

NARRATIVES OF THE SPIRIT: RECOVERING A MEDIEVAL RESOURCE*

I begin with the ninth-century Latin hymn *Veni Creator*.¹ After spending a year combing through texts on the Holy Spirit, I find this short hymn to reflect major elements of the tradition in a comprehensive, succinct, and poetic way. Beginning with prayer also underlines the doxological as well as the historical and theological dimensions of the project.

- I. Come, Creator, Spirit,
visit the souls of your own;
fill with heavenly grace
the breasts that you have created.
- II. You who are called Paraclete,
gift of the most high God,
living water, flame, charity
and spiritual anointing;
- III. You who are sevenfold in your gift,
finger of God's right hand,
you who were rightly promised by the Father,
enrich our throats with speech.
- IV. In flame the light of our senses,
pour love into our hearts,
the weakness of our bodies
strengthen with lasting power.
- V. Drive the enemy far back,
and at once grant us peace;
with you going ahead of us,
may we avoid all harm.

*In memoriam: Yves Congar (1904–1995); Walter Principe (1922–1996). Also, I would like to thank the following persons who have read and commented on this paper at various stages of its development: Walter Principe, Michael Slusser, John Bennett, Elizabeth Johns, Elizabeth Johnson, Mark Burrows, Joseph Chinnici, and Nancy Dallavalle.

¹Cited in Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol 1, *The Experience of the Spirit* (New York: Seabury, 1983 [1979]) 108-109.

VI. Through you may we know the Father
and recognize the Son;
and may we always believe
in you, Spirit of both.

These few stanzas point to both the internal and external loci of the Spirit's work, that is, the gifts and fruits promised by God. The hymn notes the traditional images of water, fire, and oil. It petitions the Spirit for inspired speech, alert senses, loving hearts, strong bodies, safety and peace. Finally, it attests to that power of the Spirit that enables one to know God.

This article is arranged in three sections. First, a word about context and method. Then, an offering of select medieval narratives of the Spirit under four themes that are either explicitly or implicitly present in the hymn above, namely, (1) God's liberality; (2) ecclesial communion; (3) prophetic witness, and (4) transformed affections. Finally, I raise some questions about the silences of the Spirit. To date, the authors I have examined most fully are Augustine, because of his notable influence on Western trinitarian theology; Hildegard of Bingen and Julian of Norwich, whose neglected texts reveal the prophetic and mystical dimension of the divine presence in singular ways; and Bonaventure, because of the richness of his imagery and the existential, pastoral concerns of his theology.²

I. CONTEXT AND METHOD

My task was to look at pneumatology in the Christian West from a historical perspective. Therefore, my aim in this paper is to locate and reflect on the language, imagery and concepts of select, neglected texts on the Holy Spirit in a way that takes seriously the faith experience of the community and its social, ecclesial context.³ Why did our ancestors in the faith speak of the Spirit the way they did? What needs and questions did a given approach attempt to answer? What didn't they say about the Holy Spirit and why? What problems were glossed over? What enemies silenced?

²Authors yet to be examined include Mechthilde of Magdeburg, Bernard of Clairvaux, Thomas Aquinas, Catherine of Siena, Martin Luther, Teresa of Avila, and John of the Cross.

³See Roger Haight, "The Case For Spirit Christology," *Theological Studies* 53 (1992): 260. In concluding comments of the second volume of the multivolume work, *The Presence of God*, Bernard McGinn describes his method as one that does not criticize by measuring the gap between ideals and reality or by judging the legitimacy of the ideals. Rather he seeks to identify the spiritual values various mystical authors said they were trying to inculcate in their lives and societies. That they no doubt often failed or deluded themselves about their intentions does not necessarily falsify the values at which they aimed. I take a similar approach in this essay. *The Growth of Mysticism: Gregory the Great through the 12th Century* (New York: Crossroad, 1994) 420.

This task presents a challenge inasmuch as the East has always been seen as the shining star in the preservation and celebration of the Spirit's presence. Criticisms of the Western tradition's theologies of the Holy Spirit are numerous.⁴ Indeed, now familiar descriptors of the Spirit include personally amorphous, faceless, forgotten, upstaged, ethereal and vacant, unclear and invisible.⁵ Descriptors of pneumatology include ambiguous, reticent, obscure, neglected, groping, abstract.⁶ So, at first glance, the situation does not appear promising.⁷

And when one extends the focus to the doctrine of the Trinity, one finds scholars complaining that Western trinitarian theologies are unrelated to creation, devoid of soteriological concerns, and neglectful of the distinctive roles of the persons. For example, in his book on Ruysbroeck's trinitarian mysticism, Louis Dupré states:

We in the Latin world begin with a theory of the one God and add the "distinctions" later. But by that time they no longer relate to the primary object of spiritual theology, man's approach to God. The Greeks, on the contrary, begin

⁴Critical statements about early pneumatology are not limited to Roman Catholic theologians, e.g., Protestant process theologian David Griffin laments the loss of Paul's awareness of the Spirit's presence. "But it was not long before the experience of being guided by the Spirit waned. A Christian was increasingly defined in terms of certain doctrinal beliefs, and these were beliefs that did not concern the relation of God's Spirit to the actual experiences of daily life. . . . The sense of a present experience of God that characterized Jesus and the early Church was largely gone." "Holy Spirit: Compassion and Reverence for Being," in *Religious Experience and Process Theology: The Pastoral Implications of a Major Modern Movement* (New York: Paulist Press, 1976) 109.

⁵See Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992) 50; Sallie McFague, *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) 169-71; 157-80; Walter Kasper, *God of Jesus Christ*, trans. V. Green (New York: Paulist, 1976) 223; Frederick Crowe, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* (Willowdale: Regis College, 1970) 18, 69.

⁶Kilian McDonnell summarizes highlights of this discussion in "A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?" *Theological Studies* 46 (1985): 191-227. Ralph Del Colle focuses on Orthodox criticism in *Christ and the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) 8-33. McDonnell notes that Wolf-Dieter Hauschild has questioned assessments that pneumatology was lacking in the early theologians. *Gottes Geist und der Mensch: Studien zur frühchristlichen Pneumatologie* (Munich: Kaiser, 1972) 11.

⁷Elizabeth Johnson attributes a less than vibrant trinitarian theology to the fact that "over time the triune symbol has been divorced from the original multifaceted, life-giving experiences that gave it birth in human understanding." *She Who Is*, 192. See also the discussion of the relationship between spirituality and theology by Philip Endean, Mark McIntosh, Matthew Ashley and Anne M. Clifford in *Christian Spirituality Bulletin* 3/2 (Fall 1995): 6-21.

directly with the order of salvation.⁸

And in her careful study of the Trinity, *God for Us*, Catherine Mowry LaCugna criticizes Augustine on the basis of a hypothetical separation of his systematic from his exegetical and pastoral works. She says:

Even if Augustine himself intended nothing of the sort, his legacy to Western theology was an approach to the Trinity largely cut off from the economy of salvation. . . . When the *De Trinitate* is read in parts, or read apart from its overall context and in light of Augustine's full career, it is both possible and common to see no real connection between the self-enclosed Trinity of divine persons and the sphere of creation and redemption.⁹

One also finds criticisms of the role the Trinity plays in contemporary faith experience. Karl Rahner's lament that in their practical life, Christians are

⁸Louis Dupré, *The Common Life: The Origins of Trinitarian Mysticism and Its Development by Jan Ruusbroec* (New York: Crossroad, 1984) 10-11. He goes on:

It would, of course, be absurd to claim that Western spiritual theology has ignored the Trinity. . . . But the real question is, what the idea, so obviously present from the beginning of Western theology has *meant* to the spiritual life. While in the East the three Persons operate at once upon the soul, each one in a different mode, in the West God's operation in the soul appears as a single effect. All we know is one God. There is no *experience* of the distinctions he reveals about himself, nor is there any vital interest in them. This is not to say that the Trinity remains a purely abstract concept. St. Augustine, who is responsible for much of the later speculation, is deeply concerned with finding "images" of the Trinity in human experience. But these images remain *external* analogies (16-17).

