–22.

[22] *OBPD*, 123.

[23] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 184.

[24] Paul Turner, *Present for God's Call: An Overview of the Rites of Institution and Ordination* (Chicago: Liturgical Training Publications, 2023), 174.

[25] *OBPD*, 123.

As was the case with the homily for the ordination of a Bishop, the ordaining Bishop then addresses the candidates directly. In this case, the Bishop explains how, in Christ, they will exercise the office of teaching, sanctifying, and governing. In each case, the candidates are exhorted to draw ever closer to God and to exercise these functions for the good of the People of God. They are urged to meditate constantly on God's Word, so as to "believe what [they] read, teach what [they] believe, and practice what [they] teach." In addition, in celebrating the sacred mysteries, they are to strive to understand what they do and to imitate what they celebrate, striving "to put to death whatever is sinful within [them] and to walk in newness of life." Finally, they are urged "to gather the faithful together into one family, so that [they] may lead them to God the Father, through Christ, and in the Holy Spirit," always following the example of the Good Shepherd.

The Prayer of Ordination

As was the case in the ordination of a Bishop, after the homily, the candidates to be ordained Priests make a series of promises regarding the ministry they are about to assume. The ordaining Bishop then leads all those gathered in the Litany of Supplication, praying for an outpouring of God's grace on the men to be ordained. The litany concludes with a prayer offered by the ordaining Bishop. Since the essential elements for the valid conferral of the Sacrament of Holy Orders are the laying on of hands and the prayer of ordination, the ordaining Bishop lays hands on each of the candidates in silence, followed by the Priests present, who also lay hands on the candidates in silence.

Then the ordaining Bishop, with the Priests standing alongside him, prays the Prayer of Ordination (see Appendix Four[26]) with outstretched hands.[27] The text of the prayer is substantially the same as has been used in the Roman Church since ancient times, with the only modification being the addition of a request that their preaching may reach the ends of the earth.[28] The prayer "relies heavily on biblical testimony"[29] regarding the role of Priests and is structured in four sections: an invocation, an anamnesis, an epiclesis, and a doxology.

The prayer begins by asking the Father to draw near and then refers to certain attributes of God. It mentions that God, "by the power of the Holy Spirit, in order to form a priestly people, establish[ed] among them ministers of Christ [his] Son in various orders." It then proceeds to the anamnesis, recalling God's action in the Old

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[26] *OBPD*, 131.

[27] *OBPD*, 130.

[28] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 200.

[29] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 181.

Testament, including the appointing of Moses and Aaron, the sending of the Spirit on seventy elders to help Moses in his ministry, and the establishment of the Levitical priesthood.

The anamnesis then moves from consideration of priesthood in the Old Testament to that of the New Testament. It recalls, first of all, the sending of Jesus into the world as "Apostle and High Priest of our confession," who, "[t]hrough the Holy Spirit, [. . .] offered himself unblemished to [the Father] and made his Apostles [. . .] sharers in his mission." The prayer then speaks of "companions" whom God gave to the apostles "to proclaim and carry out the work of salvation through all the world."

Then, as Paul Turner explains, "the bishop moves to the purpose of his prayer. Having recalled how God has appointed leaders in both Old and New Testaments, the bishop turns his attention to contemporary needs. As Moses in his weakness required helpers, so does the Church today."[30] The bishop prays the sacramental formula, which is essential for a valid ordination: "Grant, we pray, almighty Father, to these your servants, the dignity of the Priesthood; renew deep within them the Spirit of Holiness; may they hold the office second in order, received from you, O God, and by the example of their manner of life may they inspire right conduct." Miralles notes that "the fact that in the anamnesis the action of the Spirit in the sacrifice of the Cross is recalled makes the epiclesis more meaningful: the Holy Spirit will make the elected participants in the priesthood of Christ exercised on Golgotha."[31]

The last part of the sacramental formulas leads directly to the next part of the prayer, which describes the various ministerial functions of Priests.[32] They are called to be co-workers of Bishops in preaching, guided by "the grace of the Holy Spirit." Together with Bishops, they are to be "faithful stewards of [God's] mysteries," so that the faithful may be renewed by Baptism, refreshed by the Eucharist, reconciled through Penance, and raised up through the Anointing of the Sick. Furthermore, they are to join Bishops in "imploring [God's] mercy for the people entrusted to them and for the whole world."

Before concluding the prayer of ordination, the Bishop indicates that "if God grants this prayer, all the nations may become one people in Christ, a hope that Paul articulated in Romans 11:25."[33] Finally, the Bishop offers a Trinitarian doxology that highlights the mediation of Christ.[34]

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[30] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 182.

[31] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 207.

[32] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 207.

[33] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 182.

[34] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 209.

The Homily

After the proclamation of the Gospel, the rite of ordination of Deacons proceeds similarly as that of Priests, with the presentation of the candidates to the ordaining Bishop, the asking for and giving of testimony regarding the worthiness of the candidates, and the election of the candidates by the Bishop and the assent of the assembly.[35] The ordaining Bishop then preaches the homily, which, as was the case in the two rites already examined, he can compose himself, avail himself of the model homily (see Appendix Five[36]) included in the ritual book, or he can combine parts of the model homily with his own words.

The model homily contained in the ritual book has characteristics similar to those for the ordination of a Bishop and of Priests, with the exception that the one for Deacons also takes into account that some men ordained Deacons are married, while others commit themselves to celibacy.[37] The homily begins with six paragraphs that are applicable to all ordinations of Deacons, then provides three alternative conclusions, depending on whether the group of ordinands includes married and unmarried men, only unmarried men, or only married men.

The homily begins by greeting those present and inviting all to "consider carefully the nature of the ministerial rank to which [the elect] shall be raised." It then "assures all that the Holy Spirit will strengthen these candidates."[38] The homily then says that Deacons "help the Bishop and his Priests in the ministries of the word, of the altar, and of charity, showing themselves to be servants of all." It then expands on the three-fold ministry of word, altar, and charity.

In describing the ministry of the altar, the homily outlines the principal roles of Deacons in the celebration of the Eucharist. Turner observes, "The bishop probably explains [service at Mass] first because the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life."[39] In the next paragraph, the homily explains that "[a]t the Bishop's direction it will be [the Deacons'] duty to exhort believers and unbelievers alike and instruct them in holy doctrine." Another part of their ministry of the word is "to preside over public prayer, administer Baptism, assist at and bless Marriages, bring Viaticum to the dying, and conduct funeral rites." While some of these latter functions

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[35] *OBPD*, 197–98.

[36] *OBPD*, 199.

[37] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 224.

[38] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 126.

[39] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 127.

are connected to the liturgy and the ministry of the altar, the homily "envisions ministry of the Word through instruction and through serving as a leader of prayer outside the celebration of Mass."[40]

The next paragraph focuses on the Deacons' ministry of charity. It begins by asserting that "Deacons derive this consecrated mission of charity directly from the same imposition of hands that binds them more closely to the altar."[41] It goes on to say that "they will carry out a ministry of charity in the name of the Bishop or pastor." It calls on the candidates to carry out the ministry of charity "in such a way that [others] recognize them as disciples of him who did not come to be served but to serve."

The next two paragraphs elaborate on the idea of the example of the Lord Jesus as essential for diaconal ministry. The Bishop, directly addressing those to be ordained, says, "The Lord has given you an example: that, just as he himself has done, so also you should do." He goes on to say that "as Deacons, that is, as ministers of Jesus Christ," they should "serve others with joy as [they] would serve the Lord." He then warns them to "look upon all impurity and greed as the serving of false gods."

It is at that point in the model homily that, as was noted above, the ritual book offers three alternatives, depending on the marital state of those to be ordained. "[I]n reality, there is not a lot of difference [between the three alternatives] because, to the married elect it makes reference to what is common to all and to the celibate ones only a few appropriate references are added."[42] Turner notes, "[t]he conclusion of the suggested homily is the same for all candidates, regardless of their marital status. They are to be planted and grounded in faith."[43] They are urged to live and serve "without blemish and beyond reproach before God and others," holding fast to "the mystery of faith with a clear conscience." They are "to express the Word of God in speech and deed so that the Spirit may bring all people to life"[44] and "to help people become a pure offering to God."[45] If they live and serve in this way, they can hope, on the last day, to hear the Lord say to them, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord."[46]

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[40] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 127.

[41] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 127.

[42] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 225.

[43] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 128.

[44] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 129.

[45] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 129.

[46] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 129.

The Prayer of Ordination

As with the rites of ordination of both a Bishop and Priests, after the homily, the rite of ordination of Deacons proceeds with a series of promises regarding the ministry they are about to assume, and the ordaining Bishop laying hands on the candidates. Unlike those other rites, however, no other clergy lay hands on the ordinands.[47]

The Bishop then prays the prayer of ordination (see Appendix Six[48]). The prayer is based on an ancient prayer for the ordination of Deacons, which has been continually used by the Roman Church since the sixteenth century.[49] The current prayer has been modified, but preserves that original structure of the prayer, namely, an introductory invocation, an anamnesis, an epiclesis, and a doxology.[50] As is the case with the two other prayers of ordination, this prayer "abounds in biblical allusions."[51]

The invocation is similar to the prayer of ordination for Priests, asking God to draw near and then indicating some divine attributes. It then recalls that God is the one "who apportion[s] every order and assign[s] every office." It also mentions that God "make[s] due provision for every age, through your Word, your Power, and your Wisdom, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord."

The anamnesis continues by noting how God has provided for the Church, which is "drawn together in the diversity of her members, and united by a wondrous bond through the Holy Spirit," so that it can "grow and spread forth to build up a new temple." The prayer then recalls the service of the sons of Levi in the tabernacle. It then mentions that "in the first days of your Church, your Son's Apostles, led by the Holy Spirit, appointed seven men of good repute to help them in the daily ministry." It also notes that the seven were entrusted this ministry "[b]y prayer and the laying on of hands."

Then, as Turner notes, "[h]aving acknowledged these deeds that God has done, the bishop then makes his request. He asks God to pour out the sevenfold Holy Spirit upon these men."[52] This epicletic request is not made for the benefit of those being ordained, but so that they can "carry out faithfully the work of the ministry." The Bishop goes on to name the evangelical virtues that should abound in new Deacons: "unfeigned love, concern for the sick and the poor, unassuming authority, the purity of innocence, and the observance of spiritual discipline." This is followed by a further description of how they should conduct themselves. The Bishop asks "that their

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[47] *OBPD*, 207.

[48] *OBPD*, 207.

[49] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 236.

[50] Miralles, *Teologia Liturgica dei Sacramenti*, 236.

[51] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 136.

[52] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 136.

conduct may reflect God's commandments, thus inspiring others."[53] Thus, by following the example of Christ, "who came not to be served but to serve," the Deacons can hope to "be found worthy to reign with [Christ] in heaven."

The whole prayer ends with the traditional doxology of Roman prayers. Then, the faithful assent to the prayer and make it their own by responding, "Amen."

Observations on the Theology of Ordained Ministry Suggested by the Texts Examined

This cursory examination of the model homilies and prayers of ordination contained in the ritual ordination of a Bishop, of Priests, and of Deacons has tried to highlight the rich and developed theological understanding of ordained ministry of the Roman Catholic Church. Much more could be said about these texts, as well as to the other elements and texts that are part of ordination liturgies. Given the limits of this article, the following observations are offered to encourage and foster dialogue regarding the Roman Catholic theology of ordained ministry.

1. *Roman Catholic theology of ordained ministry is deeply grounded in Scripture*. As was noted in the various sections of this article, the model homilies and prayers examined are thoroughly imbued with scriptural references, including allusions from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. This suggests that any consideration of ordained ministry in the Catholic Church must consider the biblical witness regarding the calling of certain individuals by God to serve in particular offices and ministries. The rites of ordination see in certain ministerial roles of the Old Testament prefigurements of Church offices and ministries established by Christ and the apostles.

2. *Roman Catholic theology understands ordained ministry within the context of salvation history*. Connected to the grounding of ordained ministry within Scripture, the texts examined, especially the prayers of ordination, situate ordained ministry within the larger context of God's relationship with humanity as revealed and lived out in salvation history. Ordained ministry is seen as a way in which God continues to instruct, sanctify, and govern the People of God. In a special way, ordained ministry is a sacramental continuation of the ministry of Jesus Christ, who came into the world to do the will of his Father and continues that work, in part, through those who are ordained. In other words, the roles of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon have their origin in God's will for the building up of the Body of Christ and the salvation of the world.

3. *The Roman Catholic view is that ordained ministry is not only a functional reality, but also an ontological one*. The texts examined in this article make clear that the function of ordained ministers is to continue the mission of the Church in the world

[53] Turner, *Present for God's Call*, 137.

and build up the Body of Christ. But they also indicate that ordained ministers do this not merely as deputed functionaries, but as sacramental participants and embodiments of Christ. The model homily for the ordination of Bishop says that Christ himself is present among the faithful "in the Bishop surrounded by his Priests."[54] The homily for the ordination of Priests says that the candidates "are to be configured to Christ the eternal High Priest and joined to the Priesthood of the Bishops."[55] It also speaks of them as being "consecrated" to preach, govern, and celebrate divine worship. The homily for the ordination of Deacons states, "Consecrated by the laying on of hands passed down from the Apostles and bound more closely to the service of the altar, they will carry out the ministry of charity in the name of the Bishop or pastor."[56] Through their consecration and configuration, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons make Christ the Teacher, Priest, Shephard, and Servant sacramentally present to the Church and the world.

4. *The sacramental configuration and consecration to Christ calls for a lived response from those in Holy Orders*. The model homilies and prayers of ordination make clear that, in being configured and consecrated to Christ, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons assume a particular responsibility of living and acting in a way that incarnates the example of Christ the Good Shepherd. It is the example of Christ, "who knows his sheep and is known by them, and who did not hesitate to lay down his life for them," [57] that Bishops should strive to live out in their ministry. For their part, Priests are called to "[k]eep always before [their] eyes the example of the Good Shepherd, who did not come to be served but to serve and who came to seek and to save what was lost."[58] Those called to be Deacons are instructed, "The Lord has given you an example: that, just as he himself has done, so also you should do."[59]

5. *The action and grace of the Holy Spirit is essential for the ordination and the living out of the sacrament of Holy Orders*. One thing that all the model homilies and prayers of ordination emphasize is the role of the Holy Spirit in the actual ordination and in the ministry of the ordained. All the homilies make mention of the action of the Spirit in the establishment of the three orders of the sacrament. This is part of the way in which the Spirit builds up the Body of Christ that is the Church. The anamnetic sections of the prayers of ordination for both Priests and Deacons also make mention of the power and guidance of the Spirit in the establishment of those two orders. Of particular

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[54] *OBPD*, 39.

[55] *OBPD*, 123.

[56] *OBPD*, 199.

[57] *OBPD*, 39.

[58] *OBPD*, 39, 123.

[59] *OBPD*, 199.

importance is that all three sacramental formulas, which are epicletic in nature, make explicit requests for the outpouring of the Spirit on those being ordained, so that they may have the necessary share in the mission and power of Christ. Finally, the homilies and prayers of ordination assert the need for the ongoing grace of the Spirit, so that those in Holy Orders may fulfill their ministry in accordance with the will of God and the need of the Church.

Conclusion

This review of the model homilies and prayers of ordination contained in the ritual ordination of a Bishop, of Priests, and of Deacons has sought to examine how these liturgical texts can help identify dimensions of theological reflection on the nature and purpose of ordained ministry in the Roman Catholic Church today. The observations offered at the end of the article seek to propose some fundamental points that can be discerned from the texts that have been examined, in the hope that they can serve as a starting point for a thoughtful dialogue on ordained ministry as understood by the Roman Catholic Church.

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Appendix One: Model Homily for the Ordination of a Bishop

Dearly beloved, consider carefully the nature of the rank in the Church to which our brother is to be raised. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who was sent from the Father to redeem the human race, himself sent twelve Apostles into the world. Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, they were to preach the Gospel, and gathering all peoples into one flock, they were to sanctify and govern them. In order that this ministry might remain until the end of time, the Apostles in turn chose helpers for themselves. Through the laying on of hands, they passed on to them the gift of the Holy Spirit that they themselves received from Christ. In this way, the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders is conferred. Thus, the tradition handed down from the beginning, through the unbroken succession of Bishops, is preserved from generation to generation, and the work of the Savior continues and grows even to our own times.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is High Priest forever, is himself present among you in the Bishop surrounded by his Priests. For through the ministry of the Bishop, Christ himself never ceases to proclaim the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments of faith to those who believe. Through the fatherly office of the Bishop, Christ himself adds and gathers new members to his Body. Through the wisdom and prudence of the Bishop, Christ himself leads you on your earthly pilgrimage toward eternal happiness.

Gladly and gratefully, therefore, please receive our brother whom we, as Bishops, admit into our College through the laying on of hands. Honor him as a minister of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God. To him have been entrusted both the task of bearing witness to the truth of the Gospel and the ministry of the Spirit and of justice. Remember the words that Christ spoke to the Apostles: "Whoever listens to you listens to me, and whoever rejects you rejects me, and whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me."

And now, dear brother, you have been chosen by the Lord. Consider that you have been taken from among the people and appointed to act on their behalf in those things that pertain to God. For the title of Bishop signifies a task, not an honor; a Bishop must strive to benefit others rather than to lord it over them. For in keeping with the precept of the Master, let the greater among you be as the younger, and the leader be as one who serves. Preach in season and out of season; reprove with all patience and sound teaching. Whenever you pray and offer sacrifice for the people committed to your care, seek with zeal and devotion to obtain an abundance of grace for them from the fullness of Christ's holiness.

In the Church entrusted to you, be a faithful steward, moderator and guardian of the mysteries of Christ. As one chosen by the Father to govern his family, be mindful always of the Good Shepherd, who knows his sheep and is known by them, and who did not hesitate to lay down his life for them.

With the charity of a father and brother, love all those whom God places in your care, especially the Priests and Deacons, who are your co-workers in the ministry of Christ; but love also the poor and the weak, foreigners and strangers. Exhort the faithful to work with you in your apostolic labors; do not refuse to listen willingly to them. Never tire of caring for those who are not yet gathered into the one fold of Christ; for they too are entrusted to you in the Lord. Never forget that you are joined to the College of Bishops in the Catholic Church, which is unified by the bond of charity; and so, you should have a constant concern for all the Churches and gladly come to the aid of Churches in need. Keep watch, therefore, over the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit places you to govern the Church of God: in the name of the Father, whose image you represent in the Church; and in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, whose office of Teacher, Priest and Shepherd you will discharge; and in the name of the Holy Spirit, who enlivens the Church of Christ and, by his power, strengthens us in our weakness.

Appendix Two: Prayer of Ordination of a Bishop

God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Father of mercies and God of all consolation, who dwell on high and look upon the lowly, who know all things before they come to be: it is you who established order in your Church through your gracious word, who from the beginning predestined a righteous people born of Abraham, who instituted rulers and priests and did not leave your sanctuary without ministry, who from the beginning of the world have been pleased to be glorified in those you have chosen.

NOW POUR FORTH UPON THIS CHOSEN ONE THE POWER THAT IS FROM YOU, THE GOVERNING SPIRIT, WHOM YOU GAVE TO YOUR BELOVED SON JESUS CHRIST, AND WHOM HE GAVE TO THE HOLY APOSTLES, WHO ESTABLISHED THE CHURCH IN EACH PLACE AS YOUR SANCTUARY, TO THE GLORY AND UNFAILING PRAISE OF YOUR NAME.

Grant, O Father, knower of all hearts, that this your servant whom you have chosen for the Episcopate may nourish your holy flock and may without reproach exercise before you the High Priesthood, serving you night and day; that he may unceasingly cause your face to shine upon us and offer the gifts of your Holy Church. Grant that by the strength of the Spirit of the high priesthood he may have authority to forgive sins according to your command; that he may apportion offices according to your precept and loosen every bond according to the authority you gave the Apostles; may he be pleasing to you in meekness and purity of heart, offering a sweet fragrance to you through your Son Jesus Christ, through whom glory and power and honor are yours, with the Holy Spirit in the holy Church both now and forever and ever. Amen.

Appendix Three: Model Homily for the Ordination of Several Priests

Dearly beloved; since these men, our sons and your relatives and friends, are soon to be advanced to the Order of Priests, consider carefully the nature of the ministerial rank in the Church to which they shall be raised.

Indeed, the entire holy People of God is made a royal priesthood in Christ. Nevertheless, our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, chose certain of his disciples to exercise in his name, on behalf of the human race, a public priestly office in the Church; for Christ, who was sent from the Father, himself in turn sent the Apostles into the world, that through them and their successors, the Bishops, he might exercise without ceasing his own office of Teacher, Priest, and Shepherd. In addition, Priests are established as co-workers of the Order of Bishops with whom they are joined in the priestly office and with whom they are called to the service of the People of God.

Now that mature deliberation has taken place, these brothers are to be ordained to the Priesthood in the Order of the presbyterate, that they may serve Christ the Teacher, Priest, and Shepherd. By the priestly ministry, his Body, that is the Church, is built up and grows into a holy temple, the People of God.

These men are to be configured to Christ the eternal High Priest and joined to the Priesthood of the Bishops; they will be consecrated as true Priests of the New Testament, in order to preach the Gospel, shepherd God's people, and celebrate divine worship, especially in the Lord's sacrifice.

Now, beloved sons, you are to be raised to the Order of the Priesthood, and for your part, you will exercise in Christ the Teacher the sacred office of teaching. Impart to everyone the Word of God that you yourselves have received with joy. Meditating on the law of the Lord, see that you believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach.

And so, let your teaching be nourishment for the People of God, and let the holiness of your life be a pleasing fragrance for Christ's faithful, so that you may build up by word and example that house which is the Church of God.

You will also exercise in Christ the office of sanctifying; for by your ministry the spiritual sacrifice of the faithful will be made perfect: in the celebration of the mysteries, it is united to the Sacrifice of Christ, which is offered, through your hands and in union with them, in an unbloody manner on the altar. Understand, therefore, what you do, and imitate what you celebrate; as celebrants of the mystery of the Lord's Death and Resurrection, may you strive to put to death whatever is sinful within you and to walk in newness of life.

Remember, when you gather men and women into the People of God through Baptism, and in the name of Christ and the Church, forgive sins in the Sacrament of Penance, when you comfort the sick with holy oil and celebrate the sacred rites when

you offer praise and thanksgiving through the hours of the day and pray not only for the People of God but for the whole world: always remember that you have been taken from among the people and appointed on their behalf in those things that pertain to God. Fulfill, therefore, the ministry of Christ the Priest with abiding joy and genuine love. Seek not your own concerns but those of Jesus Christ.

Finally, dear sons, united with your Bishop and subject to him, fulfill the office of Christ, head and shepherd, to the best of your ability. Strive to gather the faithful together into one family, so that you may lead them to God the Father, through Christ, and in the Holy Spirit. Keep always before your eyes the example of the Good Shepherd, who did not come to be served but to serve and who came to seek and to save what was lost.

Appendix Four: Prayer of Ordination of Several Priests

Draw near, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, author of human dignity and bestower of all graces, through whom all things progress, through whom everything is made firm, who, by the power of the Holy Spirit, in order to form a priestly people, establish among them ministers of Christ your Son in various orders.

Already in the earlier covenant there arose offices instituted by mystical rites: so that when you had set Moses and Aaron over your people to govern and sanctify them, you chose men next in order and dignity to join them and assist in their work.

Thus in the desert, you instilled the spirit of Moses in the minds of seventy wise men; with them as helpers he more easily governed your people.

So too, over the sons of Aaron you poured an abundant share of their father's fullness, that the number of priests prescribed by the Law might be sufficient for the sacrifices of the tabernacle, which were a shadow of the good things to come.

But in these last days, holy Father, you sent your Son into the world, Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.

Through the Holy Spirit, he offered himself unblemished to you and made his Apostles, who were consecrated in the truth, sharers in his mission; to them you added companions to proclaim and carry out the work of salvation through all the world.

Now, we pray, O Lord, provide also for our weakness these helpers whom we need for the exercise of the Apostolic Priesthood.

GRANT, WE PRAY, ALMIGHTY FATHER, TO THESE YOUR SERVANTS THE DIGNITY OF THE PRIESTHOOD: RENEW DEEP WITHIN THEM THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS; MAY THEY HOLD THE OFFICE SECOND IN ORDER, RECEIVED FROM YOU, O GOD, AND BY THE EXAMPLE OF THEIR MANNER OF LIFE MAY THEY INSPIRE RIGHT CONDUCT.

May they be trustworthy co-workers with our order, so that by their preaching and through the grace of the Holy Spirit, the words of the Gospel may bear fruit in human hearts and reach even to the ends of the earth.

Together with us, may they be faithful stewards of your mysteries, so that your people may be renewed through the cleansing waters of rebirth and refreshed from your altar, so that sinners may be reconcile and the sick raised up.

May they be joined to us, Lord, in imploring your mercy for the people entrusted to them and for the whole world.

Thus, may the full number of the nations, gathered together in Christ, become your one people, brought to perfection in your kingdom.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

Appendix Five: Model Homily for the Ordination of Several Deacons

Dearly beloved brothers and sisters: since these men, our sons and your relatives and friends, are soon to be advanced to the Order of Deacons, consider carefully the nature of the ministerial rank to which they shall be raised.

Strengthened by the gift of the Holy Spirit, they will help the Bishop and his Priests in the ministries of the word, of the altar, and of charity, showing themselves to be servants of all. As ministers of the altar, they will proclaim the Gospel, prepare the sacrifice, and distribute the Body and Blood of the Lord to the faithful.

At the Bishop's direction it will also be their duty to exhort believers and unbelievers alike and instruct them in holy doctrine, to preside over public prayer, administer Baptism, assist at and bless Marriages, bring Viaticum to the dying, and conduct funeral rites.

Consecrated by the laying on of hands passed down from the Apostles and bound more closely to the service of the altar, they will carry out a ministry of charity in the name of the Bishop or pastor. In all these duties, let them act with the help of God in such a way that you recognize them as disciples of him who did not come to be served but to serve.

Now, beloved sons, you are to be raised to the Order of the Diaconate. The Lord has given you an example: that, just as he himself has done, so also you should do.

And so, as Deacons, that is, as ministers of Jesus Christ, who appeared in the midst of the disciples as one who serves, do the will of God in charity from the heart; serve others with joy as you would serve the Lord. Since, in fact, no one can serve two masters, look upon all impurity and greed as the serving of false gods.

Since you present yourselves for the Order of the Diaconate of your own free choice, you must be like those once chosen by the Apostles for the ministry of charity: men of good reputation, full of wisdom and the Holy Spirit.

If both married and unmarried elect are to be ordained, he concludes:

> Those of you who will exercise your ministry in the celibate state must know that celibacy is both a sign of pastoral charity and an incentive to it, as well as a source of spiritual fruitfulness in the world. For, urged on by a sincere love of Christ the Lord and living in this state with total dedication, you will cling more readily to Christ with an undivided heart, you will devote yourselves with greater freedom to the service of God and others, and you will serve single-mindedly the work of spiritual rebirth.
>
> Whether or not you have been called to holy celibacy, be firmly planted and grounded in faith. Show yourselves without blemish and beyond reproach before God and others, as is proper for the ministers of Christ and the stewards of God's mysteries. Do not allow yourselves to be turned away from the hope of the Gospel which you must not only hear but also serve. Hold fast to the mystery of faith with a clear conscience and express by your actions the word of God, which your lips proclaim, so that the Christian people, brought to life by the Spirit, may become a pure offering accepted by God, and so that you yourselves, when you go out to meet the Lord on the last day, may be able to hear him say: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord."

Or, if only unmarried elect are to be ordained, he concludes:

> Since you present yourselves for the Order of the Diaconate of your own free choice, you must be like those once chosen by the Apostles for the ministry of charity: men of good reputation, full of wisdom and the Holy Spirit.
>
> You will exercise your ministry in the celibate state. Celibacy is both a sign of pastoral charity and an incentive to it, as well as a source of spiritual fruitfulness in the world. For, urged on by a sincere love of Christ the Lord and living in this state with total dedication, you will cling more readily to Christ with an undivided heart, you will devote yourselves with greater freedom to the service of God and others, and you will serve single-mindedly the work of spiritual rebirth. Firmly planted and grounded in faith, show yourselves without blemish and beyond reproach before God and others, as is proper for the ministers of Christ and the stewards of God's mysteries. Do not allow yourselves to be turned away from the hope of the Gospel which you must not only hear but also serve. Hold fast to the mystery of faith with a clear conscience and express by your actions the word of God, which your lips proclaim, so that the Christian people, brought to life by the Spirit, may become a pure offering accepted by God, and so that you yourselves, when you go out to meet the Lord on the last day, may be able to hear him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord."

If only married elect are to be ordained, he concludes:

> You must be like those once chosen by the Apostles for the ministry of charity: men of good reputation, full of wisdom and the Holy Spirit. Firmly planted and grounded in faith, you are to show yourselves without blemish and beyond reproach before God and others, as is proper for the ministers of Christ and the stewards of God's mysteries. Do not allow yourselves to be turned away from the hope of the Gospel which you must not only hear but also serve. Hold fast to the mystery of faith with a clear conscience and express by your actions the word of God, which your lips proclaim, so that the Christian people, brought to life by the Spirit, may become a pure offering accepted by God, and so that you yourselves, when you go out to meet the Lord on the last day, may be able to hear him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord."

Appendix Six: Prayer of Ordination of Several Deacons

Draw near, we pray, almighty God, giver of every grace, who apportion every order and assign every office. While remaining unchanged, you make all things new and, setting all things in order with everlasting providence, you make due provision for every age, through your Word, your Power, and your Wisdom, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

You grant that your Church, his Body, adorned with manifold heavenly graces, drawn together in the diversity of her members, and united by a wondrous bond through the Holy Spirit, should grow and spread forth to build up a new temple. As once you chose the sons of Levi to minister in the former tabernacle, so now you establish three ranks of ministers in their sacred offices to serve your name.

Thus, in the first days of your Church, your Son's Apostles, led by the Holy Spirit, appointed seven men of good repute to help them in the daily ministry, so that they might devote themselves more fully to prayer and the preaching of the word. By prayer and the laying on of hands they entrusted to these chosen men the ministry of serving at table.

Look favorably also on these your servants, we pray, O Lord, whom we humbly dedicate to serve at your holy altars in the office of the Diaconate.

SEND FORTH THE HOLY SPIRIT UPON THEM, O LORD, WE PRAY, THAT THEY MAY BE STRENGTHENED BY THE GIFT OF YOUR SEVENFOLD GRACE TO CARRY OUT FAITHFULLY THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY.

May every evangelical virtue abound in them: unfeigned love, concern for the sick and the poor, unassuming authority, the purity of innocence, and the observance of spiritual discipline.

May your precepts shine forth in their conduct, that by the example of their manner of life they may inspire the imitation of your holy people. In offering the witness of a good conscience, may they remain firm and steadfast in Christ, so that,

imitating your Son on earth, who came not to be served but to serve, they may be found worthy to reign with him in heaven.

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

Called

A Pentecostal Theology of Vocation

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Abstract

In this essay, I propose a Pentecostal theology of vocation that extends out of the Full Gospel and prophethood of all believers. Though Pentecostals devote considerable attention to church-related/religious vocations, Pentecostals must reimagine vocational implications for fullness of the Spirit on all believers. All Pentecostals are called to embody the dual impulses of the Fivefold Gospel. They are being saved, sanctified, baptized in the Spirit, healed, and living in eager anticipation of Jesus' return. At the same time, all Pentecostals become saving agents with Christ; they perform holy love; they engage in Spirit-inspired witness; they offer healing balm for a broken world; and they work toward the full consummation of God's kingdom. Prophethood, an extension of Luther's axiom, "priesthood of all believers," concerns the implementation of dreams and visions given by God to the young and old, rich and poor, male and female. Pentecostals live out these vocations daily in their families, workspaces, communities, and churches.