⁹*God For Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991) 102-103. LaCugna also suggests that Augustine's obvious love of metaphysical speculation caused him to neglect the scriptures. Peter Brown comments to the contrary, "He [Augustine] had come to believe that the understanding and exposition of the Scriptures was the heart of a bishop's life. His relations with the Scriptures, therefore, come to form a constant theme throughout the *Confessions*." *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1967) 162. Brown also cites A. M. LaBonnardière, "Car si Saint Augustine est un théologien, il est un théologien de la Bible; son enseignement sourde directement de l'Écriture." *Recherches de chronologie augustin* (1965) 180. In sermon XXII.7, Augustine calls the Scriptures the "countenance of God" (Ergo pro facie Dei, tibi pone interim scripturam Dei) PL 38, 152. Cited in Brown, 262. See also *Confessions*, XI.ii.2. NPNF I, 163/PL 32, 819. James O'Donnell offers a fine analysis of the use of scripture in the *Confessions* in *Confessions, by Augustine* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). However, LaCugna also acknowledges the need to keep narrative and doctrine linked: "The doxological mode of theology keeps together primary and secondary theology, reaffirming both the centrality of the narratives of Christian experience for Christian theology, and the appropriateness of theological reflection on the divine 'actor' in the narratives" (*God For Us*, 358).

"almost mere monotheists" has attained the status of a mantra in the literature!¹⁰ Must one therefore conclude that indeed, the trinitarian persons have been seriously neglected and that in particular, the Holy Spirit is aptly described as Cinderella, that is, the neglected member of a trio, consigned to invisible drudgery in the cellar?¹¹

How might we account for this tendency to undervalue the tradition's treatment of the distinctive role of the persons and in particular, of the Holy Spirit? The criticisms may stem in part, from the pressing search for a pneumatology that will respond to contemporary needs and questions that are radically different from those of historically and geographically distant communities.¹² Additionally, we may err in interpretation by attending only to a very narrow range of texts or by failing to appreciate adequately the language and imagery of these texts and the ways they may have functioned in specific historical contexts.¹³ Indeed, our choice to attend to certain genres more than others may say more about our own needs and consciousness than about the tradition itself.

¹⁰Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970) 10. Rahner offered an early invitation to present the doctrine of the Trinity in such a way that it becomes a reality in the concrete lives of the faithful. He asks, practically, "How can the contemplation of any reality, even of the loftiest reality, beatify us if intrinsically it is absolutely *unrelated* to us in any way?" *Ibid.*, 14-15, 39.

¹¹See G. J. Sirks, "The Cinderella of Theology: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit," *Harvard Theological Review* 50/2 (1957): 77-89.

¹²Recent literature on the Holy Spirit suggests that we are looking for a pneumatology that is not abstract, but located within the concrete, biblical, historical unfolding of salvation history. We want a God in three persons who are above all related to us and to the universe in love, challenge, and care—persons who are able to identify with us in our joys and sorrows. We want a Holy Spirit who enjoys the fullness of a distinctive role and personhood (*proprium*), and yet is equal to the other persons. We would like a pneumatology that is philosophically respectable, intelligible and coherent. Finally, we want a pneumatology that would bring our spirits to life and transform tendencies in the church to mistrust what Congar calls "the personal principle," i.e., "the place that is accorded to the initiatives of individuals as persons and to what those persons have to say on the basis of personal conscientious conviction and motivation" (not to be divorced from an "institutional principle" that sees the church as a communion of persons). *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, *Lord and Giver of Life* (New York: Seabury Press, 1983 [1979]) 153-54.

¹³The call to be more attentive to the complexities of historical context is a hallmark of contemporary historiography. I cite but one example from Sabine MacCormack: "we cannot claim to understand the past if we are not prepared to lend our ears to those who spoke in it and to listen to them in their own words; if we are not prepared to consider the images and objects they created within the context in which these were first meaningful or to comprehend the social and political order that produced words, images, and objects in the first place." "How the Past is Remembered: From Antiquity to Late Antiquity, the Middle Ages and Beyond," in *The Past and the Future of Medieval Studies*, ed. John Van Engen (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994) 107.

These issues are the topic of a recent analysis of the treatment of Augustine in contemporary trinitarian theology by Michel René Barnes. Barnes calls attention—as many others have before him—to the continuing and unhelpful use of Théodore de Régnon's late nineteenth-century categories contrasting Greek and Latin approaches to trinitarian theology.¹⁴ Barnes criticizes what he perceives as systematic theologians' preference for what he calls grand, architectonic, and idealistic styles of writing. In this approach, details matter less than perspective and historical facts become epiphenomena, often reduced to an "expression or symptom of a hermeneutic or ideology." History is treated as the material en-structuring of those themes which are constitutive of contemporary systematics.¹⁵

Another way to express this tension is to call attention to the need to explore the creative possibilities between what Langdon Gilkey calls particularity, or the language of story, and universality, or the language of ontology—both essential to Christian theology. While narrative is the primary language of theology, since the encounter between God and humans is essentially dramatic, one must then proceed to the task of *thinking* about the divine-human relation.¹⁶ The ideal is to take both moments of this single reality seriously and to keep them in dialogue with each other. Some of the criticisms of past pneumatologies are valid; but others reflect inadequate attention to the *particular*, to the dramatic, to the narrative dimension of earlier communities' experiences of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, in liturgy, in religious experience.¹⁷

Another complaint points to the focus on the unity and essence of the Trinity at the expense of attention to the persons. Often enough, one hears about

¹⁴Michel René Barnes, "Augustine in Contemporary Trinitarian Theology," *Theological Studies* 56/2 (June 1995): 237-50. Théodore de Régnon, *Etudes de théologie positive sur la Sainte Trinité* 2 vols (Paris: V. Retaux, 1892).

¹⁵Barnes, 241.

¹⁶Langdon Gilkey, *Catholicism Confronts Modernity: A Protestant View* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975) 91-92.

¹⁷Underlying this approach is the conviction that the theological task is located in the discovery of the presence of the triune God in history, what Killian McDonnell calls the "contact point" where God and humankind "touch" one another. One starts with the individual and collective experience of the Spirit, what he calls the obverse side of the Spirit's mission. "A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?" *Theological Studies* 46 (1985): 206, 208. Another presupposition is the conviction that theological and spiritual texts bear witness to religious experience. In her book *From Virile Woman to Woman Christ*, Barbara Newman expands on this conviction in three points. First, the subjects of religious experience are persons with developed interiority—conscious and unconscious wishes, anxieties, projects, and beliefs regarding key human concerns such as life, love, and death that are often expressed through religion. Second, religious experience takes place in complex, dynamic cultures characterized always at some level by struggle. Third, religious experience reveals mysterious, multivalent, often opaque traces of a real and transcendent object. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995) 16.

Aquinas' choice to treat perfections before processions in God in the *Summa theologiae*. But one rarely runs across discussions of the medieval, academic requirement to comment on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, nor on their content. The first thirty-four distinctions focus in large measure on the persons of the Trinity. The topics include: an introduction (dist. 1); the Trinity (dist. 2); knowledge of God from creatures (dist. 3); generation of the Son (dist. 4-7); incommunicability and simplicity in God (dist. 8); distinction of persons (dist. 9); the Holy Spirit (dist. 10-18); other aspects of the Trinity, especially the way we speak about the persons (dist. 19-34). In the nine distinctions on the Holy Spirit, Lombard treats the Holy Spirit as Love; the procession of the Holy Spirit; the temporal processions; the visible and invisible missions of the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit as Gift. It is not until distinction thirty-five that Lombard begins to speak about the divine attributes of knowledge, providence, omnipresence, causation, omnipotence and will. It is hard to imagine that this formative exercise, undergone by all students from Alexander of Hales to Martin Luther, led to a theology that disregarded the distinctive nature of the persons in the Trinity, as some today suggest.¹⁸

For a more adequate perspective, one needs to consult the vast collection of scriptural commentaries that often provide the backdrop for disputed questions and *summae*. Many medieval theologians engaged in this task throughout their lifetimes. The Holy Spirit is often treated in sections on the annunciation, the baptism of Jesus, other references to the Holy Spirit in the synoptics, and the all important passages in John and Paul. I discovered that narratives of the Spirit were consistently shaped by this biblical language and imagery.