Introduction

> Man, if you gotta ask you'd never know.
>
> — Louis Armstrong

In Pentecostal fashion, I begin with a testimony. In July of 2022, I enjoyed perhaps the most fruitful week of teaching in my life as the morning Bible speaker at Manhattan Beach Family Camp at Pelican Lake in Ninette, Manitoba. I first set foot on that hallowed site as a seven-year-old boy in 1972. Fifty years later, I stood in the "tabernacle" pulpit to address the theme of vocation. The crowd represented a panorama of lifelong friendships that included my childhood and teenage Sunday school teachers, camp counselors, youth leaders, and former pastors. Others had sat under my teaching as a Sunday school teacher, pastor, or college professor. The audience also included several former pastoral colleagues from the Manitoba and Northern Ontario District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. A good number came for the

week specifically to hear me. I knew this crowd intimately. These were my people! For one week, whether I deserved it or not, I was their "boy." I grew up with these folks. They were proud of me. I had clout with this group! They leaned into my story.

I had made roughly forty annual pilgrimages to Manhattan Beach Camp for kids camps, youth camps, and family camps. I had walked the grounds in the shoes of a camper, counselor, pastor, and occasional camp speaker. Camp meetings are integral to a Pentecostal story. From early tent revivals to modern posh campgrounds with rented and private cabins, camp meetings continue to shape Pentecostal lives. Pentecostals cherish intimate encounters with God on such hallowed grounds and around tabernacle altars. Those unable to attend summer camps need not worry because Pentecostals carry "camp meetings" in their satchels. Sunday night services, youth meetings, and prayer services bring camp into local churches. Throughout the calendar year, youth and young adult retreats provide a similar venue. Every Pentecostal experiences camp somewhere.

I grew up in a nominal Pentecostal family. We seldom talked about faith at home, but I committed early to my local church. I followed Jesus from a young age and wanted to serve him "to the full." By my teenage years, my faith served as the compass for my life. As I embraced Pentecostal teaching, I wrestled, like many Pentecostals, with questions around vocation. Pentecostals proclaim boldly "the higher calling" to pastoral and missionary vocations. The plea for candidates was direct and subtle, enticing and haunting, daring and frightening at the same time. If God called you to "the ministry," you were a celebrated candidate, but you dare not respond flippantly. I wanted to serve God to the max, but I could not place my finger on a crisis moment where I heard God's voice. Any Pentecostal insider knows this impassioned rhetoric well.

In my final year of high school, I reeled with anxiety. I had come from a broken home. Through no fault of her own, my mother offered little life direction, particularly concerning higher education. Mom migrated to Canada as a young teenager and never went to high school. My first educational interests centered on biology, math, and a burgeoning subject called computer science. As I pondered public university, I was encouraged—even pressured—to attend Central Pentecostal College in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The college had recently introduced a one-year discipleship program to prepare students in their transition to adulthood and attendance at public university. In 1982, I enrolled for the longest one year of my life. By the end of that first year, I heard everywhere that God was calling me to the ministry. I responded to this call and graduated with a Bachelor of Theology (BTh) in 1986. I married Evelyn, the love of my life, in 1986, and we embarked on another decade of educational adventure. I completed a Master of Divinity (MDiv) among Mennonites at Providence Seminary in Otterburne, Manitoba, and as I became drawn toward higher education, I completed a PhD in Religious Studies at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Along the

way, I pastored for roughly ten years in my native Winnipeg and southern Manitoba. In 2000, Ev and I moved our young family to Springfield, Missouri, where I accepted the position of Professor of New Testament at Evangel University. The rest is history. My call fulfilled! What a relief! What a testimony! I am a poster story for the call to ministry and that of a Bible professor!

I shared this story intimately in front of my camp crowd. Many of the campers knew the highlights of my story until I pivoted to the counter-testimony. I proceeded to say, "If I had known as a teenager or college student what I know now about 'calling,' I would not be where I am today." My audience leaned in. My revelations captivated them. I showered them with an array of statements that I would unpack over the week: "I no longer believe that pastoral and missionary service are God's highest calling"; "I am convinced that people with such a view led me down a path I would otherwise not have chosen"; "I think I fell prey to erroneous teaching." I slowed down and assured my listeners that I was not bitter. I emphasized that they should not feel responsible for my choice. They could hear joy and passion in my storytelling and teaching. I thanked them for their role in my story. I suggested that my story is a classic Pentecostal story. Everyone hears it. Many wrestle with it. Call stories embody a cherished form of Pentecostal testimony.

As part of this counter-testimony, I ask, "Why do Pentecostals seldom hear testimonies of a calling to other vocations?" I believe the traditional narrative has led many Pentecostal believers toward church-related ministry because of a minimalist theology of the call. Some of these folk, like me, have survived and thrived; others stumbled. Added to this, I have a concern for Pentecostal congregants who never receive the call to church-related ministry. Many struggle to understand why they receive no such call, and many more are left with little instruction and discipleship concerning their day-to-day vocations.

Pentecostals share testimonies as a diagnostic means of rehearsing and developing their theology. Through testimonies, they articulate theology for everyday life. Testimonies of salvation, healing, guidance, and deliverance demonstrate God's hand on their lives. So where are the larger call stories? I suggest that erroneous or undeveloped theologies result in fragmented lives. If this is true, theology must attend to the lives of believers not only for Sunday worship, but to every moment of our weekly calendar.

My testimony—the good, the bad, and the ugly—inspires my interest in a Pentecostal theology of vocation. For over twenty years, I have been teaching a required first-year course that includes an intense unit on vocation. With my department colleagues, we provide roughly fifteen sections of this course annually. I listen to students' stories every day. I see in them the same enthusiasm, adventure, angst, and fright that I experienced before them. Many students sense God's hand on their lives,

but others feel lost. Most of them have not reflected theologically about vocation. These students sit in my classroom as the children and grandchildren of the adults I addressed at my beloved camp.

Getting Started

In this essay, I contend that theology inevitably points to Christian vocation. The academy, of which I am part, has produced an invaluable legion of "-ologies." Sadly, most Pentecostal congregants care little about these efforts. I do not blame them. Good theology must not be relegated to ivory towers; instead, it must inspire our material, physical, experiential, affective, social, and vocational lives. Theology must make muster in our homes, on the street, in schools, at the hockey rink, in the marketplace, and in our churches. Theology and vocation cannot be separated. Who are we? Why are we here? What does God require of us? And specifically, how do Pentecostals answer these questions? Pentecostals deserve a theology that offers vocational clarity for their daily lives. Pentecostals deserve a theology that will enrich their lives with deep satisfaction, meaning, and liberation.

Pentecostalism's diversity makes this a daunting conversation. For the sake of this essay, I define Pentecostals broadly. I do so through employment of three common impulses: (1) Pentecostals connect their *raison d'être* to Pentecost; (2) Pentecostals proclaim the *Full Gospel*, an expression also known as the *Fivefold* or *Fourfold Gospel*; and (3) Pentecostals (ought to) embody the axiom "*prophethood of all believers*." Though average Pentecostals might not know this language, the pervasiveness of these impulses across global Pentecostalism serves as my basis for a Pentecostal theology of vocation. Each impulse begins and ends with Jesus. Pentecost launches the Spirit of Jesus in believers. The Fivefold Gospel captures Jesus' vocation. Prophethood finds its exemplar in Jesus; Pentecostals encounter Jesus as prophet not as professional clergy. Jesus calls believers; Jesus commissions them.[1]

Some Pentecostal Hurdles

Despite their passion for the Holy Spirit, Pentecostals struggle immensely with the meaning of "life in the Spirit." This struggle manifests itself primarily in an erroneous

[1] On the difference between the Fivefold Gospel and Fourfold Gospel, see Wolfgang Vondey's *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel* (London: T&T Clark, 2018). He states: "Pentecostals hold different views on the place and effect of sanctification in the order of salvation. Most visibly, Pentecostals are divided over the exact reception of sanctification as a work of grace; those following the Wesleyan Holiness tradition speak of sanctification as the experience of a 'second blessing' (subsequent to regeneration) while others follow the Reformed view of progressive sanctification throughout the believer's life" (67–68). This disagreement does not warrant dismissal of fivefold language by fourfold proponents; all Pentecostals emphasize fervently the importance of holiness.

theology of vocation. Why is Sunday so often divorced from Monday through Saturday? Why do many Pentecostal worshippers find little connection between Sunday worship and their weekly duties and activities? Why do Pentecostals experience intimacy with God in worship, prayers, sermons, and service, yet seldom connect these practices to life outside of gatherings? Though they spend the bulk of their lives at work, with families, and in their communities, Pentecostals believe, at least subtly, that what really matters is the time spent in church, in prayer, and in contemplation. I dare say most active Pentecostal churchgoers cannot remember a constructive sermon on the importance of their workplace or community life. Despite good intentions, Pentecostals fail to act out their passion for the Spirit-filled life in their daily lives.

I see three consistent hurdles to a sustainable Pentecostal theology of vocation. First, Pentecostals must address their consistent dive into dualism. They cannot fall prey to compartmentalization, to the trap of sacred versus secular. Second, as I stated in my counter-testimony, Pentecostals must reimagine their erroneous obsession with the vocational superiority of church-related ministry. Third, Pentecostals, like other traditions, must address the significance of calling beyond the workplace. If Pentecostals genuinely cherish terms such as "*life* in the Spirit" or the "Spirit-filled *life*," they must ensure that such a life extends to every moment of their lives for the duration of their lives. What does "life in the Spirit" mean for a child, a teenager, a college student, and a retiree/senior adult?

Jesus

To understand what "life in the Spirit" means for Pentecostal believers, I must turn first to Jesus, the consummate person of the Spirit. At his baptism, Jesus is anointed by the Spirit (Luke 3:22). He emerges full of the Spirit, led by the Spirit (Luke 4:1) and empowered by the Spirit (Luke 4:14). He announces his mission as the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy:

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
> because he has anointed me
> to proclaim good news to the poor.
> He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
> and recovery of sight to the blind
> to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor (Isa 61:1–2a/Luke 4:18–19).

Jesus boldly states, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). Near the conclusion of the Third Gospel, when the two Emmaus disciples struggle to

recognize Jesus as "a prophet mighty in word and deed" (Luke 24:19), Luke announces that Isaiah's prophecy was emblematic of a grand narrative that "[begins] with Moses and *all* the prophets" and points to Jesus (Luke 24:27).

When Pentecostals turn from the Gospels to Acts, they discover their connection to the prophetic Jesus at Pentecost. Luke transitions with an introductory statement about "all that Jesus began to do and teach" (Acts 1:1). Luke's second volume continues the story of Jesus with unmistakable parallels. Just as Jesus is anointed by the Spirit (Luke 3:22; 4:18), so the disciples will not begin their ministry until they have been baptized with the Spirit (Acts 1:4, 5). As Jesus lives full of the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:1a), so the disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4). Just as Jesus is empowered by the Spirit to perform miracles, wonders, and signs (Luke 4:14; Acts 2:22), so also the new people of God perform wonders and signs (Acts 2:43; 5:12; 6:8; 8:6, 13; 14:3). The same prophetic Spirit that enables Jesus' vocation emboldens the life and mission of the new people of God. In terms of the Fivefold Gospel, Jesus' call to conversion sets Pentecostals on a quest for holy love. As Pentecostals conform to the image of Christ, they draw deeper from the well of God's love. As disciples of Christ, they are compelled to witness to the divine love at work in their lives. As Jesus the savior, sanctifier, and Spirit-baptizer transforms their lives, Pentecostals turn their love toward the sick, the needy, the oppressed, and all things near to God's heart.

Pentecost and Pentecostals

With the connection to the prophetic Jesus established, I now turn to Pentecost and its significance for "life in the Spirit." Pentecostals, as their name suggests, trace their origin to Acts 2. They emerged with characteristics described by Grant Wacker as primitivism and pragmatism. Through these impulses, Pentecostals view themselves as recipients of a "last days" deluge of the Spirit that will usher in the return of Jesus in fulfillment of Joel 2:28–32 and Acts 2:17–18:

> In the last days, God says,
> I will pour out my Spirit on all people,
> Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
> Your young men will see visions,
> Your old men will dream dreams,
> Even on my servants, both men and women,
> I will pour out my Spirit in those days
> and they will prophesy.

As a restorationist movement, Pentecostals laud the return of charismatic gifts. Within Pentecostalism, the label "primitivist" does not denote a primitive or simple movement; it captures Pentecostals' desire to embody, reenact, and continue the first-century story of Jesus and the Apostles. On one hand, Pentecostals hope to write volume three of Acts (or Acts 29ff.). However, they do not begin at the end of Acts. The inaugural issue of the *Apostolic Faith*, the newsletter of the upstart Apostolic Faith Mission in Los Angeles, signals both the movement's return to and extension of Acts 2. The newsletter's opening headline reads:

> PENTECOST HAS COME
> Los Angeles Being Visited by a Revival of Bible Salvation and
> Pentecost as Recorded in the Book of Acts.[2]

Luke's account of Pentecost serves as more than an event on a first-century calendar. Pentecostals return unashamedly to the Day of Pentecost as a root symbol for an ever-present reality. At the first Pentecost, the resurrected and ascended Jesus becomes the baptizer in the Spirit. Pentecost serves as a "last days" beginning for the first followers of Jesus and for a burgeoning twentieth-century movement.

I cannot overstate the breadth of this Pentecostal conviction. In my office, I have photos of two signs from the tabernacle at my Pentecostal camp. They read, "Be Filled with the Spirit—Ephesians 5:18," and "Jesus is the Same Yesterday, Today, and Forever—Hebrews 13:8." A seasoned Pentecostal worshipper would surely identify these verses with Pentecost. Canadian evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson, the founder of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, published a collection of personal experiences and sermons under the title *This is That* (see Acts 2:16).[3] She interprets her life—and subsequent Pentecostal lives—as fulfilment and continuation of Peter's declaration in Acts 2:16 that the Pentecost event realizes Joel's prophecy for a last days outpouring of the Spirit.

Both Joel's and Peter's proclamation of the Spirit's outpouring on "all flesh" has theological implications that carry infinite vocational potential. Nineteenth-century English poet Gerard Manley Hopkins captures well this result: "Christ plays in ten thousand places."[4] As the great equalizer, the Spirit falls upon the young and old, sons

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[2] "The Apostolic Faith Movement," *Apostolic Faith*, 1:1, September 1906, 1.

[3] Aimie Semple McPherson, *This is That. Personal Experiences, Sermons and Writings* (Los Angeles: The Bridal Call Publishing House, 1919).

[4] Gerard Manley Hopkins, *As Kingfishers Catch Fire* (London, Penguin, 2015), 7. Catholic theologian José Comblin captures a similar link: "There was one Easter; there are millions of Pentecosts" (Cited by Steven J. Land in *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993], 173).

and daughters, male and female, servants and free. If the Spirit enlists everyone, patriarchy and hierarchy collapse. The Spirit washes away the sacred and secular divide. Though so much more could be said of a barrier-breaking Pentecost, I must turn briefly to Pentecost as a stage for dreamers, visionaries, and prophets.

Dreams and Visions

Peter's affirmation of Joel's prophecy encourages Pentecostals to dream, and even a cursory glance at Pentecostal history reveals consistent tales of visions and dreams. According to the framework at hand, the Holy Spirit stirs believers' imaginations to extend the life of Jesus. Pentecostals affirm that dreams and visions shape their lives whether on a given day or a lifetime. How might Pentecostals carry this worldview toward vocational formation? Though Pentecostals often testify to extraordinary examples such as direct messages through visual, auditory, and physical experiences or through symbols and pictures, they must enlarge their understanding of dreams and visions. Pentecostals cannot expect everyone to dream like Joseph and experience visions like Peter and Paul in Acts. I dare say that most people do not experience such extraordinary revelations. If so, how do we reimagine Spirit-driven dreams and visions? How might Pentecostals imagine their Pentecost-al vocation?

Dreams and visions, whether extraordinary visions or daily reflections, take Pentecostals to an imaginary space. The child in all of us dreams through fantasy or fairytales. "Once upon a time" begins a story that longs for the "day" when dreams come true. Dream stories reveal passions, longing, suffering, and hope, and they demand responsive characters. In these tales, dreamers do not seek escape from this world; they seek its transformation.

Consider the evolution of Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. With poetic precision and a S/spirit of improvisation, King performs his dream as hope for a better day. Like Jesus and the prophets of old, King's dream is prophetic. Dreamers do not begin with an answer, but they know something must be done. They do not know the way, but they envision a brighter future. A short rehearsal of biblical dreamers (all prophets are dreamers) like Joseph, Moses, Isaiah, Amos, Micah, John the Baptist, and Jesus demonstrates further that dreamers observe culture. They carefully study their world. They feel need. They experience suffering and abuse. They speak truth to power! This Pentecost-al Spirit creates within them—and us—a visionary zeal. Spirit-inspired dreams move people to live out their vocations with intentionality. Dreamers do not live in the past. King does not say, "I had a dream"; instead, he takes on the role of a prophet. King invites his listeners then and now to ask, "Do you see it?" The Spirit released at Pentecost calls everyone to imagine a better world.

Beyond the extraordinary encounters of Scripture, what about day-to-day life? We dream every day. Quaker scholar Parker Palmer argues that most dreams arise internally; they emerge slowly, evolve, and remain fluid.[5] The Spirit of Pentecost asks: What do you dream about? How do specific dreams shape your formation, your practices, and your pursuits? The Spirit invites Pentecostals to act out their own "I Have a Dream" speech(es). What would you say? Who would you address? What would compel you to act? How do you turn dream(s) into reality?

Jazzolalia

Along with dreams and visions, Swiss Pentecostal scholar Walter Hollenweger's bid to link Pentecostal roots to black or African-American spiritualities provides further fodder for a theology of vocation.[6] Out of their spiritual songs, African-Americans gave rise to jazz, a genre that serves as a suitable metaphor for Pentecostal life in the Spirit.[7] Pentecostal worship, liturgies, theologies, and—I suggest—vocations do not produce orchestral or symphonic performances; instead, Pentecostals celebrate oral and bodily spontaneity and improvisation. According to Church of God in Christ theologian David Daniels, "Pentecostal sound became a means of constructing an alternative soundscape, social space, and religious culture."[8] For this reason, *jazzolalia* serves as an imaginative extension of first-century glossolalia. Like Louis Armstrong's statement at the outset of this essay, trumpeter Cootie William rejects an invitation to define jazz: "Define it, I'd rather tackle Einstein's theory."[9] If applied to vocation, the aphorism by Nigerian-American Pentecostal scholar Nimi Wariboko resonates well: "It-does-not-make-sense-but-it-makes-spirit."[10]

Pentecostal lives are simultaneously beautiful and messy, rhythmic and complex. They share life together not through stiff and defined parameters but as a dance. Fourth-century theologian Gregory of Nazianzus describes the Trinity with a jazz-like metaphor as a dance of mutuality and reciprocity. Similarly, Pentecostals experience Jesus' love for the Father, and they imitate Jesus' intentionality, freedom, and flexibility.

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[5] Parker J. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 10.

[6] Walter J. Hollenweger, "The Black Roots of Pentecostalism," in *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, eds. Allan Anderson and Walter J. Hollenweger (Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1999), 36–43.

[7] Concerning the history of jazz, music historians argue that the improvisation behind African-American spirituals gives rise to genres such as swing, blues, ragtime, soul, and rap.

[8] David Daniels, "'Gotta Moan Sometime': A Sonic Exploration of Earwitnesses to Early Pentecostal Sound in North America," *Pneuma* 30 (2008), 5–32.

[9] William Edgar, *A Supreme Love: The Music of Jazz and the Hope of the Gospel* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2022), 176–77.

[10] Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Hypothesis: Christ Talks, They Decide* (Eugene: Cascade, 2020), xvi.

As dreamers and visionaries, Pentecostals play prophetic music in new places. With a jazz consciousness, Pentecostals imagine and improvise God's love and justice. Pentecostals should not be preoccupied with vocational certainty but with faithful improvisation; they should not descend into unbridled subjectivity, but they must develop a "listening ear," an ear that responds intimately to the ebb and flow of intense conviction and daily whispers. Like Wariboko's aphorism, the Pentecostal vocation consists of singing, playing, listening, celebrating, suffering, empathizing, sharing, and creating together. All of life involves a call and response. Pentecostal callings, like jazz, are not scripted. Vocations are not mapped out for them. Pentecost invites people to a live performance inspired by love.

On one hand, Pentecostals have an inadequate theology of vocation. On the other hand, I am convinced that they overthink—and overlook—the call of God. If calling looks less like a Mozart score, Pentecostals might do well to refrain from the obligatory search to answer the question, "To what am I called?" If God's call does not come out of a time-sealed vault that reads, "Thus say the Lord, 'Here is your calling!,'" Pentecostals might entertain the metaphor of *jazzolalia*. Imagine the conviction, passion, liberation, and dynamism that accompanies such impulses. The call might be "better felt than telt." In seeking alternative phrases to saying, "I am called," William Klein and David Steiner provide helpful descriptors that reverberate with Wariboko's aphorism:

1. "I desire to pursue . . ." I want to engage in a good thing, I sincerely want to do this.
2. "I feel compelled to . . ." I am wired to do this.
3. "I want to . . ." I am equipped for a task. I have the time and resources. I want to say yes to an inner longing.
4. "I have to do . . ." I am not sure about my passion or interest, but I simply must do it. I cannot wait to see if someone steps up.
5. "I must obey . . ." I must respond to the word of God. I cannot say no.[11]

Perhaps it is better to say that "the love of Christ compels me" (2 Cor 5:14) than "I have found my calling." Perhaps it is better to follow wordless groans (Rom 8:22–27) than to spend a lifetime seeking a template. Finally, I find Hollenweger's poetic articulation of Pentecostal theology applicable:

> [it's] not the book, but the parable,
> not the thesis, but the testimony,

[11] William W. Klein and Daniel J. Steiner, *What Is My Calling? A Biblical and Theological Exploration of Christian Identity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2022), 168–70.

not the dissertation, but the dance,
not concepts, but banquets,
not a system of thinking, but stories and songs,
not definitions, but descriptions
not arguments, but transformed lives.[12]

Concerning vocations, I would add "it's not classical music, but *jazzolalia*."

Prophethood of all Believers

A Pentecostal understanding of vocation requires jazz-like improvisation, but the axiom "prophethood of all believers" lies at the heart of the movement's theology of vocation. The phrase "prophethood of all believers" first appeared among Pentecostals in Roger Stronstad's groundbreaking *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* in 1984.[13] Stronstad later titles a 1999 work by this axiom.[14] Similarly, and to my knowledge independent of Stronstad, Steven Land argued in his 1993 work *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* that the time is ripe for Pentecostals to think beyond Luther's theology of the "priesthood of all believers" and to imagine "the prophethood of all believers."[15] Not surprisingly, Stronstad and Land both begin with Pentecost. Where Pentecostals have too often been bogged down on evidential tongues, these authors inspire Pentecostals to turn their attention to prophetic life in the Spirit. Stronstad connects the Spirit in the life of Jesus and Jesus' followers to charismatic (think "prophetic") figures in the Old Testament like Moses, David, or Elijah. Even as these figures serve God's mission, the same Spirit that rests upon them is transferred to their successors, such as Moses to Joshua, Saul to David, and Elijah to Elisha. As the Spirit comes upon and animates Jesus' life, Jesus transfers this same Spirit to his followers on the day of Pentecost.

Peter boldly explains that Pentecost makes the Holy Spirit available "to all flesh" (Acts 2:17 KJV). Where the Spirit in the Old Testament comes upon a select few, Pentecost sets in motion the last days and makes prophethood possible! Pentecostals anticipate this universal potential from the Hebrew Scriptures. In Numbers 11:16–17, after Moses cries out over the burden of leading God's people, God gives Moses seventy elders and grants them the power of the Spirit. Moses responds with a plea "that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put his Spirit on them" (Num

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[12] Walter J. Hollenweger, "Pentecostalisms: Article, Research Centers, Bibliographies and Selected Literature," *European Pentecostal Charismatic Research Association*, http://www.epcra.ch/papers.html (6 June 2023).

[13] Roger Stronstad, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012).

[14] Stronstad, *The Prophethood of All Believers: A Study in Luke's Charismatic Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).

[15] Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 18.

11:29). God also promises Ezekiel (like the prophet Joel) that the cleansing, sanctifying, and commissioning Spirit will rest on God's people (Ezek 36:24–32). The Spirit released at Pentecost invites every person to participate in prophetic fulfilment of God's kingdom. Pentecost makes prophethood a reality.

Pentecostal use of "prophethood of all believers" obviously amplifies Martin Luther's axiomatic "priesthood of all believers." Luther coins this language first in terms of salvation, so that every person has direct access to God without the mediation of a priest. Further, for Luther, the priesthood of all believers makes all vocations equal before God. Sadly, even as I extend Luther's historic advancement of Christian vocation, many Pentecostals are not yet aware of Luther's contributions. To be filled with the Spirit is an initiation into prophetic life. Throughout the book of Acts, and beyond, Luke establishes the people of God as an eschatological community of Spirit-filled prophets, every one of them—and us—called to participate in Christian vocation.

Prophethood requires careful use of language. First, prophethood does not mean every person claims the office or title of a prophet. To the contrary, in an impassioned plea to believers at Corinth, Paul chastises a young congregation for their misuse of utterance gifts during gathered worship (1 Cor 12–14). In order to curb Corinthian pride, Paul provides multiple lists of diverse gifts (or ministries) given to the church for mutual edification. The Apostle asks, "Are all Apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers?" (1 Cor 12:29). His questions are rhetorical. Of course not! Not everyone holds the office of apostle, prophet, or teacher. Paul could have gone further. Not everyone serves as a pastor, deacon, or elder. In Ephesians 4:11, Paul describes the ministry of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers as specific offices given to the church by God, not to all but to specific individuals, for the building up of the church. Just as the priesthood of all believers does not dismiss the specific call to a pastoral office, so also prophethood leaves space for the office of a prophet. So if prophethood does not grant every believer the title and responsibilities for the office of prophet, what might it mean?

A careful rendering of prophethood rescues Pentecostals from dreadful misunderstanding and abuse by those who cheapen the prophetic with their end-time speculations. If Pentecostals truly desire fullness in the Spirit, prophethood gives vocational urgency to everything they say and do. Jesus calls every believer to participate in prophetic Christianity. Like the prophets, Pentecostals seek justice, love, peace, healing, and reconciliation of humanity and God's creation. People of the Spirit must daily take on the mantle of the prophets to stand up and fight, speak out, march, protest, sing, vote, give, hope, love, read, laugh, cry, and do whatever is necessary to fulfill the gospel. Life in the Spirit calls Pentecostals to embody and perform God's vision for humanity.

At an ecclesial level, Pentecostals might draw on the renowned American rabbi Abraham Heschel, who argues that prophets declare the state of a people, whether a nation, community, or workplace. In a world filled with accusations about who is at fault for the state of our world, Heschel states boldly that "no matter who is guilty, all are responsible."[16] Through the Spirit, Pentecostals must dream new dreams within their local churches, denominations, and global networks. In so doing, participants may live out their dreams both individually and collectively.

The Full Gospel: Fivefold Gospel

While the "prophethood of all believers" exists as a key Pentecostal concept, the Fivefold Gospel serves as a plausible structure for Pentecostal theology. The fivefold confession centers on five tenets: Jesus is (1) Savior, (2) Sanctifier, (3) Spirit-baptizer, (4) Healer, and (5) soon-coming King. Even where Pentecostals have not heard or do not employ this specific structure, these historic tenets find space under the large confessional and experiential umbrella that is Pentecostalism. I propose that these tenets offer Pentecostals a solid foundation for a theology of vocation.

These tenets locate the entire—"full"—gospel around Jesus. The connection to Jesus' mission—vocation—cannot be underestimated. Though Pentecostals often restrict these tenets to individual experience, they demand much more. Jesus is not only a personal savior but the redeemer of all things. Jesus calls his followers to holy living and heals our broken bodies, but he is the ultimate sanctifier, healer, and deliverer of every physical and social evil. Jesus the Spirit-baptizer creates space for intimacy and dynamic evangelism, but he opens our world to greater breadth of Spirit. Jesus is "my" king not only in a personal or spiritual dimension, but he launches a new kind of kingdom that decries all injustice and demands a praxis built upon reconciliation in anticipation of new creation.

If Jesus directs and serves as the lead actor of the Full Gospel and if Pentecostals receive the blessings of Jesus' mission, what might be the link between Jesus, the Full Gospel, and vocation? The Spirit-filled Jesus embodies his vocational identity as Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit-baptizer, Healer, and soon-coming King. Jesus' vocation becomes the believer's vocation. Pentecostals not only receive the Full Gospel, but they perform the Full Gospel for the world. Pentecostal vocation is the extension of Jesus' vocation.

Before turning to the specific tenets of the Full Gospel, I want to pull in non-Pentecostal readers. First, the Full Gospel sounds elitist, and Pentecostals have no doubt been guilty of suggesting its superiority. Where Pentecostals have done so, I am saddened and ashamed, and I ask forgiveness. Obviously, the fivefold tenets are not only

[16] Abraham Heschel, *The Prophets* (New York: Harper, 1962), 19.

domain of Pentecostals; they reside fully within orthodox Christianity (another compelling incentive for ecumenism). The Full Gospel provides the necessary language for Pentecostals to construct their identity, theology, experience, and vocations. Even as Pentecostals continue to plunge the depths of the Full Gospel, they are not alone in doing so. In *The Secular Age*, Catholic philosopher Charles Taylor describes the human search of happiness as a search for "fullness." While Taylor surely understands the idea of fullness for a Christian worldview, he recognizes that believers and non-believers live their day-to-day lives in routine and drudgery, all the while pursuing greater clarity and fulfilment.[17] Similarly, Pentecostals seek and imagine a *fuller* gospel, a more holistic view of Jesus' life, mission, and commissioning. Indeed, if Jesus is the living Jesus, he continues to speak and act among us. The application of Full Gospel tenets to vocation serves as my attempt to flesh out Pentecostal appropriation of Jesus' call.

Second, though some are tempted to see the Full Gospel as sequential, these tenets are not strictly linear. Salvation is a taste of the end. Healing is integral to salvation. In light of our vocations, we do not seek to fill a tenet, but we participate in a great web of God's work. I also appreciate the words of A. J. Swoboda, who describes the "prophethood of all believers" as the "sixth element of the 'full gospel' message of the earliest Pentecostals."[18] Whether prophethood flows out of the Full Gospel or vice versa, I am not sure. It is not my desire to defend or rehearse this structure, except to locate its importance around vocation.

1. Savior

When outsiders to Pentecostalism (and not a few insiders) describe Pentecostals, they often jump immediately to Pentecostal obsession with Spirit baptism. Pentecostal scholars slow us down. "The Full Gospel," according to Wolfgang Vondey, "is soteriological from beginning to end."[19] Though Pentecostals traditionally celebrate a sudden (or crisis) conversion, an integrated understanding of salvation suggests that Paul's exhortation to "work out your salvation" means people are saved, being saved, and will be saved (Phil 2:12). Similarly, salvation turns our attention not only toward God, but simultaneously toward our neighbor. As Chris E. W. Green puts it, "How God saves us must be inseparable from what God saves us for."[20] Pentecostals are pardoned at salvation, and they begin to proclaim the grace they have received. The call

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[17] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 5.

[18] A. J. Swoboda, *Tongues and Trees: Toward a Pentecostal Ecological Theology* (Dorset, UK: Deo Publishing, 2013), 189.

[19] Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology*, 37

[20] Chris E. W. Green, *Sanctifying Interpretation: Vocation, Holiness, and Scripture* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2015), 43.