In addition, theology can benefit from an examination of prayers, sermons, liturgical resources, catechetical material and accounts of mystical experience in order to arrive at a "thicker description" of how earlier communities experienced the Spirit's presence.¹⁹ Sermons and catechetical materials are explicitly oriented to communication and praxis in a pastoral setting. Lives of the saints and mystical texts often reveal the God met in intense experiences—usually of individuals—and by extension, of the communities and societies in which they lived.²⁰

¹⁸I am grateful to Walter Principe for calling this fact to my attention.

¹⁹Joan Nuth comments, e.g., that scholarly consideration of texts by doctors of the Church Catherine of Siena and Teresa of Avila fall under the rubric of spirituality since they are not considered theologians. As a result, "any doctrinal insights born of their experience of God are neither noticed nor studied as such, because one does not expect to find them." *Wisdom's Daughter: The Theology of Julian of Norwich* (New York: Crossroad, 1991) 1.

²⁰In an article entitled "Towards A Theology of the Holy Spirit," Edmund J. Dobbin situates trinitarian language within the context of religious experience. He argues that since the Christian experience of the presence of God in our inmost depths (*intimissimum*) has been symbolically expressed primarily through the symbol of the Spirit, we need to

These genres have the potential to provide a window onto the life of the communities to which they were addressed in a way that formal, systematic treatises simply do not. And each genre offers a distinctive perspective and reveals different aspects of a community's interpretation of their experience of God. They complement one other, and provide a more adequate account of the ways in which a community experienced, thought about, imaged and spoke of the Holy Spirit.²¹ We might even ask whether the Holy Spirit is more prominent in certain genres, and if this is the case, how might it be explained?

But I suspect that this situation is even more complex than Barnes allows. Historians also contribute to muting the tradition when they relegate the past to the past, refusing to engage in a dialectic that connects the past to the present in critical and meaningful ways. Is it not just as legitimate to allow the past to "read us," as it is for us to "read" the past?²² One can allow the tradition to call us to account, not by judging us and finding us wanting according to archaic and fossilized criteria, but by expanding our horizons in both constructive and deconstructive directions, exposing us to fresh ways of seeing and thinking about God.

I approached my task with a dual objective. First, are there narratives of the Spirit in the medieval tradition that have been obscured or forgotten?²³ And if so, can these texts be interpreted in an imaginative and historically responsible way

attend to the accounts of that experience. He suggests that the symbol "Father" evokes the transcendent dimension of the numinous as *dissimilis nobis*; the "Son" is Jesus as *Realsymbol* of God; the Holy Spirit is donative of the immanent dimension of the numinous presence, the *similis nobis*. For Dobbin, the Spirit represents the deep abyss within the inmost self whence the power of action emanates, the numinous ground of the unrestricted *eros* of the human spirit. He suggests that such in-depth experiences of God are most visible in mystical literature. He suggests, therefore, that any comprehensive pneumatology must address this part of the tradition, since these accounts offer the most focused, detailed accounts of the experience of the immanent presence of the Spirit. Edmund J. Dobbin. "Towards A Theology of the Holy Spirit," *Heythrop Journal* I/17/1 (1976): 5-19; II/17/2 (1976): 129-49.

²¹For an example of how audiences played a role in the genesis of a work see Katherine Gill, "Women and the Production of Religious Literature in the Vernacular, 1300-1500," in *Creative Women in Medieval and Early Modern Italy: A Religious and Artistic Renaissance*, ed. E. Ann Matter and John Coakley (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994) 63-104; and Aron Guervich, *Medieval Popular Culture: Problems of Belief and Perception*, Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture 14, trans. Janos M. Baak and Paul A. Hollingsworth, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 3-8.

²²David Tracy calls attention to this perspective: "If the text is a genuinely classic one, my present horizon of understanding should always be provoked, challenged, transformed." *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981) 102.

²³Dieter Hauschild, *Gottes Geist und der Mensch*, 11.

that will allow them to be useful to contemporary pneumatology (and by extension christology, trinitarian theology, spirituality, ecclesiology, etc.) and to the faith life of our communities by evoking a more lively and relevant way to encounter the mystery of the Spirit in everyday life? The roles of the Spirit present in these texts are many. A sampling of the most prevalent themes includes an imaging of the Holy Spirit as agent of reconciliation and unity; as the one who offers comfort and confidence to those who suffer; as messenger of God the gift-giver; as the one who empowers the believer to act, especially in the realms of virtue and love of neighbor; and as the one who renews the face of the earth. The Spirit is seen as the wind or breath that blows where it will, bringing freedom; as an aid to contemplation; as the fire of Love that transforms the affections; as the gift of insight, leading to an intelligent grasp of the faith, and the ability to live it maturely; as courage to witness to the gospel and to prophesy. From this rich menu, I have chosen four samplings. The first—the Holy Spirit as the renewing outpouring of God's liberal love—has to do with our image of God. Sections two and three focus on dual aspects of the Spirit's presence to the faith community that need to be held in creative tension, namely, the Holy Spirit as unifier and reconciler of the community and the Holy Spirit as the enabler of prophecy and courageous witness to the ongoing need for reform. The fourth sampling explores the West's distinctive connection between the Spirit and love, and examines texts in which the Holy Spirit is experienced as transformer of the affections.

Second, I made inquiry about the setting of these texts. What was the context in which speech about the Holy Spirit took place? Is there a discernible purpose behind specific ways of invoking the Spirit? Is an individual author influenced by movements that gave a key role to the Holy Spirit and that were judged to have been on the fringes of established doctrine, or even heterodox in some or all of their ideas and practices? Members of these movements often understood themselves as inheritors of the Spirit-directed prophetic and apocalyptic traditions of the Bible. Hallmarks include a call to a rigorous purity of Christian life; a belief in an imminent eschaton; visible gifts such as prophesying and tongues; unmediated access to the Spirit's power; and female leadership. Examples include Montanism and gnosticism in the second century; the medieval Joachimites²⁴ and Spiritual Franciscans; the Brethren of the Free Spirit;²⁵ Anabaptism in the sixteenth century;²⁶ the nineteenth-century Shakers;²⁷

²⁴See Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, I:126-37.

²⁵See Robert Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1972).

²⁶See *Early Anabaptist Spirituality: Selected Writings*, trans. Daniel Liechty (New York: Paulist Press, 1994).

²⁷See *The Shakers: Two Centuries of Spiritual Reflection*, ed. Robley Edward Whitson (New York/Mahwah NJ: Paulist Press, 1983).

and various forms of Pentecostalism emerging continuously up to the present.²⁸ In many of these groups, specific individuals were believed to have been touched by the Holy Spirit in extraordinary ways, prompting the question, Was the Holy Spirit linked with the marginal, the chaotic and the unexpected, in ways that prompted theologians and mystics to silence rather than to speech?

Rather unexpectedly, the data grew exponentially as I discovered more texts and figures who lured me into their worlds. As a result, the project is very much *in medias res* and I can offer but a taste of what I hope will become a fuller meal with many more courses.

II. THE TEXTS: NARRATIVES OF THE SPIRIT

(1) The Holy Spirit: God's Liberality

In that strain of the tradition referred to as Neoplatonic emanationism, God has been imaged as the *fons plenitudo*, the primordial source from which love and grace overflow to the Son and Spirit and thence to creation.²⁹ This image is given a distinctive, pneumatological thrust when linked with Paul's famous phrase in Romans 5.5: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." This imagery has given birth to a certain way of understanding the Trinity and salvation history in which the Spirit functions as the culmination of a process that begins with the creator God and ends in a kind of Spirit fulness. Language rooted in the Bible and replete with images of moving, flowing, rippling, cascading fluids is employed to communicate this sense of the Spirit's presence.

In a Pentecost sermon preached in 417 at Hippo Regius, Augustine juxtaposes two metaphors, comparing the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost to the creation of new wineskins for new wine and to the pouring of molten bronze or silver into a previously prepared mold. Augustine employs these cultural artifacts

²⁸See, e.g., Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1995); Eldin Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit: Toward an Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic* (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1993).

²⁹This emphasis on God's generosity was visible in the medieval emphasis on the gifts of the Spirit. William Hill notes that medieval theology of the Spirit was elaborated largely in terms of Paul's "gifts of the Spirit" (1 Cor. 1.7) that point back to the gifts of Isaiah 11.2-3. The gifts were understood as concrete and specific examples of what Aquinas described as the more general grace of the Holy Spirit at the heart of the New Law. *The Three-Personed God: The Trinity as a Mystery of Salvation* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1982) 303. An example is Aquinas' "Explanation of the Lord's Prayer," in which he links the forgiveness of trespasses explicitly with the Spirit's gift of counsel. *The Catechetical Instructions of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. J. B. Collins (New York: Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., 1939) 159.

to speak about the fulness of God in historical terms—the old Scriptures represent the mold; the new, the promised grace of the Spirit poured out. He says,

It's like a craftsman of things to be fashioned from some metal or other, bronze or silver; he first makes out of wax the shapes he is going to cast, and the first sketch paves the way for the solid object that is to come—I mean, he makes the very shapes with which he is going to fill the molds. In the same way the Lord sketched everything and formed it in figures for the old people, while for the new he filled the molds with a perfect casting.³⁰

Twelfth-century Benedictine abbess, prophet and visionary, Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179), imagined the outpouring of the Spirit in natural rather than cultural metaphors.³¹ She combined images of planting, watering, and greening to speak of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Hildegard linked the flow of water on the crops with the love of God that renews the face of the earth, and by extension the souls of believers.

Scholars explain the prominence of the color green in Hildegard's work in a number of ways, one of which suggests that she may have been influenced by the lush green countryside of the Rhineland Valley. But "greenness" or *viriditas* played a larger role in Hildegard's theology. In the English language edition of her letters the translators lament, "This *viriditas*, this despair of translators, this 'greenness' enters into the very fabric of the universe in Hildegard's cosmic

³⁰Sermon 272/PL 38, 1243. Citations for Augustine's *Sermones ad Popularem* for the festival of Pentecost (including the vigil) are from *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century*, ed. John E. Rotelle OSA, part 3, vol. 7: *Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons* (New Rochelle NY: New City Press) 267-310. The sermons number eight, plus one fragment (nos. 266-72B), and are dated roughly from 397 to 416, approximately the same years during which Augustine was writing the *De Trinitate*.

³¹Hildegard of Bingen was born in the Rhineland in 1098 and was sent to live with the holy woman Jutta von Sponheim at the age of eight. She was the recipient of visions from her earliest childhood. Endorsed by Bernard of Clairvaux and Pope Eugene III, she became a religious leader and prophet, abbess of a Benedictine community in Rupertsberg, preacher to clergy and laity. She spoke out against the creeping influence of the Cathars and the sins of a church that consistently failed to live up to its gospel calling. In addition to writing three major theological works, she practiced and wrote about the healing arts of medicine; wrote the first musical mystery play—the *Ordo virtutum*; composed a library of choral chant for her community; created her own language; and had an extensive correspondence with bishops, popes and emperors.

Her first major theological work, *Scivias*, is a doctrinal work that covers the wide sweep of salvation history from creation to the eschaton. The book has a trinitarian structure. Book I treats creation; book II, redemption; book III which is equal in length to parts 1 and 2, treats the history of salvation—the way of the church and of moral virtue. References are to sections and page numbers in the volume in the series, *Scivias*, trans. Columba Hart and Jane Bishop, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1990).

scheme of things. In Hildegard's usage it is a profound, immense, dynamically energized term."³²

Viriditas was a key concept that expressed and connected the bounty of God, the fertility of nature, and especially the presence of the Holy Spirit. Barbara Newman comments about this aspect of Hildegard's thought, "If you are filled with the Holy Spirit then you are filled with *viriditas*. You are spiritually fertile, you are alive."³³ Hildegard describes the prelate who is filled with weariness (*taedium*) as lacking in *viriditas*, and counsels the neophyte in religious life to strive for "spiritual greenness."³⁴

In addition to life and fertility, the *viriditas* of the Spirit points to a life of virtue, the active fruit of the Spirit's gift. The garden where the virtues grow is imbued with *viriditas*, and in a letter to Abbot Kuno, Hildegard describes Saint Rupert, a man of exceptional virtue and the patron of her monastery, as the *viriditas digiti Dei*, the "greenness of the finger of God."³⁵

In one of her many descriptions of the Trinity in the *Scivias*, written between 1141 and 1151, and the first of her three major theological works, Hildegard also connects the Holy Spirit with the flowing freshness of sanctity:

And so these three Persons are in the unity of inseparable substance; but They are not indistinct among themselves. How? He Who begets is the Father; He Who is born is the Son; and He Who in eager freshness proceeds from the Father and the Son, and sanctified the waters by moving over their face in the likeness of an innocent bird, and streamed with ardent heat over the apostles, is the Holy Spirit.³⁶

Like a fallow field, a person with good heart receives the seed of God's word and thus is granted the gifts of the Holy Spirit in superabundance. The person who sometimes accepts and sometimes refuses God's word has some greenness, though "not much," she says. But one who never chooses to hear the word or

³²*The Letters of Hildegard of Bingen*, vol. 1, trans. Joseph L. Baird and Radd K. Ehrman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) 7. Hildegard connects *viriditas* with moisture (*humor, humiditas*). If the earth did not have moisture or greenness it would crumble like ashes. In the spiritual realm both *viriditas* and *humiditas* are "manifestations of God's power, qualities of the human soul, for 'the grace of God shines like the sun and sends its gifts in various ways; in wisdom, in greenness, in moisture'" (letter 85r/b, 195). In the spiritual realm, a lack of moisture causes virtues to become dry as dust (letter 85r/a, 194).

³³Barbara Newman, "Hildegard of Bingen," video (Washington DC: The National Cathedral, 1989).

³⁴*The Letters of Hildegard of Bingen*, 7.

³⁵Letter 38r, PL 197, 203.

³⁶*Scivias*, III.7.9, p. 418.

waken the heart to the admonition of the Holy Spirit dries up and dies completely.³⁷

Hildegard employs a wonderful coincidence of opposites to describe the sweetness of the Holy Spirit given at Confirmation, which is both serene and boundless, swift to encompass all creatures in grace. She continues, "Its path is a torrent, and streams of sanctity flow from it in its bright power, with never a stain of dirt in them; for the Holy Spirit Itself is a burning and shining serenity, which cannot be nullified, and which enkindles ardent virtue so as to put all darkness to flight."³⁸

Bonaventure of Bagnoreggio offers an abundant smorgasboard of Spirit narratives.³⁹ In large measure, they reflect Bonaventure's concern to retain the practical, affective, religious orientation of theology that marked the monastic schools of the twelfth century. For Bonaventure, theology is above all a practical science whose overriding purpose is to assist the faithful to achieve loving union with God.⁴⁰

Bonaventure builds on Pseudo-Dionysius' concept of God as self-diffusive goodness (*bonum diffusivum sui*), a term he uses 240 times in his corpus.⁴¹ His sensitivity to the overflowing fullness of God's love results in narratives about the Holy Spirit that emphasize God's generosity.⁴² He sees positive qualities in "unbegottenness"—the first person is the fountain of all fullness, the fecund source from which flow all goodness, immanent processions, and external pro-

³⁷Ibid., III.10.4, p. 475; III.10.7, p. 478. Hildegard describes the power of Antichrist as the ability to set the air in motion, bring forth fire and lightnings, raise thunders and hailstorms, uproot mountains, dry up water and take the greenness from forests. III.11.27, pp. 502-503.

³⁸*Scivias*, II.4.2, p. 190.

³⁹My primary, though not exclusive referents are the *Itinerarium*; ten sermons given on the feast of Pentecost; and two sermons on the trinity. All references in parentheses are to *Opera Omnia* (Quaracchi: Collegio S. Bonaventurae, 1882).