"to be saved" cannot be separated from vocation. Even as conversion turns affections toward God, their experience enlivens a new disposition. To benefit from Christ's sufferings brings an immediate call to suffer with him. As Pentecostals receive God's unconditional love, they are invited to forgive those who hurt them. The love of Jesus compels them to avoid bitterness, jealousy, or resentment.

Through salvation, strange as it may sound, "we become like God toward others."[21] In a mysterious but real way, salvation makes Pentecostals saviors with Christ and like him. Some may be surprised by the old Pentecostal hymn "I Am His and He Is Mine." Upon close inspection of the lyrics, the hymnwriter is hardly lost in otherworldly ecstasy with the Divine. Filled with love, he sees a different world:

> Heaven above is softer blue,
> Earth around is sweet green;
> Something lives in every hue
> Christless eyes have never seen.[22]

Similarly, culture critic Steve Turner gives a poignant result of salvation: "We feel differently about trees, leaves, rain, bad housing, animals, food, money, sex, social standing, leisure, poverty."[23] Pentecostals must proclaim that salvation means more than enjoyment of God's love. Jesus the savior calls every person to fulfill this mission.

2. Sanctifier

Salvation offers new believers stirring possibilities for transformation. New believers cast (more or less) their false, messy, and egocentric lives to Jesus in pursuit of a new kind of "fullness." They commit to obey Jesus' commandments and to "walk in the light as he is in the light" (1 John 1:7). They strive to be "imitators of God" and to "walk in love" (Eph 5:1–2). Justification is surely not primary with sanctification as secondary add-on.

Sadly, Pentecostals often reduce sanctification to a list of dos and don'ts. They face a constant temptation to slip toward legalism. Instead, a theology of vocation resists a worldview based on drudgery and plagued by judgment in exchange for the pursuit of God's love and beauty. When "the world is charged with the grandeur of God," holiness ignites a call to discover our truest desires.[24] Food and drink, dance and music, sex and play, work and leisure fulfill God's design. Sanctified people are called not to be drunk

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[21] Henri Nouwen, *Discernment: Reading the Signs of Daily Life* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2013), 135–36.

[22] Penned by George Wade Robinson in 1890, many Pentecostal hymnals include this hymn. On its origin, see https://hymnary.org/text/loved_with_everlasting_love (21 June 2023).

[23] Steve Turner, *Imagine: A Vision for Christians in the Arts* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2017), 102.

[24] Hopkins, "God's Grandeur," 5.

with wine, but filled—dare I say "drunk"—with the Spirit (Eph 5:18). Sanctification liberates Pentecostals to enjoy life to the full (John 10:10; Rom 14:13; Gal 5:1).

A further emphasis concerns Paul's call upon the "saints" (literally, "a people set apart"; Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:2). Pentecostals declare boldly the call "to be holy as God is holy" (1 Pet 1:14). On one hand, every seasoned Pentecostal knows the call to "come out from among them and be ye separate" (2 Cor 6:17). On the other hand, though Pentecostals take the purity that God demands seriously, an overzealous commitment to separation remains inadequate. Jesus' invitation to a sanctified life means more than sinlessness. Beyond separation and purity, the sanctified people of God are at one and the same time called to the world. Intimacy with Jesus turns Pentecostals toward their neighbor. The great commandment describes holy love turned outward (Matt 22:37–40). God's holy love, enacted in and through Pentecostals, is made manifest through sanctified lives. Holiness becomes a way of laboring in our families, workplaces, schools, and communities (see Gal 5:22–23; Col 3:12–17).

Prophethood commissions every Pentecostal to embody holy reverence and awe with each task. The idea of sacred and secular vocations collapses; every "secular" vocation becomes a "sacred"—a sanctifying—vocation. Prophethood enlists Pentecostals to address moral, social, political, and systemic evils. In so doing, they do not succumb to a message of doom, but they deliver a message of hope. When Pentecostals speak truth to power, the call to sanctification cannot dissolve into debates of who bears guilt. Prophethood makes everyone responsible. Prophetic people imagine spaces filled with divine sanctity, love, and compassion.

Finally, sanctifying vocations with their reordered ambitions, gratitude, and compassion mesh well with Jesus' present and future kingdom. Deeper love for God translates to deeper love for one another and thereby contributes to and creates a yearning for the full consummation of God's kingdom. Like young love between wife and husband, love for God creates longing and unending passion, service, and joy. Our taste of the future creates an insatiable desire for God's perfect love. Living out their sanctifying vocations enables Pentecostals to experience and anticipate the "shalom" promised with the new heaven and earth. Jesus the sanctifier calls Pentecostals to holy living. In a mysterious way, sanctification makes us sanctifiers with him and like him.

3. Spirit-Baptizer

According to Frank Macchia, Spirit baptism is the crown jewel of Pentecostal theology.[25] Although it may be the best known tenet of Pentecostals, Spirit baptism remains difficult to unpack. Many Pentecostals know the refrain, "I'm saved, sanctified,

[25] Frank Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 20.

and filled with the Holy Ghost." While classical Pentecostals typically experience Spirit baptism as a crisis experience accompanied by evidential tongues, the larger umbrella of Pentecostalism covers a host of expressions. Charismatic or renewal streams often speak of "fanning the flame" or "actualization of baptismal initiation." In short, though Pentecostals debate the reception of the Spirit, all streams agree that life in the Spirit includes current manifestations of spiritual gifts and ongoing pursuit of a deeper, fuller encounter with the Spirit.[26]

I argued earlier that Pentecostals see the Spirit-filled Jesus as exemplar. Sammy Alfaro offers a helpful assessment about Jesus' vocation: "What might be surprising, however, is that to speak of the baptism with the Holy Spirit early Pentecostals began by identifying Jesus as Spirit Baptized," and according to the Gospels, "Jesus did not preach a single sermon or begin his mission in any way until the Holy Spirit had anointed him with power."[27] At the end of Luke's Gospel, Jesus directs the disciples to wait in Jerusalem "until they have been clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49; see also Gal 3:26; Col 3:12). Upon his ascension, Jesus the Spirit-baptizer empowers the new people of God to extend his mission. With unending anticipation and in fulfillment of Acts 1:8, Pentecostals sense a divine destiny for their lives. Their participation in the "last days" outpouring compels them to take the gospel to the ends of the earth (see also Acts 2:17). With such urgency, it is no wonder that this zeal leads to the expansion of the movement.

The vocational connection between Spirit baptism and the prophethood of believers should be immediately apparent. Sadly, however, Pentecostals often experience Spirit baptism as a profound encounter with God that fails to impact daily living. Stronstad exhorts—and warns—Pentecostals not to forget its effect. Pentecostals must not reduce Spirit baptism to evangelism (think verbal proclamation). Prophetic people with holy affections speak truth to power. Witnesses testify and advocate for individuals and communities. Spirit-empowered witnesses embody the suffering, stewardship, hospitality, and compassion of God to the world.[28]

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[26] See my *Reading Luke-Acts in the Pentecostal Tradition* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010) and my 2021 SPS presidential address, "A Century in the Making: Receiving the Samaritan Pentecost (Acts 8:4–25) in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Traditions," *Pneuma* 43 (2021), 173–98. In the spirit of ecumenism, see "'Do Not Quench the Spirit': Charisms in the Life and Mission of the Church," the Report of the Sixth Phase of the International Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue (2011–2015), http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-occidentale/pentecostali/dialogo/documenti-di-dialogo/testo-del-documento-in-inglese.html (5 July 2021).

[27] Sammy Alfaro, *Divino Compañero: Toward a Hispanic Pentecostal Christology* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010), 40–41.

[28] Stronstad, *Charismatic Theology*, 97–98.

Again, where Pentecostals often speak as elitists, the late pastor Jack Hayford offers helpful counsel for insiders and outsiders. The Spirit-baptized life is marked by "a passion for fullness, for *all of Jesus* . . . [to] open me to the Holy Spirit's constant overflow in my life, welcoming His gifts and transcending my limits with His almightiness."[29] I also cling to the words of Pentecostal historian Ronald Kydd, my college professor, who often stated that "an encounter with God that does not lead to greater intimacy with Jesus is ultimately disappointing." If Pentecostals experience Spirit baptism as an expression of God's love upon them, they will inevitably turn that same love toward the world. The fivefold vocation is increasingly clear: "The fruit of the Spirit [is] the Spirit's work to manifest Christ in the character of the believers. The gifts of the Spirit . . . manifest the power of God in the service of the gospel" to evangelism and edification.[30] Jesus calls every Pentecostal to this life.

4. Healing/Exorcism

Healing plays no small part in Jesus' ministry. Similarly, the new people of God continue his healing ministry. In Acts, disciples heal the sick, grant sight to the blind, and deliver the oppressed in Jesus' name. Paul includes gifts of healing, faith, and miracles among ministries given by God for the common good. James encourages prayer for the sick (Jas 5:13–16). Pentecostals everywhere believe unashamedly that God heals today. That "Jesus Christ [the healer] is the same yesterday, today, and forever" requires little defense among Pentecostals (see Heb 13:8).

Given the outstanding essays on healing by David Han and Andrew Prevot, I draw attention only to links between healing and vocation. In short, a Pentecostal theology of healing must extend further than bodily healing. According to Prevot, healing "may be interpreted in diverse ways and involve features such as emotional comfort, social inclusion, personal empowerment, holistic care, spiritual wellbeing, and lengthy process of change and growth."[31] Healing vocations, formal and informal, attend to economic, social, cultural, political, and environmental dimensions. Similarly, exorcisms include deliverance both from demonic forces tormenting an individual as well as from the systemic evils felt by communities.

Pentecostals must acknowledge and celebrate where they already serve in ministries of healing. They serve in vocations that carry out the ministries that Prevot details above on a regular basis. Though families, local churches, and working communities support and care for one another at a basic level every day, many

[29] S. David Moore, *Pastor Jack: The Authorized Biography of Jack Hayford* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2020), 241.

[30] Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 119.

[31] Andrew Prevot, "Varieties of Healing: A Catholic Perspective," *Spiritus* 9:2 (2024), 197.

Pentecostals fail to equate their daily lives with healing. On the other hand, Pentecostals must capture a larger vision for prophetic healing. They must proclaim the convergence of Jesus' announcement of the kingdom with the day of the Lord's favor (Luke 4:19). The ministry of healing calls for Jubilee. In a world filled with corruption, abuse, exploitation, racism, inequality, and bigotry, Pentecostals must reimagine their sphere of influence. As an example, the recent publication of O*pen Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love,* published by the USCCB in 2018, offers a pastoral appeal to address racism.[32] In the Spirit of Pentecost, Pentecostals must learn from our fellow Christian communities and expand their visions of a better world.

Another implication for vocation concerns the role of those in medical work. Pentecostals pray every day for the physical needs of their fellow congregants and neighbors. Patients yield their lives to physicians, surgeons, nurses, and expansive teams of professionals and workers committed to the common goal of health, recovery, and overall wellbeing. Pentecostals believe intuitively that all healing comes from God, whether extraordinary or ordinary (of course, heart surgeries, knee replacements, and life-saving prescriptions are hardly ordinary). Allow me to share a personal testimony. My audiologist is bi-vocational. During my consultation, Dr. Myers (name adjusted) inquired about my "day job." When he learned that I work as a professor of theology, Myers stated enthusiastically that he pastors a local church. A month after I received my hearing aids, I met Myers for a checkup. When he asked about my adjustment to hearing aids, I told him that I testify joyfully to friends that "God healed my hearing." When I asked Myers if he saw his medical work as healing ministry, his facial response indicated that he had never considered this question. He began to talk of his work as a pastor. Sadly, the majority of Pentecostals do not imagine their work/careers as extensions of Jesus the healer.

5. Soon-Coming King

Early Pentecostals believed that Jesus would return sooner rather than later. While this hope remained strong throughout much of the twentieth century, urgency began to wane. Though later streams did not share the same zeal, all Pentecostal streams remain committed to Jesus' return and the full consummation of his kingdom. I suggest that a theology of vocation provides the necessary impetus to fuel passion and purpose. Whereas early Pentecostals may have been accused of an under-realized (too futuristic)

[32] *Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love—A Pastoral Letter Against Racism*, https://www.usccb.org/resources/open-wide-our-hearts-enduring-call-love-pastoral-letter-against-racism (12 June 2023).

eschatology, contemporary Pentecostals should be on the frontlines of a realized eschatology.[33]

Sadly, hymns such as "This World Is Not My Home" and popular choruses like "All Aboard for the Gospel Train" teach a faulty eschatology that marginalizes daily life. Even as Pentecostals engage in end-time evangelical zeal (Matt 9:37/Luke 10:2; Matt 24:14/Mark 13:10; Luke 21:24) and long for the consummation of God's kingdom, they must resist dualism. As the final tenet of the Fivefold Gospel, Pentecostals do not seek escape from this world, but they bring the future into the present. Pentecostals must proclaim more than "eternal life." The previous tenets of the Full Gospel demonstrate that Jesus steps into his vocation with the announcement that "the kingdom of God is upon us" (Mark 1:14). Paul tells the Ephesians that the promised Holy Spirit is a deposit that guarantees their final inheritance (Eph 1:14). In the fivefold scheme, intimate encounter with Jesus brings a taste of heaven to earth; holiness creates an insatiable passion for love, peace, and joy. Jesus heals the sick, delivers the oppressed, and transforms lives now (Luke 7:22-23)!

The reign of Jesus requires a prophetic response. Not only do Pentecostals reap the benefits of the already kingdom of God, but they join Jesus' vocation as agents of God's kingdom. Contrary to the common images of an endless bliss devoid of work, the rule of Jesus redeems their vocations. Pentecostals' vision for the kingdom renews their commitment as God's agents for co-creation and re-creation. With the prophet Zechariah, Pentecostals imagine a world where people enjoy the fruit of labor and fair compensation (Zech 8:10–12). With Micah, Pentecostals cannot separate their daily "walk with God" from justice and mercy (Mic 6:8). If there is no domain outside of God's rule, Pentecostals must reimagine their politics, business, education, and stewardship. With glossolalic zeal, Pentecostals groan with creation in anticipation of full redemption (Rom 8:28). With prophetic imagination, they extend the rule of God beyond church walls. In so doing, they do not imagine a single politic, but they bring prophethood to every and any kind of *polis*. Through *jazzolalia*, Pentecostals enjoy and anticipate "the kingdom of God . . . [as communities of] righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom 14:17).

Implications: PCCNA/USCCB Dialogue

Having spent the bulk of this essay developing a framework for a Pentecostal theology of vocation, I turn now to practical considerations. If the Spirit of Pentecost is the great Equalizer and available for everyone and if the Full Gospel promises "fuller" lives and if the prophethood of all believers launches prophetic dreams and visions, where does the

[33] Obviously, Pentecostal diversity prevails again. A common thread of the prosperity gospel/Word Faith messengers offers an erroneous and abusive over-realized eschatology.

rubber meet the road? I invite readers to remember my "Everyman" (and Everywoman) Pentecostal testimony, a tale of hierarchy, angst, and confusion. I invite all Pentecostals to find their place in the call of God. Due to length restrictions, I am limited to the following introductory implications for praxis.

First, as I stated earlier in this essay, a robust theology of vocation addresses Pentecostal proclivities to dualisms. (1) Pentecostals must abandon any obsession with the "spiritual" life. God is not interested in our spiritual lives. Instead, Pentecostals must embrace a spiritual*ity* that does not compartmentalize God's intent for their physical, emotional, sexual, and vocational lives. All humans are created and commissioned wholly by God. Period. (2) Pentecostals must abandon the sacred versus secular divide. A common mantra at Evangel University is "everyone is called to ministry." The call of God—whatever a student's major—rests on every student that walks on our campus. (3) Pentecostals must not limit their vocation to a career/workplace. Vocation extends to all of life (see below).

Second, Pentecostals must enlarge their theology of vocation to include family, workplace (if applicable), citizen/community, church, friendship, and lifelong learning. I serve at one and the same time as a husband, father, sibling, and son. I serve as a professor, counselor, mentor, and scholar. I am a biblical scholar, a pacifist, an activist (with Missourians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty),[34] and an ecumenist. I worship and teach Sunday School at my local church. I am a Canadian citizen and a permanent resident in the United States. I live in Springfield, Missouri, specifically, the Galloway neighborhood. The list goes on. I wear many hats! Though degrees of consciousness and attentiveness to a specific vocation inevitably vary, I never take off a hat. What a responsibility! What a privilege! God calls every Pentecostal to similar yet unique livelihoods. Imagine the Fivefold Gospel enacted by every daughter and son, young and old, woman and man in every kitchen, bedroom, classroom, factory, city chamber, pew, and cubicle. The list goes on.

As an example, envision our families. The home is the ideal arena to enact the Full Gospel. The home functions as the stage for holy love and ambition, healing, and re-creation. As Luther's priesthood of all believers revolutionizes family life, Pentecost grants every member of every family a call to prophethood. Parents, siblings, and extended family members speak into each other's lives. Eyes and ears are always nearby. When a child states from the back seat of a car, "Mom/Dad, why is that man begging for food?," parents hear the prophets Amos and Micah and our supreme prophet Jesus. Even as parents guide children to their futures, parents receive a call to embody Jesus' fivefold mission. Parents strive to provide quality education, career/workplace guidance, but they also seek to guide their children to faith, to live holy lives, to bring healing, and

[34] See https://www.madpmo.org (14 June 2023).

to raise good citizens and humans. As the decades go by, children often become caregivers for their parents. However, in doing so, children must not deny their aging parents their day of "sageing."[35] Applications are infinite.

Third, I wonder if Pentecostals might reimagine vocation not as a noun (i.e., a call or calling), but as a verb (i.e., called). For this idea, I am indebted to Catholic theologian Kathleen Cahalan.[36] First, we live in an anxious world. As an educator, I see the mental health crisis every day. A consistent concern among young Pentecostal students is "what will I do with my life?" and "where is God calling me?" Of course, this anxiety plagues every age group. I propose that an emphasis on "called" rather than "calling" might offer a partial solution to the current crisis. What if Pentecostals would obsess less over an ever-elusive quest to discover an all too often "hidden" calling (and whether they remain in the will of God) in exchange for affirmation and commitment to their current vocations? Every Pentecostal is called. They are called to Jesus, to holy living, to life in the Spirit, to be healers, and to be harbingers of Jesus' return. They are called to prophethood, wherever they live, love, work, and play. Right now! To live such lives constitutes the perfect will of God (Rom 12:1–2).

Fourth, conversations about vocation must recognize the role of privilege. Those of us who ask "what will we do with our lives?" make up a small fraction of the global population. A large percentage of Pentecostals—particularly in the Global South—live daily under socioeconomic duress. Unlike most readers of this essay, the poor of this world invest little energy on a quest for "their callings."[37] Instead, many people care only for daily food, health, and shelter. Many Pentecostals neither choose vocations nor imagine options. This vast need must inspire at least two prophetic possibilities. First, how might a robust theology of the Full Gospel inspire "the rich" to inspire self-worth and vocational value for the poor? Workers nearby and around the world contribute daily to the sustainability of the human project. The world runs on the backs of workers who engage in ordinary and mundane yet essential service; their work must be valued as kingdom work. Second, however, the privileged of this world must use their lives to advocate for and enable the poor. Jesus calls us to employ our resources on behalf of the outcast, the migrant, the incarcerated, and every person desperate for the Day of the Lord's favor (Luke 4:18–19; 11:1–4). Privilege demands prophetic responsibility.

Finally, I believe a major reason for the rising exodus of young people (and older people) out of institutional Christianity stems at least in part from an underdeveloped theology of vocation. I am tired of accusations of laziness and apathy hurled at today's

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[35] See the delightful work by Jewish writer Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, *From Age-ing to Sage-ing: A Profound Vision for Growing Older* (New York: Warner Books, 1995).

[36] Kathleen A. Cahalan, *The Stories We Live: Finding God's Calling All Around Us* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017).

[37] Regardless of tradition, questions about privilege remain scarce in literature on vocation.

youth. I am saddened by their disdain for church. However, I am convinced that Pentecostal churches do not demand enough from them. Exiled Pentecostals see through siloed living; they are tired of cheap grace. Instead, young adults want to make a difference in their world. If the church does not inspire their efforts, they look elsewhere. What if Pentecostals would reimagine discipleship that turns holiness from legalism and lawlessness to holy ambitions? What if youth would connect their artistic and creative desires to ministries of redemption and healing? Today's youth want to live prophetic lives. Pentecostals must affirm their work.

Until We Meet Again

Finally, if the prophethood of all believers and the Full Gospel serve as a legitimate foundation for a Pentecostal theology of vocation and if Pentecostals truly aspire to embody the barrier-breaking hospitality of Pentecost, we must represent the call to ecumenism. The Spirit of Pentecost undoubtedly calls Pentecostals to imagine the ecumenicity of the Spirit.[38] Pentecost calls believers to embody and release the cross-traditional recognition of God's work in the life of the "other." A common stated purpose for ecumenical dialogue includes emphasis upon unity and common witness. The world, which is so often characterized by anger, division, and violence, desperately needs prophetic unity and witness. I trust our investment in ecumenism embodies holy love, Spirit-driven witness, and healing. I pray for dreams and visions of a better world. I pray that this exploratory dialogue finds listening ears among my Pentecostal constituents.

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[38] See Emilio Alvarez, *Pentecost: A Day of Power for All People* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2023), 36.

Response to Martin Mittelstadt

Leonardo J. Gajardo

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The experience of participating in our three-year exploratory dialogue was enriching and rewarding for me in several ways. The one that I had anticipated, and that certainly became a reality, was the blessing of learning about Pentecostal theology from Pentecostal brothers and sisters who have been formed by and have formed others in that rich theological tradition. One unexpected way in which I was enriched and rewarded by our three years of dialogue, prayer, and fellowship was that our reflections together afforded me the opportunity to revisit some of the theological tenets and insights of my own Catholic tradition. That was certainly the case with Martin Mittelstadt's paper, "Called: A Pentecostal Theology of Vocation."

In his paper, Mittelstadt frames the question he considers as follows:

> Theology and vocation cannot be separated. Who are we? Why are we here? What does God require of us? And specifically, how do Pentecostals answer these questions? Pentecostals deserve a theology that offers vocational clarity for their lives. Pentecostals deserve a theology that will enrich their lives with deep satisfaction, meaning, and liberation.[1]

He also identifies three consistent hurdles that have made a Pentecostal theology of vocation difficult to develop: 1) the dualism between the sacred and the secular; 2) the erroneous assumption that church-related ministry is vocationally superior to other vocations; and 3) the difficulty of articulating a sense of calling beyond the workplace. According to Mittelstadt, only by overcoming these hurdles will Pentecostals be able to ensure that the "*life* in the Spirit" or the "Spirit-filled *life*," which they cherish so much, "extends to every moment of their lives for the duration of their lives."

While I cannot speak for Pentecostals, I would say that, not just Pentecostals, but all Christians deserve a rich and robust vocational theology, so that they can perceive and respond to the Spirit's call in every aspect of their lives. I also must confess that Catholic theology, imagination, and practice have faced the same hurdles in articulating a theology of vocation that Mittelstadt identifies. But thanks to the questions he raised and the reflections he offered, as well as our rich dialogue, I was led to reflect on what my own Catholic tradition has to say about the vocation of all believers.

As I read Mittelstadt's paper, but even more so during his presentation of the paper and our subsequent discussion, I was struck by the resonance between the

[1] Martin W. Mittelstadt, "Called: A Pentecostal Theology of Vocation," *Spiritus* 9:2 (2024), 286.

questions and ideas he raised, and the teaching of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) on what the Council fathers called the universal call to holiness. This teaching had been important for me during my ministerial and theological formation, but, in recent years, other theological questions and ideas had caused me to "forget" this important teaching of the Council. I am very grateful to Mittelstadt for helping me to rediscover it and to recognize how it might contribute to the vital work of ecumenism.

The Council's teaching regarding the universal call to holiness in the church is found in the fifth chapter of the Council's dogmatic constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* (*LG*), which was approved by an overwhelming majority of the more than 2,000 bishops present at Vatican II and was officially promulgated by Pope Paul VI in November of 1964. The chapter begins by affirming that God alone is holy, and that through the saving work of Christ, God has sanctified the church and bestowed on it the gift of the Spirit. It then declares:

> For this reason, everyone in the church is called to holiness, whether he belongs to the hierarchy or is cared for by the hierarchy, according to the saying of the apostle: "This is the will of God, your sanctification" (1 Th 4,3; see Eph 1, 4). This holiness of the church is shown continuously, and it should be shown, in those fruits of grace which the Spirit produces in the faithful; it is expressed in many different ways in the lives of those individuals who in their manner of life tend towards the perfection of charity and in so doing are a source of edification for others.[2]

Later in the chapter, the Council fathers declare that "all the faithful, whatever their condition or rank, are called to the fulness of the Christian life and the perfection of charity. And this sanctification is conducive to a more human way of living even in society here on earth."[3] The chapter goes on to describe how all the faithful, each according to his or her own vocation, can live out the universal call to holiness.

The teaching of Vatican II on the universal call to holiness marked a new and decisive, although still not fully appreciated or embodied, effort by the Catholic Church to provide the faithful with the kind of vocational theology that, it seems to me, Mittelstadt suggests that Pentecostals need and deserve. The quotes from *Lumen Gentium* cited suggest how the Council fathers tried to address the very same hurdles that Mittelstadt argues Pentecostal theology confronts as it seeks to articulate a theology of vocation. The Council fathers, grounding their teaching on the holiness of God, affirm that all the members of the Church, whether lay or ordained, are called to live

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[2] *Lumen Gentium,* 1964, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html, 39.

[3] *Lumen Gentium,* 40.

the holiness of God, which can in be expressed in "many different ways," and which is meant to bear fruit in the others and in the world.

While Catholics still need to do much reflection on this teaching in order to receive it and reflect it in their concrete lives, my sense from our dialogue is that the universal call to holiness could contrive to a fruitful and mutual enrichment between Pentecostals and Catholics as we seek to discern and articulate a theology of vocation.

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Response to Walter Kedjierski and Leonardo Gajardo

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As a Pentecostal educator, I am seized by an unrelenting mission to address and resist compartmentalization of the Christian life. In my essay, I critiqued a persistent Pentecostal struggle, namely, the dualistic hierarchy promoted for those in church-related vocations. I proposed that the "prophethood of all believers" and "the Fivefold Gospel" provide grounded impetus for prophetic and Full Gospel vocation that resists such a dualistic hierarchy. In my research on vocation, I have found among Catholic scholars a rich and robust theology of religious vocations. Having said this, I felt that the sheer volume of literature on Holy Orders does not adequately address the responsibilities of Catholic laity. Sadly, and stereotypically, I assumed that a Catholic theology of vocation focused too heavily on the Sacrament of Holy Orders to the detriment of lay vocations. Concerning these assumptions, I could not have been more mistaken. Moreover, my fresh understanding of Catholic lay vocation may also prove pivotal for Pentecostals.

I am grateful for God's hand over our 2023 conference theme. I focused on the wide category of vocation, Walter Kedjierski attended to the sacrament of marriage, and Leonardo Gajardo addressed religious vocations. I was particularly struck by the interplay between these respective callings. Kedjierski masterfully displayed the sacrament of marriage (and family) as the extension of the church. Pentecostals resonate naturally with the foundational responsibilities and opportunities to embody the Full Gospel in and through our homes. Concerning religious vocations, Gajardo explored the call and meticulous training for religious vocations. Having said this, I (and my Pentecostal peers) sought further clarity on the vocational lives of Catholic laity.

To do so, my Catholic friends illustrated a "fuller" Catholic understanding of sacrament/al vocation. Following our gathering, I returned to an enduring question: "What do Catholics mean when they say that the church is the 'Body of Christ?'" While Pentecostals typically view Paul's body language as metaphoric (1 Cor 11:29; 12:27), for Catholics, the sacramental bread becomes the Body of Christ and, when understood and experienced correctly, proves integral to a Catholic theology of vocation. At Mass, the presiding priest prepares and offers the eucharistic bread so that he and believers might consume the Body of Christ. The priest may do so only because he serves under the authority of and in continuity with the apostolic community; apostolic succession does not provide a path for historical ancestry but the mysterious

and vocational extension of the living Jesus. The Catholic Church under papal authority appoints bishops, who in turn ordain both priests and deacons for parish ministry as well as a wonderful array of sisters and brothers for holy vocations (universities, hospitals, monastic life, etc.). The sacrament of Holy Orders is an extension of the Body of Christ.

At this point, Pentecostals ought to imagine the vocational implications for Catholic parishioners. The (weekly) Mass performs the mysterious and empowering celebration of the Body of Christ within and alongside the sacramental web of succession and ordination. The sacraments enable the church to be the Body of Christ. Believers not only receive the Body of Christ through their officiants, but they in turn are commissioned as the Body of Christ to the world. Kimberly Belcher and Andrew Prevot guided me to several liturgists. According to Lizette Larson-Miller, "Ecclesial sacraments are not static, one-time events with no precedent or ongoing efficacy."[1] Similarly, Kristiaan Depoortere declares a threefold vocational telos for the sacraments:

> [T]hey *authenticate*: "all previous practices of faith related to the sacrament that went before" because it has value and is part of the revelatory character of a sacrament; they *perfect:* "the sacramental act is an epiclesis . . . a performative word that effects what it affirms"; and they *send forth*: "every sacramental seal entails a mission."[2]

The third dimension proves pivotal for Catholic laity. The sacraments bring believers together as the people of God and simultaneously thrust them into the world: "the Church [through its succession, priests, liturgies, and proclamation] makes the Eucharist and the Eucharist makes the church." The Body of Christ (i.e., the church) becomes "sustenance for the planet to engage with our own salvation which is, by the very reality of being part of all things, a transformation of the whole universe into 'a new future in God.'"[3] I am personally drawn to words from the United Methodist communion liturgy: "Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood."[4] Sacramentality embodies the conviction that the world experiences the full life of God in Christ and the Spirit.

What are the implications for a Pentecostal theology of vocation? What do Pentecostals mean when they claim to be "filled with the Spirit"? Is this filling only a metaphor? Is "fullness" merely functional? Is it sacramental? I proposed that every

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[1] Lizett Larson-Miller, *Sacramentality Renewed: Contemporary Conversations in Sacramental Theology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2016), 20.

[2] Khristiaan Depoortere, "From Sacramentality to Sacraments and Vice Versa," in *Contemporary Contours of a God Incarnate,* eds. L. Boeve and L. Leijssen (Peeters: Lueven, 2001), 60.

[3] Larson-Miller, *Sacramentality Renewed*, 53.

[4] "The Brief Great Thanksgiving for General Use," in *The United Methodist Book of Worship* (Nashville, TN: UMC Publishing House, 1992), 36.

Pentecostal commits to the Fivefold Gospel vocation for reception and extension of Jesus the Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit-baptizer, Healer, and Soon-coming King. If Pentecostals believe that the same Spirit that rests upon Jesus now rests on us, pastoral leaders guide their Spirit-filled congregants into their "fuller" vocations.

In light of our Notre Dame gathering, I offer two closing observations. First, we lamented that too many Catholics and Pentecostals are not catechized to understand the extent of their respective vocations. The Catholic Church as the Body of Christ, whether understood or not, is the life of Jesus for the world. Similarly, Pentecostals, whether realized or not, fill up the mission of Jesus. I dream of a day where contemporary disciples would be aware, confident, and intentional in their vocations. I long for a day when discipleship and vocation cannot be separated. Second, if my proposal that Pentecostals must produce a more robust theology of lay vocation is correct, I believe Pentecostal theologians need to reimagine the responsibilities given to those in religious vocations. I encourage Pentecostal theologians and educators to wrestle with the sacramental responsibilities of the Catholic priesthood. Even as every priest vows to feed the Body of Christ, may it be that Pentecostal pastors nurture their congregants toward "fullness." And in turn, may every religious worker—Catholic and Pentecostal—release God's people to a hungry and thirsty world.