⁴⁰For Bonaventure, the wisdom that is theology is midway between the purely speculative and the practical because it embraces each of them. He says, "this [wisdom of theology] is the grace of contemplation and is for us to become good, but chiefly that we become good (ut boni fiamus). . . . This knowledge aids faith, and faith is in the intellect in such a way that by its very reason its nature is to move the affect. And this is clear. For unless someone is a sinner and hard of heart (durus), to know that Christ died for us and similar truths moves us to love (movet ad amorem); the same is not true of this truth, that the diameter is asymmetrical to the circumference." *Sentences*, Proemium, q. 3, Resp. (I, 13).

⁴¹Of these 240 iterations, 140 appear in the *Sentences*.

⁴²See *Hexaemeron* 3.19. (V, 346); 14.28. (V, 397); and *Breviloquium*. IV.3.4. (V, 243); V.2.2. (V, 253).

ductions.⁴³ The texts suggest that this quality in God was no abstract idea for Bonaventure, but one that lived and breathed in his own psyche and experience, and one he wanted to communicate to others. In order to nurture a disposition of gratitude, Bonaventure encourages the faithful to meditate on God's wonderful qualities and gifts.

God's liberality is manifest above all, for Bonaventure, in the incarnation, the sending of the Holy Spirit, and also in endless gifts, virtues, fruits, beatitudes—all gratuitously given.⁴⁴ In true Franciscan fashion, the cross, for Bonaventure, is the symbol *par excellence* of God's generous love.⁴⁵ Sin is horrid, but it takes on even more sinister dimensions because it is a negative response to the kind of love revealed in the cross. In a Pentecost sermon delivered in 1253, he says, "Who has a heart so unyielding that, when they reflect and consider the generosity which the Lord manifests in creation, in redemption, in calling us individually . . . they are not wholly touched and transformed into love for God?"⁴⁶

But he relates the generous gifts of God in a distinctive way to the third person to whom is appropriated the name Gift, and who comes in fire at Pentecost to bestow a host of charisms on the church.⁴⁷ A contemporary of Bonaventure, Mechthild of Magdeburg (ca. 1208-ca. 1282-1297), speaks of the Holy Spirit as the source of her revelations, which she calls a gifted address. She described receiving her text as a flowing, and thus entitled it, *The Flowing Light*

⁴³Z. Hayes, *Disputed Questions on the Mystery of the Trinity* (St. Bonaventure NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1979) 41.

⁴⁴*Sermo X* (IX, 345). In *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*, Umberto Eco cites Gilbert of Stanford who does not explicitly mention the Holy Spirit but speaks of the multiple meanings of scripture in terms of a flowing river: "Imitating the action of the swiftest of rivers, Holy Scripture fills up the depths of the human mind and yet always overflows, quenches the thirsty and yet remains inexhaustible. Bountiful streams of spiritual sense gush out from it and, merging into others, make still others spring up—or rather (since 'wisdom is undying'), they do not merge but *emerge* and, showing their beauty to others, cause these others not to replace them as they fail but to succeed them as they remain." (*In Cant.* 20.225). (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1984) 150.

⁴⁵In Bonnefoy's analysis of Bonaventure's treatment of the gift of piety, the cross figures prominently. Bonaventure counsels novices to meditate always on the passion (*Regula novitiorum*, 7.1-2/VIII, 483). His response to a request for a letter of edification from the abbess of a monastery in Longchamp takes the form of a little treatise on Christian perfection in which one of the eight chapters is dedicated to the cross (*De perfectione vitae ad Sorores*, 6/VIII, 120ff.). And Bonaventure recounts a personal story in which thoughts of the cross saved him from the devil's attacks (*Sermo II de Donis, XIII post Pent.*, 1/IX, 404). *Le Saint-Esprit et ses dons selon Saint Bonaventure* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1929) 150.

⁴⁶*Sermo IX* (IX, 342).

⁴⁷*Brev.* I.1.9. (V, 210); I.6.1. (V, 214); V.1.4. (V, 252); V.5.1. (V, 257).

of the Godhead. She says, "I, unworthy sinner, was so flowingly greeted by the Holy Spirit." Like Bonaventure, Mechthild's "bewildering fertility" of the theme of flowing finds its center in her understanding of the Trinity, and in particular in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁸

In a Pentecost sermon delivered in Paris to the Friars Minor, Bonaventure invited his Franciscan brothers "to gather in, ruminare on, and embrace with affection the unparalleled event of Pentecost, since it revealed so clearly the divine mysteries."⁴⁹ He wanted not only to arouse gratitude in their hearts, but also to offer instruction on how to be good friars and ecclesiastical leaders. For Bonaventure, it is the Holy Spirit who assists in the proper living of the vows, in holding the community together in unity,⁵⁰ and in the making of decisions.⁵¹

Bonaventure also related the spirit of gratitude to the virtue of humility, which he sees as not only the proper response to God's love but also as a necessary predisposition to receive the Spirit's gifts.⁵² He counsels both Church leaders and the faithful about the importance of humility, without which leadership flounders⁵³ and salvation is jeopardized. Humility, Bonaventure says, is the basis "of complete spiritual health."⁵⁴ The exemplar for this humility is the Christ of Ephesians 4.10 who "descends and ascends that he might fill all things." A century later, Catherine of Siena would use the image of the meal to

⁴⁸Mechthild of Magdeburg, *The Flowing Light of the Godhead* (II.6, 26). Mechthild also links the metaphor of flowing liquids with the abundance of God's love. She speaks of the flood of love (V.31); the flowing fire of God's love (V.1); the great overflow of God's love that in its abundance and sweetness causes our small vessel to brim over (VII.55); the playful flow of love flows in the trinity, which love she desires to have released into her soul (III.1; VII.45). Oliver Davies comments, "The bewildering fertility of Mechthild's conception of the theme of 'flowing' . . . finds its centre in her understanding of the Christian Trinity. It is this which is the conceptual basis which underlies the unifying image of 'flowing' and which serves to unite the disparate themes of cosmic creation, Mechthild's own literary creation, the outflow of grace and God's gifts, as well as the soul's ecstatic *reditus* to God into a single integral vision of the dynamic fecundity of the Godhead. . . . The Trinitarian dimension can be seen also in the fact that she frequently links the language of flowing with the Third Person, and also uses this term in order to speak of the generation of the Son from the Father." "Transformational Processes in the Work of Julian of Norwich and Mechthild of Magdeburg." In *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England*. Exeter Symposium V, ed. Marion Glasscoe (Suffolk: D. S. Brewer, 1992) 49.

⁴⁹*Sermo II in Pentecoste* (IX, 333). Henceforth *Sermo I, II*, etc.

⁵⁰*Sermo II* (IX, 333-34).

⁵¹*Sermo I* (IX, 332). See also *Sermo de trinitate* (IX, 357).

⁵²*Sermo VII* (IX, 337, 339).

⁵³*Sermo I* (V, 332): "Quia Apostoli non extollebantur in superbiam, licet essent positi rectores totius orbis a Spiritu sancto. . . ."