Reviews

Pentecostal Prophets: Experience in Old Testament Perspective. By Stephen D. Barkley. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock. 157 + xii pp.

Stephen D. Barkley is an ordained minister with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada and currently serves as Director of Pastoral Leadership and campus pastor at Master's College and Seminary, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada. He completed a Doctor of Ministry degree from Master's, and this book is an adaptation of his doctoral dissertation.

The introductory chapter lays out the objective of the book: to probe the coherence between the modern phenomenon of prophecy among Canadian Pentecostals and Old Testament prophecy. The introduction describes prophecy in Pentecostalism and provides definitions of prophecy (7–14). Chapter 1 then presents the author's research tools (methodologies) and plan. Four "lenses" (or approaches) are identified: practical theology, practice-led research, phenomenological perspective, and theological reflection. For each method, the author provides useful definitions and evaluations. The chapter ends with the structure of the book. Chapter 2 takes the discussion of the previous material deeper through a literature review. Divided into theoretical and empirical studies, the former covers the development of prophecy through a long period from the Old Testament (i.e., Jeremiah) to Jesus as the prophet via the intertestamental period. This section also includes modern-day prophecy. The empirical section engages four authors in three aspects of the charismatic prophetic phenomenon. Here, the author's main task is clear: to probe "the coherence between the Old Testament prophets and modern practitioners" (66).

The next three chapters form the main body of the research. Chapter 3 explores the Old Testament prophet's experience (in this case, Jeremiah). Using five programmatic experiences or actions in the prophetic process (69), the author takes the readers through the book of Jeremiah. This analytical reading reveals the inner workings of the prophetic experience in stages: 1) recognizing God's presence; 2) receiving prophetic impulse; 3) discerning the source and message by the Scripture; 4) releasing the message; and 5) experiencing sensations. The discernment stage, for example, analyzes Jeremiah's argument against the false prophets (77–82). Throughout the discussion, the author highlights the emotional and spiritual burden that the prophetic message causes in Jeremiah's life. The author rightly selects the book of Jeremiah, which best reveals the internal process of the prophetic phenomenon.

Chapter 4 then takes us to twenty-first-century Canadian Pentecostal prophets! This qualitative study utilizes phenomenological methodology to describe the prophetic process in modern Pentecostal Christianity. For the "Textural Description" of the Charismatic prophets, the author uses the same five-step analysis of the participating prophets. The "Structural Description" explores three components influencing their prophetic experience. They represent the process of "making of a contemporary prophet": mentoring, location, and prophetic "failure" (114–121). The author concludes the chapter by bringing two descriptions of participant prophets together into a first-person "testimony." I find this two-page recap quite creative. Chapter 5, as anticipated, incorporates the ancient prophetic experience (ch. 3) and the modern one (ch. 4) for comparison to establish the level of coherence. Consistently applying the five-stage framework (but now adding the sixth, "Sacramental Experience"), the author carefully compares the ancient and the modern. In each heading, I appreciate the author's scholarly integrity by not attempting to increase the coherence between the two. After the investigation, the author summarizes, "It is clear from the theological reflection . . . that the experience of modern-day charismatic prophets coheres strongly with the experiences of the Old Testament prophets in many ways" (139). Finally, chapter 6 offers a summary of the study, its limitations in three areas, and new "vistas" for future research. An appendix lists six interview questions.

This book is a fine example of using an ancient text to interpret a contemporary experience, applying different methodologies. This attempted connection between the two eras also influences each other: the modern experience sheds light on the reading of the ancient text, while the Old Testament record serves as a hermeneutical template for the twenty-first-century Charismatic prophets. The author is keenly aware of the limitations of his study: one prophet from many in the Old Testament, and selected Charismatic prophets in Canada (144). But the art of research is the process of delimitation!

Two questions linger after reading the book. The first concerns the agency of the (Holy) Spirit. Chapter 4 includes many voices of modern prophets, and the agency of the Holy Spirit is liberally expressed. They understand the work of the Holy Spirit not only in revealing messages but also in a variety of functions such as "pilot and guide," "inspire," and "flood the soul." (This indicates that they are Pentecostals.) Interestingly, in Jeremiah's experience, it is "God" and the "word," but nowhere is the work of God's Spirit mentioned in the book. In contrast, elsewhere in the Old Testament, the Spirit is often attributed to being the source of revelation, even for a pagan seer Balaam (". . . the Spirit of God came on him, and he spoke his message. . . ," Num 24:2b–3a). I fully understand that Jeremiah best reveals the inner workings of the prophetic vocation, but this would be an interesting issue to explore. The second question is if this comparative study tries to equate Old Testament prophetism with the modern-day prophetic phenomenon. If the author's intention is

only to investigate the level of coherence between the two experiences that are millennia apart, he did it well.

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Phenomenal Phenomena: Biblical and Multicultural Accounts of Spirits and Exorcism. By Joy L. Vaughan. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2023. 265 pp.

Studying exorcism in biblical and theological discourse is not a popular topic. Yet, New Testament interpreters are forced to interpret accounts of exorcism regarding the Synoptic tradition. For many Western scholars, these accounts are problematic to their Western reductionist worldview, and (often influenced by Bultmann) their only option is to explain away the realities of spirit possession as physical, mental, or mythical accounts. At the same time, global anthropological scholars have long accepted spirit possession accounts and have documented the cultural and contextual importance of these phenomena in their analyses. These anthropological insights reveal much about the worldview of cultural contexts unhindered by Western reductionist paradigms. However, very few studies have sought to engage the continuity of both. In *Phenomenal Phenomena*, Joy L. Vaughan seeks to do just that by using insights into modern spirit possession accounts in global contexts to shed light on biblical spirit possession accounts. In this way, Vaughan hopes not only to allow these multicultural perspectives to illuminate these ancient texts but also demonstrate that the ancient worldview has more in common with the global contextual worldview than seen in Western NT scholarship.

In Chapter One, Vaughan lays out a comprehensive history of the interpretation of exorcism in the New Testament, pointing out that while scholars widely recognize Jesus as an exorcist, scholars have debated the interpretation of these passages (8). From legendary tales in Bultmann to psychological conditions for modern anthropologists, most of these methods for interpreting spirit possession disavow the historicity of the accounts to "disallow the genuine existence of modern experiences of possession and exorcism" (17). At the same time, modern anthropological studies of spirit possession recognize the value of cultural accounts yet do not use these insights to read back into the first-century worldview. Vaughan argues in Chapter Two that anthropological studies also fall into the trap of analyzing the spirit-worldview as either customs or religious practices without engaging the validity of these experiences. They occupy the worldview but do not necessarily represent reality. This, too, is a Western paradigm. Instead, in Chapter Three, Vaughan presents a methodology of interpretation that allows the biblical author's historical account to be compared to contemporary cultural phenomena and asks "if they are historically plausible" accounts to provide some sense of validity to the supernatural biblical data (75).

The second section is the heart of her contribution to this task. In Chapter Four, she explores how spirit possession is related to the cause of sickness. She demonstrates

that spirit and illness are widely experienced phenomena globally. With these insights, she looks at various Gospel texts where possession is linked to diseases and disability, and exorcism is a method of cure. She then compares this text to accounts from many different regions of the world, including Asia, Africa, South America, and Europe. She uses these insights to show that Bultmannian interpretations of the supernatural as "myth" are "not an allowable premise" in light of these realities (133). In Chapter Five, she explores spirit-possession's impact on human strength in various biblical accounts. Again, her comparison to multicultural, global accounts seeks to establish lines of continuity to validate ancient biblical accounts. In Chapter Six, she looks at spirit possession and its effects on speech, voice inflection phenomena, and ocular alteration, finding anthropological parallels in global accounts.

Chapter Seven concludes with the findings of her research. She argues, "The collection of evidence above demonstrates that there are many reports of possession experience that are characteristically analogous to the stories of Jesus and those who suffered ailments" (206). These insights counter a history of biblical studies that offered non-spiritual explanations of such biblical phenomena. The fact that global contexts have documented multicultural phenomena should give biblical interpreters pause before making such reductionistic claims. In this way, Vaughan rightfully "narrows the gap" between the "Jesus of history and the historical Jesus" (209).

To finish the final chapter, Vaughan, a professor at Asbury University, takes up the legacy of "deliverance ministry" in the Pentecostal and Charismatic tradition. She notes that healing and spirit possession were a reality in the Healing Movement with ministers like Oral Roberts and William Branham. Later, Charismatic ministers also embraced healing and deliverance as interconnected. She notes that some of this possession worldview expanded into end-times prophecy teaching and demonology-based fictional literature. The strength of the Spirit-empowered traditions is that there is no disconnect between the spirit-worldview of the New Testament and their ministry phenomena. For Vaughan, the totality of global, ancient, and Spirit-oriented contexts confirm that supernatural phenomenon and spirit possession is an ontological reality that all biblical interpreters must take seriously.

Vaughan's engagement with the subject of exorcism contributes to both biblical interpretation and critiques of Western enlightenment anti-supernatural assumptions that have shaped the church and its worldview. By connecting the ancient biblical accounts with modern phenomena, her work should be viewed by those in the Spirit-empowered tradition as a new way to support the supernatural worldview that comes with its embedded theology of healing, miracles, and the supernatural. Though it is uncertain whether Vaughan would include herself in the Pentecostal academy, this study should undoubtedly be elevated to prominence in the canon of Pentecostal-Charismatic scholarship not just for biblical interpretation but for its contribution to documenting

the global phenomena of healing and the supernatural. Additionally, its contribution to epistemology is consistent with the Pentecostal hermeneutic that elevates the experience of phenomena in interpreting Scripture. While the average believer may get lost in the rich documentary research, this text would be perfect for any graduate or post-graduate course looking at Pentecostal hermeneutics or global contextual readings of Scripture. It will undoubtedly spur new discussions of demonology, deliverance, and Pentecostal phenomenology in general.

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Christ Centered: The Evangelical Nature of Pentecostal Theology. By Robert Menzies. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2020. 190 pp.

It is unanimously accepted that Christology is an indispensable theological tenet of Pentecostal theology. Thus, the title of Robert Menzies book, *Christ Centered*, has historical ties to origins of early Pentecostal theological expressions rooted in the Full Gospel. Yet it is the decidedly more divisive subtitle of the text, *The Evangelical Nature of Pentecostal Theology*, that provides the scaffolding for the text. Menzies' objective is to tether Pentecostal theology to a narrow subsection of religious expression commonly labeled Evangelicalism. In the opening pages of the text, he laments that the strong Evangelical convictions of Pentecostalism are being forgotten (xv). Further into the Introduction he presses the issues further claiming those who do not affirm the Evangelical origins of Pentecostal theology ". . . do not understand the Pentecostal movement or seek to transform it into an image of their creation" (xvii). Menzies' strong assertions provide the reader with a clear understanding of his stance regarding his views on the relationship between Pentecostalism and Evangelicalism.

Given the strong assertions in the Introduction, Menzies' appeal to R. A. Torrey as historical evidence for the Evangelical origins of Pentecostal theology should not come as a surprise to those familiar with early Pentecostal history. Unlike Charles Parham, whose reputation has been called into question under historical scrutiny, the historical record regarding Torrey is favorable. Further, Torrey provides a direct connection to the Keswick Movement, which played a larger role in shaping Evangelical sensibilities than the Wesleyan roots of William Seymour. Torrey, whom Menzies suggests is the "father of Fundamentalism" (3), provides the historical ties necessary for Menzies to assert the Evangelical origins of Pentecostalism. While he does not explicitly make the claim, those familiar with the historical underpinnings of Pentecostalism will note that Menzies is essentially shifting the primary influence of Pentecostalism from Azusa Street to the Keswick Movement in his appeal to Torrey as the father of Pentecostalism (4), despite Parham and Seymour having the strongest historical consensus. Considerably more historical scrutiny must be conducted prior to validating Menzies' assertions regarding Torrey as the "father of Pentecostalism." While the influences of the Keswick and Higher Life movements upon Pentecostalism have been historically documented, the attempt to position the Keswick Movement as the primary influence of early Pentecostalism requires more than the condensed biographical sketch provided by Menzies.

Part II transitions towards a theological argument in favor of the Evangelical origins of Pentecostalism. The opening pages anticipate the absence of Azusa Street from the previous historical defense by devaluing the role of Azusa Street. Citing his

father, a renowned historian, Menzies insinuates that the Evangelical origins of Pentecostalism protected the Pentecostal Movement from being cast to the periphery, which he claims has been the fate of over twenty charismatic movements documented in the history of the church. Conveniently, the discussion of Azusa Street and its most influential characters, Parham and Seymour, is only mentioned in passing as evidence for the Evangelical nature of Pentecostal theology. The remaining portion of Part II addresses the three key theological themes of baptism in the Spirit, glossolalia, and signs/wonders in three separate chapters. Menzies' choice of these three specific theological themes is anticipated as they are historically the most commonly rejected among Evangelical/fundamentalist theological systems. The argument that Pentecostal theology has its Evangelical root hinges upon being able to justify these three theological themes within the theological systems of Evangelicalism. Menzies leans heavily on the works of James Dunn and Max Turner, whose influence is evident in the numerous citations to their works within the chapters. Notably absent are works from influential Evangelical theologians such as John Frame, Wayne Grudem, Louis Berkhof, or Millard Erickson, who have produced works of systematic theology. The fact that Menzies is unable to make direct connections between prominent Evangelical theologians and these key doctrinal issues suggests the relationship between Evangelicals and Pentecostals may be more tremulous than he is willing to admit.

In the next section of the text, Menzies shifts the dialogue from theology to spirituality. The section contains chapters on the necessity of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and missions. Ignoring the pietist influences of the Reformation, Menzies advances his argument for the Evangelical origins of Pentecostalism by appealing to the Reformer Martin Luther. Bypassing the pietist influences Menzies is relieved of addressing the theological differences between the magisterial reformers and pietist movements regarding religious experience. As a renowned historian Menzies is no doubt aware of the abundant historical documentation concerning the influence of Wesleyan/Holiness religious expression upon Pentecostalism, which suggests the omission was intentional. The omission raises questions concerning the strength of Menzies' argumentative ability to withstand alternative historical and theological proposals.

The fourth and final section enters into dialogue with two of the premier contemporary Pentecostal theologians: Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen and Amos Yong. Menzies specifically addresses an article written by Kärkkäinen for the book titled *The Spirit in the World*. He rebuffs the idea that the diversity of Pentecostalism makes it difficult to construct a set of unifying theological principles. Menzies attempts to parlay what is a valid critique of Kärkkäinen to promote the Evangelical origins of Pentecostal theology. This attempt is only viable if the origins of early Pentecostal theology are shifted away from Azusa Street and relocated to the Keswick Movement. Such an attempt runs

upstream against the consensus of Azusa Street as the defining event of modern Pentecostalism. Menzies continues his critique of Kärkkäinen, questioning the primacy of spirituality over theology within the Pentecostal tradition. This positions Menzies to argue that Kärkkäinen is "dissatisfied with the simple focus on the Bible as the source of our theology" (124). Menzies' argument is one that has been leveled by fundamentalists since the days of Azusa Street. Having registered his critique of Kärkkäinen, Menzies now turns his attention to Yong. He takes issue with Yong's assertion that other religions may be "instruments of the Holy Spirit working out the Divine purposes in the world" (131). Menzies argues that Yong has elevated pneumatology at the expense of Christology, lamenting that Yong's exhortations "sound more like a product of contemporary Western and liberal culture than the apostolic mandate" (132). Again, Menzies raises valid concerns about the views of Yong that must be critically examined. Yet, Menzies forgoes such critical examination in favor of casting Yong as outside the Pentecostal Movement. The attempts by Menzies to position two prominent Pentecostal scholars outside acceptable parameters of Pentecostalism weakens his argument for the Evangelical origins of Pentecostalism.