⁵⁴*Sermo IX* (IX, 345).

make a striking connection between the Holy Spirit and humility. The Father is the table, the Son is the food and the Holy Spirit is the servant, offering enlightenment, charity, hunger for souls and blazing desires for the Church's reform.⁵⁵ Secondary exemplars are the apostles who did not presume to face the powers of the world on their own, but only when fortified by the tongues of fire sent by the Spirit. The mission of the Holy Spirit to be carried out by them is "sweet," that is, it is devoid of haughtiness. Humility, therefore, is a *sine qua non* of the gift of leadership.⁵⁶ The antiexemplar is Simon the magician of Acts 8.20, who thought he could buy the gift of the Holy Spirit with money.⁵⁷

Bonaventure communicates not only the concept of the overwhelming outpouring of God's generous goodness in the sending of the Spirit, but he also conveys what one might call a "felt sense" of this overflowing goodness. One way in which he accomplishes this in his Pentecost sermons is by "piling on" biblical language and imagery that describe fluids (mostly water) flowing, gushing, bubbling.⁵⁸ Now anyone who teaches medieval sermons knows that they are not exactly "user friendly" to modern audiences. But attention to sound and

⁵⁵For Catherine, the Spirit, who is agent of mercy, serves the faithful at table with Christ's teaching through enlightenment to understand it and inspiration to live it. The Spirit also "serves us charity for our neighbors and hunger to have as our food souls and the salvation of the whole world for the Father's honor." Finally the Spirit serves to its servants blazing desires for the Church's reform. Prayer 12, *The Prayers of Catherine of Siena*, ed. Suzanne Noffke (New York: Paulist Press, 1983) 102. See also letters 5 and 14. *The Letters of St. Catherine of Siena* I, *Medieval & Renaissance Texts and Studies* 52, trans. Suzanne Noffke (Binghamton NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1988) 48, 119. In *The Dialogue*, Catherine has God speak: "The Holy Spirit, my loving charity, is the waiter who serves them [souls at the fourth stage] my gifts and graces. This gentle waiter carries to me their tender loving desires, and carries back to them the reward for their labors, the sweetness of my charity for their enjoyment and nourishment." *The Dialogue* (78), trans. Suzanne Noffke (New York: Paulist Press, 1980) 146. See also letter 278 to Monna Bartolomea di Dominico in Rome, cited in *The Dialogue*, 146n.

⁵⁶*Sermo I* (IX, 331-32). In *Sermo X*, Bonaventure applies the gifts of the Spirit (Joel 2.28) in a particular fashion to the gift of preaching (IX, 345-46).

⁵⁷*Sermo VII* (IX, 339).

⁵⁸*Sermo III* (IX, 335): "quantum ad modum emanandi per nomen fluvii scaturientis, qui est ipse Spiritus . . ." and "quantam ad receptaculum emanati per irrigationem paradisi, qui est ipse ecclesiasticus coetus." Water imagery is also prevalent in the more Christological sermon VIII, in which Bonaventure offers the metaphorical similitude "By 'living waters' is meant the Holy Spirit." This is so because of the properties of living water. It is living in its source (the Holy Spirit proceeds from Father and Son, Apoc 22.1 and Jn 5.26); in its continual flowing (the church is like a watered garden that will not fail because of the influence of the Holy Spirit in her sacraments and members, Isa 58.11 and Ps 45.4); and in the excellence of its effects (the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit, Apoc 22.2, Gal 5.22, and Ps 1.3) (IX, 340).

imagery as well as to content can penetrate their opacity and allow a glimpse into how this literary technique might have functioned. Allow me to try.

Images include: the river flowing out of the garden of Eden in Genesis represents the Holy Spirit's exuberance of life, joy, fruition and consummation (2.10); "A spirit of compassion and supplication will be poured out on Jerusalem" (Zach 12.10); rivers flowing out of Eden water the garden which becomes four rivers (Gen 2.10); a little spring becomes a river and there is water in abundance (Esther 10.6); the reponse to their cries was like a great river brimming with water that came from a little spring (Esther 11.10); "the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God . . . was shown" (Apoc 22.1); "the well where God made a covenant with Hagar," (Gen 16.14); "a garden fountain, a well of living water, and flowing streams from Lebanon" (Cant 4.15); "I will make this dry stream bed full of pools" (2Kgs 3.16); Gideon discovers who is to fight with him by observing how they drink water (Judges 7.5); "clean water will be sprinkled" (Ezek 36.25); "spirit will be poured out" (Joel 2.28); Wisdom is infused into all God's works (Ecc 1.9); a fountain will be opened to cleanse the house of David (Zach 13.1); a spirit of judgment and burning will wash away the filth of Jerusalem (Isa 4.4).⁵⁹

The Latin sounds like this: *effundam, effusam, fluvium paradisum irrigantem, per fontem scaturientem, fluvium . . . procedentem, per puteum viventis et videntis me, per puteum aquarum viventium, per alveum torrentis, per aquas Gedeonis, distributam, opulentam, fructuosam, infusio, diffusionis, abluerit, mirabiliter largiflua, amplificata.*

Bonaventure's construction of this sermon was intended either to show off his biblical virtuosity like a Fourth of July fireworks, make a plug for the thoroughness of medieval biblical aids and concordances, or as I prefer to think, to move and compel the brothers to pay attention to the incredible, wondrous, amazing God of Pentecost, and to allow the Spirit to influence them in their religious lives. Bonaventure wants to convince his audience that through the Spirit, God was offering them the power to repent, renew commitments, understand the mysteries of God, be unified, tranquil, inflamed by desire, and made beautiful by being conformed to the light.

In a less explicit yet quite pronounced way, fourteenth-century anchoress, Julian of Norwich,⁶⁰ also employs the Dionysian emphasis on the goodness of

⁵⁹*Sermo IV* (IX, 335).

⁶⁰Born at the end of 1342, Julian experienced a series of sixteen revelations at the age of thirty at which time she suffered from an illness that placed her at death's door. She recovered and at some point, became an anchoress at the Church of St. Julian in Conisford at Norwich, very near the house of the Augustinian Friars. After reflecting on this experience for at least twenty and possibly forty years, Julian writes a final redaction of her text sometime after 1393. All references are to chapter and page number in the volume translated by Edmund Colledge and James Walsh, *Showings*, Classics of Western

God and its overflowing nature.⁶¹ On May 13, 1373, Julian received a series of sixteen revelations of the suffering body of Christ on the cross. After decades of prayerful reflection on this experience, she completes a text, called *Shewings*, in which she explicates the theological and spiritual significance of this event. Her text addresses an audience that was experiencing the extreme suffering associated with economic, political, demographic and ecclesial upheaval. War, famine, rapine, poverty and plague must have led many to the verge of despair. Added to this suffering was the belief that their sinfulness was the cause of these expressions of God's wrath.

The attribution to God of the quality of goodness appears on almost every page of her account of her revelations. Julian repeatedly connects this flowing goodness with the Holy Spirit. She speaks of God's mercy and grace given to her "even-Christians" as "forth-spreddyng" and "spreddyng abrode"—language suggestive of the "pouring forth" of Romans 5.5.⁶²

Julian is relentless in her attempt to reverse the traditional image of a wrathful God. At both literal and subliminal levels the reader is bombarded with the message that God's goodness is everywhere, eternally and generously offered to creation. In five different texts, Julian associates goodness particularly with the Holy Spirit (54/285; 58/293; 58/295; 63/304). One example: "For before he made us he loved us, and when we were made we loved him; and this is made only of the natural substantial goodness of the Holy Spirit, mighty by reason of the might of the Father, wise in mind of the wisdom of the Son" (53/283).

Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1978).

The focus of Julian's revelations is the crucified Jesus. Like much late medieval mystical literature, Julian's text is overwhelmingly christocentric, centered on her graphic vision of Christ's wounds and suffering. But both her method and the content of her text are also thoroughly trinitarian. As one lists the triads in her text, one has the distinct experience of *déjà vu*—Augustine's *De trinitate* looms on the horizon. Her trinitarian theology is fluid, focused almost exclusively on the economy (51/278; 55/286), and notable for its rather comprehensive working out of the theme of the motherhood of God (58-61/293-302). The very first sentence of the long text reads, "This is a revelation of love which Jesus Christ, our endless bliss, made in sixteen showings, of which the first is about his precious crowning of thorns; and in this was contained and specified the blessed Trinity, with the Incarnation, and the union between God and man's soul, with many fair revelations and teachings of endless wisdom and love, in which all the revelations which follow are founded and connected" (1/175).

⁶¹There is no evidence that Julian had firsthand knowledge of Pseudo-Dionysius' work, but she could very well have been aware of the idea *bonum diffusivum sui*, which was a commonplace of scholasticism. See J. P. H. Clark, "Nature Grace and the Trinity in Julian of Norwich," *Downside Review* 100 (1982): 203 and 215n.1.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 218n.62.