Since the acceptance of the Assembly of God into the National Association of Evangelicals in 1942, the origins of Pentecostalism have been disputed. Menzies is among the minority of Pentecostal scholars in the academy who advocate for the Evangelical origins of Pentecostal theology. He should be commended for reminding Pentecostals of the deep influences that Evangelicalism has asserted upon Pentecostal theology. The tendency of Pentecostal scholarship to downplay these influences needed to be corrected. Menzies' work attempts to provide such a correction. The challenge for Menzies is his assumption that such influences are grounds for locating the origins of Pentecostal theology in Evangelicalism. The latter is much more difficult to justify historically and theologically. It requires repositioning the historical origins of Pentecostalism from Azusa Street to the Keswick Movement, ignoring the pietistic influence of the Wesleyan/Holiness Movement and reworking key theological themes within Pentecostalism to fit within fundamentalist theological systems. Despite the difficulty in claiming the Evangelical origins of Pentecostalism, Pentecostals should not dismiss the claims of Menzies. Rather, Pentecostals should see Menzies' book as an opportunity to engage in critical dialogue around the areas of continuity and discontinuity with Evangelical theology. Such ecumenical dialogue will allow for Pentecostals to come out of the shadows of Evangelicalism and begin to establish and articulate itself as a unique theological tradition.

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Follow the Healer: Biblical Foundations for Healing Ministry. By Stephen Seamands. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2023. 176 pp.

In *Follow the Healer*, Stephen Seamands examines the subject of divine healing, surveying the biblical and theological foundations of Jesus' healing ministry to inspire his readers to continue this ministry in the church today. Although he writes from an admittedly Wesleyan perspective, his primary concern is to encourage all Christians to be engaged in the healing ministry. His influences range from John and Charles Wesley, A. B. Simpson, and Smith Wigglesworth to Randy Clark, Jack Deere, and John Wimber. This is reflected in his wide appreciation of the diverse contributions of various schools of healing throughout the history of the church.

Seamands argues that when followers of Christ engage in the healing ministry, they join Jesus' continuing ministry through the church today. Jesus gave us a threefold pattern of ministry that his followers participate in—*incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection*. Undergirding Jesus' healing ministry is his love and compassion. This motivation should determine our purpose and shape our practice of the healing ministry, encouraging us to be patient and persistent when faced with challenges. Seamands presents five ways Jesus heals today: 1. through supernatural healing and miracles; 2. through doctors and medicine; 3. through the human body's healing power—the miracle of nature; 4. through bestowing grace in suffering; and 5. through victorious dying. He also examines the relationship between healing and the image of God. He shows that Jesus' healing encompasses all four dimensions of the broken divine image—spiritual, social, physical, and psychological.

The relationship between healing and the kingdom of God is also explored. By showing that Jesus inaugurated the kingdom of God, the author lays the foundation for understanding one aspect of the mystery of the kingdom: the *already/not yet* dual nature of the kingdom. He maintains that this "radical middle" perspective is foundational for understanding healing in this age. Toward the end of the book, he builds upon this foundation and encourages his readers to embrace the mystery of the kingdom. He illustrates that several truths in Christian theology (e.g., the Trinity, incarnation, divine sovereignty, and human free will) contain aspects of mystery that must be maintained. He then attempts to present a balanced view of two debated topics in healing: the relationship between atonement and physical healing and the role of faith in healing. The issue of theodicy is also addressed within the context of physical healing. He holds that any helpful answers in this area need to emphasize that God fully identifies with human suffering through the life and death of Christ. In turn, those involved in the ministry of healing are wounded healers who allow their "radiant scars" to propel them to the ministry of healing to others in need. In the last chapter, Seamands clarifies the

relationship between healing and the Holy Spirit. While many books on this subject focus on the role of the gifts of the Spirit in the healing ministry, the author stresses the crucial role of the fruit of the Spirit working in tandem with the charismata.

Overall, *Follow the Healer* is an excellent resource that bridges the gap between academic theology and praxis. The author has the unique vantage point of being involved in both worlds, which is evident in his writing. His involvement in formal theological education, as well as his decades of experience in the healing ministry, add a valuable overarching dimension to his contribution. His treatment of the topic does not come across as aloof from the real-world challenges associated with this particular ministry. If anything, it affirms the widespread experience of many and provides biblical and practical insights on how to advance toward effectiveness in ministering healing today.

His treatment of key biblical and theological concepts related to the healing ministry are all aimed at helping his readers gain a foundational understanding of divine healing. Therein lies the value of this work to those interested in engaging in the healing ministry. It answers many pertinent questions related to this subject in a balanced, nuanced, and straightforward way. Its direct approach makes it accessible to academic students and practitioners in the church alike. His theological/biblical presentation in this work lays down a solid foundation for the healing ministry today.

In his attempt to cover the core issues relating to divine healing from a theological/biblical standpoint, Seamands' work may come across as less practical to some who are familiar with other authors in this field. Some leading writers in the past, like John Wimber and Francis MacNutt, provided sections in their books that walked the reader step-by-step on how to minister healing to others, offering various field-tested models. Still, it may not have been Seamands' intention to write an exhaustive book on healing covering every related aspect, so this point does not necessarily take away from this excellent, concise treatment of healing.

Seamands presents nuanced theological concepts in a simple and straightforward way that is easy to absorb by a wide variety of audiences, even those in the church who may lack seminary training but nevertheless have been gifted by God in the healing ministry. His articulation of such concepts as *already/not yet* of the kingdom will introduce many readers to this New Testament theological principle in a clear and approachable manner. One of the more challenging topics related to divine healing is the question of why some are not healed. Seamands' approach to this question is both pastorally sensitive and theologically adept. He refrains from providing petty answers and maintains the tension of mystery that runs through several biblical doctrines. At the same time, his approach provides a helpful model that encourages believers to persist in praying for healing and walk compassionately alongside those who are still waiting for their prayers to be answered. He does not shy away from dealing with the complex

questions of theodicy. His treatment is a commendable approach that provides a helpful, workable model for anyone involved in Christian ministry.

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The Kaleidoscopic City: Hong Kong, Mission, and the Evolution of Global Pentecostalism. By Alex R. Mayfield. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2023. 269 pp.

Studies of the Pentecostal Movement have proved the existence of many forms of Pentecostalism, with the various permutations of Pentecostalism practiced in different places, thus causing the emergence of the term "Pentecostalisms." Hong Kong is no exception to the rule; since its earliest days, the Pentecostalism in that colonial city took shape by "a kaleidoscopic mix of people with competing ideas and practices" (p. 4). The form of Pentecostalism that took root in Hong Kong was influenced by missionaries and preachers from various originations, networks, institutions, and nations, carrying opposing ideas at times. However, this smorgasbord of ideas and creeds took a new form by engaging with the local Chinese culture and the message of modern Pentecost. Alex Mayfield, in *The Kaleidoscopic City*, pens the mission history of Pentecostalism in Hong Kong between 1907 and 1942. Using Foucault's conception of discourse, Mayfield describes the Pentecostal discourse on this island as "the product of global interconnections, sustained through a bevy of international revival centers, periodicals, and eventually—denominations" (p. 4). In this convincing discourse, Mayfield highlights the effect of globalization on the Pentecostal Movement in this city and how the global-local exchange transformed the form of Pentecostalism embraced and merged in Hong Kong.

In his attempt to explore the development of Pentecostalism in the early twentieth century, Mayfield employs an often-neglected methodology of spatial analysis using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data. In this discursive spatial approach, he examines the development of the Pentecostal movement in Hong Kong as a local expression while considering the multivalent nature of the global Pentecostal movement. Using 1,072 articles referencing Hong Kong in Pentecostal periodicals along with other available historical records, Pentecostalism in Hong Kong is treated as a diverse yet singular network as well as a part of the global Pentecostal network. In this transnational network discourse, one will find the interactions among local missionaries and institutions and how the global Pentecostal networks influenced it through publications, conferences, and interpersonal relations.

In five chapters, Mayfield explores a distinct face of Pentecostalism in each chapter. Chapter one treats Hong Kong as a gateway city to the region, focusing on its struggle for a center. In chapter two, he delves into denominational identity and Pentecostal mission structures. He tells readers about the move from faith mission models of the Pentecostal norm to the denominational models as denominations were formed in the homelands of the missionaries. With the shift in the mission model

comes a shift in the aims, identities, and missional approach of Pentecostals in Hong Kong, looking like Pentecostals at one moment and like evangelicals at other times.

Chapter three portrays Hong Kong as a soul-saving city sharing the soul-saving, Spirit-filled education offered by Pentecostal missionaries and evangelistic institutions. He points out that Pentecostal evangelistic practices look "un-Pentecostal" as they see education, colportage, and Sunday schools as the most effective means to evangelize this colonial city. Chapter four focuses on Pentecostal spirituality, where the Pentecostals compete in Hong Kong's religious market. Chapter five discusses the role of female missionaries, the acceptance of the evangelical missionary wife model, and the vital role of the local Chinese Bible women in the spread of the Pentecostal message. As the book is named, these five chapters show the kaleidoscopic view of Hong Kong's Pentecostal movement in five distinct themes.

Mayfield's *The Kaleidoscopic City* is a thematic examination of Pentecostalism in Hong Kong using a discursive spatial approach. In this impressive work, he manages to capture the development of Pentecostalism that is being transformed by globalization and the local culture where it is planted. His approach vastly differs from the traditional Pentecostal historiography drawn by three patterns rooted in different historiographies. Unlike the historical discourses of Vinson Synan, Walter Hollenweger, and Allan Anderson, who structured their work on the origins of Pentecostalism, Mayfield's emphasis is on the transformation of Pentecostalism and the form of Pentecostalism that emerged in Hong Kong.

One of the contributions of Mayfield to the study of global Pentecostalism is his inclusion of historical data omitted in Anderson's *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, which mainly focuses on the early part of the Pentecostal history, as Anderson intends to point to the multiple origins of global Pentecostalism. Thus, while the revival centers and pioneer Western missionaries are included in Anderson's work, it ends with the indigenous leader, Mok Lai Chi, excluding the development of Hong Kong's Pentecostalism in later decades. Mayfield's work fills out the denominational histories from 1925 until 1942. His account includes the Chinese leaders who worked alongside the Western missionaries and the impact of social and ideological changes in global Pentecostalism on its local expression.

His choice of method is effective in handling the vast amount of historical data in a manageable way, and the use of the kaleidoscope analogy fits a city like Hong Kong that played many vital roles in the region. Moreover, viewing Pentecostalism in Hong Kong as part of a transnational spatially specific discourse provides a broader and more nuanced description of the Pentecostal mission in the city. However, the thematic approach has drawbacks as some other important facts are omitted. As the author acknowledges, his method of pulling out meta trends using charts and figures is not self-explanatory and is challenging for making sense without added narrative. One

should be mindful of the biased nature of historical discourses as this project relies heavily on periodicals that are, in fact, official narratives. One should be open to the possibility of non-official narratives that can be somewhat contrary to what is included in this project.

Overall, this book provides the readers with a better understanding of the history of the early Pentecostal mission in Hong Kong and the evolution of global Pentecostalism in the early twentieth century. It is an excellent book for students who study Pentecostalism, Asian Pentecostal history, and scholars of global Christianity.

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Soon and Very Soon: A Biblical and Theological Study of the Events Surrounding Jesus Christ's Second Coming. By David K. Hebert. Tulsa: Word and Spirit Press, 2019. 193 pp.

As a youth it was intriguing to hear messages from preachers about the end times. People called it *prophecy*. Through the years as a pastor if I inquired of lay people what their favorite book of the Bible was I either received one of two answers: Psalms or Revelation. I am sure that the late gospel singer Andraé Crouch's song "Soon and Very Soon" was the inspiration for the title of Hebert's inquiry.

Soon and Very Soon is a collection of numerous ideas on eschatology and end times models from the past 150 years. The author's motivation comes from his early days as a Christian in the 1970s when the Jesus People and the Charismatic Renewal were in full swing. This time in his life provided the impetus behind the research.

He commences in chapter one by asking the question, "What does the term *end times* mean?" Many people quote Joel 2:28–32 as a basis for what the last days entail, that God will pour out the Spirit on all flesh and the great and terrible Day of the Lord will come. Yet, we are still waiting for that Day and many ideas abound about what will occur. Herbert states he is speaking of the "Perfect/Complete Gospel of Both Comings of Jesus Christ," as he terms it. Providing a definition to this phrase, he writes that the "concept cohesively unifies Jesus' first coming (for redemption, reconciliation, and restoration) with His second coming (the Rapture and Resurrection of the Body of Christ) into the complete salvation of the Body of Christ (both corporately and individually)" (5). This Perfect/Complete Gospel, which he believes Christ related to his disciples (Matt 24; Mark 13; Luke 17), will constitute the entirety of his investigation.

In chapter two he defines Bible prophecy. The concept is set into two paradigms, *forthtelling* and *foretelling.* Forthtelling states it "like it is" in today's terms, such as in preaching, while foretelling speaks of the future. The book contains much of the second term, *foretelling*. The author's writing concludes with defining the distinctive eschatological interpretations of Revelation—preterist, idealist, historical, and futurist.

Hebert's understanding of time, utilizing the Greek words *kairos* and *chronos*, is presented in chapter three. In essence, k*airos* is linear and *chronos* sequential time. He supports both ideas of time with scriptural references, leading to a discussion of salvation history through Jesus Christ. Carrying the chapter to its summation, he speaks about a gap of time named the "time of the Gentiles" (Dan 9:26). This period ranges between the beginning of the church and the rapture (33).

These thoughts flow directly into the next chapter with a discussion of the kingdom of Heaven and kingdom of God. He believes both phrases "are synonymously, biblically, and theologically meaning the same thing" (39). Noting the kingship of

Christ in Scripture and the mystery of the kingdom in Jesus' parables, these thoughts lead to a short discussion of dispensationalism and replacement theology.

Chapter five concerns the second coming of Christ or what we call the *parousia.* With numerous scriptural references, Hebert seeks to define the two comings of Christ—his first advent and second coming. These thoughts lead to his opinion of the idea of the Perfect/Complete Gospel. As he sees the timeline in Scripture develop, he notes the next event on the prophetic calendar, the millennium.

In chapter six Hebert defines three major views of the millennial kingdom—premillennial, postmillennial, and amillennial. He remarks that the millennial ideas are more controversial than the second coming beliefs for Christians. Delving into the church fathers and church history, he presents the wide range of ideas and thoughts about the millennium through the centuries. Because the presuppositions of the author are premillennial, he moves directly into chapter seven with the Old Testament idea of the Day of the Lord.

Observing numerous references to the Day of the Lord (Yahweh) in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Joel, the author believes this idea leads into the book of Acts with Peter's utterance of Joel 2 in the apostle's first sermon (Acts 2). He notes that the Day of the Lord predicts judgment to the world systems as never before experienced. Linking the Day of the Lord to the tribulation in Revelation, Hebert states it will be an "unprecedented" time of wrath (88).

In chapter eight he tackles the famed rapture theory. Jumping between partial rapture theories and the like, he concludes with the idea that the pretribulation rapture fits deftly into his idea of the Perfect/Complete Gospel.

Moving into other areas of eschatology, chapter nine is about the intermediate state, eternal state, and resurrection/judgment. As well, he writes of annihilationism and the Roman Catholic views of purgatory. However, his conclusions, drawn from his reading of Scripture, do not accept these two prior interpretations.

Finally, chapter ten speaks of the "signs of the times." Bringing together all he has written to this point, he concludes with an appeal to preach the gospel to all the world (143). His Perfect/Complete Comings of Christ leads to "such a time as this" and an urgency to take the gospel to the world.

There are two observations I would offer of Hebert's research. Number one, he is not writing an analysis of end times speculations. Each chapter essentially lists the various topics from a premillennial dispensationalist point of view. The author shares research about other views; however, his thinking fundamentally comes back to the pretribulation rapture model. Secondly, coming from my own studies of eschatology and as a pastor in churches, I know there are a number of other concepts on what Christ's second coming means to Christian people. There are pastors who do not believe in a literal second coming. As one minister told me in seminary, Christ comes a

second time when we worship or when we feed the poor (Matt 25). These impressions are not addressed in his research. In short, *Soon and Very Soon* is a good resource for lay people who believe in a premillennial rapture and literal millennium, but a number of other interpretations are not examined in his study.

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