For Julian, the procession of the Holy Spirit acts as a further "stage" in the divine self-articulation and self-gift.⁶³ As Bonaventure built on images of flowing water, Julian focuses on the flow of blood from the body of the crucified. While Julian explicitly connects blood with the crucified Christ of her vision, she consistently attributes the acts of the Trinity to all the persons in a fluid expression of the unending plenty of God's love which is poured out on the faithful (12/199-200). She, too, employs a string of terms—fill, fulfill, flow, overflow, beflow, overpass, passover—connecting the hot, flowing blood of the passion with God's love and eternal generosity.⁶⁴

But by far the most prevalent association of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Julian's mind is with grace. Julian pictures the Holy Spirit's work in the faithful soul as "secret operations," "inward grace-giving operations" and "touchings of sweet spiritual sights and feelings" (41/249; 43/255; 80/335; 81/337). The Spirit functions inwardly as the Church functions outwardly (30/228). The list of gifts associated with the Holy Spirit is long and diverse. Instead of a wrathful God, Julian offers her audience a motherly, courteous and familiar God, one who is easy to approach and whose contentment rests in part on the well-being of creation. Her most frequently used title for God is "protector." God is the one who has the power, love and will to protect people from the ravages of suffering and to ensure final beatitude. Julian repeats in diverse keys: you will not be overcome (68/314; 69/315; 70/317).

From this it follows that as truly as God is our Father, so truly is God our Mother. Our Father wills, our Mother works, our good Lord the Holy Spirit confirms. And therefore it is our part to love our God in whom we have our being, reverently thanking and praising him for our creation, mightily praying to our Mother for mercy and pity, and to our Lord the Holy Spirit for help and grace (59/296).

The gifts that are the fruit of the Holy Spirit's work are designed to offer hope and confidence to her audience. Gifts include the virtues, especially faith, humility, and mercy (54/285; 10/196; 57/292; 77/330); the power to know God and oneself (56, 288); reconciliation (48/262); the power to join one's will to God's (41/249); renewal (57/292); the power to be Christ's children and to live Christian lives (54/286). Julian's eschatological interests are revealed in her frequent references to the Spirit's work that will assure heaven (40/246; 55/287;

⁶³Nicholas Watson, "The Trinitarian Hermeneutic in Julian of Norwich's *Revelation of Love*," in *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England* 5, ed. Marion Glasscoe (Woodbridge, Suffolk UK and Rochester NY: D. S. Brewer, 1992) 99.

⁶⁴In Julian's text, "trinitarian functions are denied exact demarcation in terms of earthly activity or theological convention." Vincent Gillespie and Maggie Ross, "The Apophatic Image: The Poetics of Effacement in Julian of Norwich." In *The Medieval Mystical Tradition in England*, 5:67.

58/295). The final reward is described in terms of reconciliation, protection, peace and being at ease (48/261).

The Holy Spirit's presence is not limited to the soul, but reaches into our sensuality as well. Although, for Julian, our sensuality is only in the second person, the Father and the Holy Spirit are in Christ, working together to lead us, in our totality, to our final end (58/295).

And when our soul is breathed into our body, at which time we are made sensual, at once mercy and grace begin to work, having care of us and protecting us with pity and love, in which operation the Holy Spirit forms in our faith the hope that we shall return up above to our substance, into the power of Christ, increased and fulfilled through the Holy Spirit. So I understood that our sensuality is founded in nature, in mercy and in grace, and this foundation enables us to receive gifts which lead us to endless life (55/286-87).

Julian's psychological acumen is visible when she reassures her audience that the Holy Spirit is indeed also working in her, allowing her to recount her visions accurately. They can trust that the God Julian met and presents to them is true and reliable (44/256).

Julian's understanding of the Holy Spirit's role is stated succinctly in chapter 58:

And so our Mother works in mercy on all his beloved children who are docile and obedient to him, and grace works with mercy, and especially in two properties, as it was shown, which working belongs to the third person, the Holy Spirit. He works, rewarding and giving. Rewarding is a gift for our confidence which the Lord makes to those who have laboured; and giving is a courteous act which he does freely, by grace, fulfilling and surpassing all that creatures deserve (58/294).

Julian assures her beleaguered readers that their lives of suffering are not without value and that God is one who gives gifts freely and endlessly irrespective of their ability to earn or deserve it.

Since the imagery of God as *fons plenitudo*, and of the Holy Spirit as the fulness of that outpouring, runs like a leitmotif in so many medieval authors, should we not ask if some have too precipitously jettisoned this dynamic way of speaking about the Spirit in the interest of a too rational sophistication or of fear of subordinationism?⁶⁵ Can we really evaluate this tradition solely as a primitive viewpoint that no longer offers any light? Cannot a renewed appreciation of this tradition, which Catherine LaCugna links with God's ecstasy,⁶⁶ enrich David Coffey's proposal that we add a "bestowal" or "mutual love" model to the

⁶⁵William Hill seems especially concerned about this danger. Cf. *The Three-Personed God*, 16, 37, 142, 235, 278.

⁶⁶Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God For Us*, 351-53.

"procession" model in our articulation of trinitarian theology?⁶⁷ Clearly, the tradition has a substantial investment in this Neoplatonic viewpoint, and I suggest that these narratives remain suggestive and provocative for theology, spirituality and ministry.

The imagery of flowing liquids conjures up experiences of power, energy and force; of rivers and oceans; of refreshment and renewal; of thirst being quenched; of overwhelming floods and earth-soaking rains. In our own time, images of flowing water and blood take on sinister overtones in our struggle to care for endangered human communities and ecosystems. As we work to fashion a solid speculative trinitarian theology, and a real and compelling christology, we must also examine contemporary language and imagery that point to God's outpouring love in the Holy Spirit in the light of this material. These narratives can enhance our ability to experience and speak about being drenched in God's love, about the renewal of the earth, about the awesome, inundating power of deity, and about the pouring forth of God's Spirit into our hearts (Rom. 5.5).

(2) The Spirit as Agent of Unity and Reconciliation

Augustine struggled in the midst of a failing empire to combat forces that he judged inimical to orthodoxy and the Church's integrity. The fourth century witnessed the Arian controversy and debate about the Spirit's identity. And at every turn, Augustine confronted the Donatists, often invoking the Holy Spirit.⁶⁸ Peter Brown describes how the imagination of African Christians had become riveted on the idea of the Church, thought of as a preserve of safety and cleanliness in a world ruled by demonic powers. Africans came to church, he says, not because they were thirsty and burdened but to survive in a battlefield.⁶⁹

⁶⁷David Coffey, *Grace, the Gift of the Holy Spirit* (Manly NSW, Australia: Catholic Institute of Sydney, 1979); "The 'Incarnation' of the Holy Spirit in Christ," *Theological Studies* 45 (1984): 466-80; "A Proper Mission of the Holy Spirit," *Theological Studies* 47 (1986): 227-50; and "The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son," *Theological Studies* 51 (1990): 193-229. See also Ralph Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) 91-140.

⁶⁸The Donatists also called on the Spirit. W. H. C. Frend suggests that part of the Donatists' ability to survive was due to their ability to combine a hierarchically governed church with a nonhierarchical community devoted to the Spirit. Readers in their liturgies were thought to be transmitting the Spirit to the congregation. *The Donatist Church: A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971 [1952]) 319-20.

⁶⁹Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1967) 212-14. W. H. C. Frend notes Cyprian's popular metaphor of the church as the Ark—"within the saved, outside the drowning multitudes." Images of an ark and a dove on a sculptured pillar of a Donatist church in central Numidia portray the

Augustine's talk about the Spirit gives the reader a clear sense that the Spirit is not an abstract principle, but rather a present and compelling force, engaged in the struggle to preserve the Church.

In an effort to calm the fears and doubts of those wondering about the identity of the true Church (and also to threaten them a bit), Augustine calls on the Spirit to support his portrayal of a Church with clear boundaries for insiders and outsiders. He says, "whoever has the Holy Spirit is in the church . . . whoever is outside this Church hasn't got the Holy Spirit."⁷⁰ Those can be sure of having the Holy Spirit who "consent through sincere charity firmly to attach their minds to the unity."⁷¹ Within the Church, Augustine warns those members who belong insincerely by deceit and dissimulation.⁷² Those outside the Church [the Donatists] who "hate the grace of peace and who do not hold on to the fellowship of unity" have "absolutely no share in this gift of the Holy Spirit"⁷³

For Augustine, the sending of the Holy Spirit revealed a trustworthy God who fulfills all promises,⁷⁴ but he warned his congregation that just as the soul departs from a severed limb, so the Spirit departs from those who cut themselves off from the Church.⁷⁵ In his commentary on John, Augustine says "there is nothing that a Christian ought to dread so much as to be separated from Christ's body."⁷⁶

But Augustine's sometimes harsh language about the Spirit's presence or absence to ecclesial insiders and outsiders must be juxtaposed with his struggle with reconciliation. Against the Donatists, Augustine underlined the importance of the forgiveness that can be offered only within the Church and only through the power of God. For Augustine, the remission of sins is the first blessing of God's goodness in the Holy Spirit. And in his commentary on Psalm 8, he locates the bowels of the mercy of God in the Holy Spirit.⁷⁷ Against this

church of the saints watched over by the Holy Spirit. *The Donatist Church*, 238.

⁷⁰Ser. 268.2; 269.2/PL 38, 1232 and 1235.

⁷¹Ser. 269.4/PL 38, 1237.

⁷²Epistle CLXXXV.50, NPNF IV, 651/PL 33, 815.

⁷³Ser. 271/PL 38, 1246.

⁷⁴Ser. 266.2/PL 38, 1225.

⁷⁵Ser. 267.3/PL 38, 1230-31; Ser. 268.2/PL 38, 1232. Augustine further develops the body metaphor: "It can happen in the human body—or rather from the body—that one part is cut off, a hand, a finger, a foot; does the soul follow the amputated part? When it was in the body, it was alive, cut off, it loses life. In the same way too Christian men and women are Catholics, while they are alive in the body; cut off, they have become heretics, the Spirit doesn't follow the amputated part. So if you wish to be alive with the Holy Spirit, hold on to loving-kindness, love truthfulness, long for oneness, that you may attain to everlastingness. Amen" Ser. 267.4/PL 38, 1231.

⁷⁶"Haec dicuntur ut amemus unitatem, et timeamus separationem. Nihil enim sic debet formidare Christianus, quam separari a corpore Christi." *On the Gospel of St. John*, Tractate XXVII.6. NPNF VII, 176/PL 35, 1618.

⁷⁷*Expositions on the Book of the Psalms*, Ps VIII.8. NPNF VIII, 30/PL 36, 112.

gratuitous gift, the impenitent heart stands as an affront of enormous proportion. In a number of texts, sermons and letters, Augustine comments on Matthew 12.31-32: "Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven."⁷⁸ In Sermon 21, Augustine excoriates the recalcitrant individual who remains impassive in the "persevering hardness of an impenitent heart." Such a heart is the "blasphemy of the Spirit which shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come."⁷⁹

Augustine also spoke of the effects of the remission of sin. In his exposition on the Apostles Creed, written for the bishops of Hippo-Regius in 393 when Augustine was still a presbyter, he elaborated on the sources and fruits of reconciliation, all of which are founded in the love poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom 5.5)—perhaps Augustine's favorite biblical reference to the Spirit. Reconciliation in love, he says, makes us sons and daughters of God (1Jn 4.18); casts out fear (Rom 8.15); fills us with the spirit of liberty by which we cry, "Abba, Father" (Rom 8.15); calls us back into friendship and acquaints us with all the secret things of God (John 16.13).⁸⁰

Almost twenty-five years later, in his *Treatise Concerning the Correction of the Donatists*, written to the tribune, Boniface in 417, Augustine characterizes the fruits of pardon in this way. "The prince of sin, the spirit who is divided against himself, should no more reign in us . . . we should thenceforward be made the temple of the Holy Spirit, and receive Him, by whom we are cleansed through receiving pardon, to dwell in us, to work, increase, and perfect righteousness."⁸¹ One is reminded here of Paul's interior struggle in Romans: "For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate" (Romans 7.15). At a seminar at the 1995 annual meeting of The Catholic Theological Society of America, John Cavadini spoke of Augustine's articulation of the ambiguous, "mixed" character of life as we know it, as one of his most characteristic and enduring accomplishments.⁸² Augustine links this freedom from inner division to the work of the Spirit, visible in those community members who are no longer slaves to the war within.

But in addition to defining the Church over against its enemies, Augustine wanted to establish the Spirit's ongoing presence and function in the Church as well. In a Pentecost Sermon delivered in 412, he lays down the challenge to those who suggest that the Spirit no longer visits the community. He asks rhetorically, "Isn't the Holy Spirit being given nowadays, then, brothers and sisters? Anyone who thinks that, isn't worthy to receive it. It certainly is given

⁷⁸Sermon XXI. NPNF VI, 318-32/(Ser. LXXI) PL 38, 445-67; Epistle CLXXXV. 49-50, NPNF IV, 650-51/PL 33, 814-15.

⁷⁹Sermon XXI.20. NPNF VI, 325/(Ser. LXXI) PL 38, 455.

⁸⁰*On Faith and the Creed*, 9.19. NPNF III, 330/PL 40, 191-92.

⁸¹Epistle CLXXXV.50. NPNF, IV, 651/PL 33, 815.

⁸²John Cavadini, unpublished response given at CTSA Seminar, Annual Convention (New York: June 1995) 4.

nowadays."⁸³ Evidently, one of the arguments used to suggest the Spirit's absence was the disappearance of the gift of tongues. As part of his response to this complaint, Augustine alters the Pentecost account in Acts 2.3-4, positing that *each* individual spoke in *all* tongues. The reason Christians no longer spoke in tongues was because the promise of Pentecost had been fulfilled. At Pentecost one person speaking in the tongues of all nations pointed to the unity of the Catholic Church.⁸⁴ The sign of the Spirit's presence in Augustine's time was the unity of a world Church that embraced all languages.⁸⁵

Among you, after all, is being fulfilled what was being prefigured in those days, when the Holy Spirit came. Because just as then, whoever received the Holy Spirit, even as one person, started speaking all languages; so too now the unity itself is speaking all languages through all nations; and it is by being established in this unity that you have the Holy Spirit, you that do not break away in any schism from the Church of Christ which speaks all languages.⁸⁶

The variety of tongues given by the Spirit pointed to the unity of the world Church that Augustine envisioned, contrary to what he perceived as the narrow, parochial vision of the Donatists.⁸⁷

The Holy Spirit is also the Gift that makes possible communion with God and with each other. In sermon 71, Augustine linked the bond of love that is the Holy Spirit within the Trinity, with its effects in the community of faith. He says, "The Father and the Son have willed that we enter into communion among ourselves and with them through That which is common to them, and to bind us into one by this Gift which the two possess together, that is by the Holy Spirit, God and gift of God. It is in him in fact, that we are reconciled with the Divinity and take our delight in it."⁸⁸

Augustine's intense drive toward unity and his desire for communion among the faithful was grounded in part, in the decidedly mixed character of the Church's members and the daily, life-and-death struggle with the Donatists. Using the scriptures as a launching pad, he turns to the Holy Spirit as a force for unity and reconciliation within each individual and within a divided community.

⁸³"Cur donum linguarum non modo conceditur numquid modo, fratres, non datur Spiritus sanctus? Quisquis hoc putat, non est dignus accipere. Datur et modo." Ser. 267.3/PL 38, 1230. In Sermon 269.1 we read: "Can they [Donatists] possibly deny that even now the Holy Spirit comes upon Christians?" PL 38, 1235.

⁸⁴Ser. 268.1; 268.4; 269.1/PL 38, 1232, 1233, 1234. "The reason, after all, why the Holy Spirit was prepared to demonstrate his presence in the tongues of all nations, was so that those who are included in the unity of the Church which speaks all languages might understand that they have the Holy Spirit." Ser. 268.2/PL 38, 1232.

⁸⁵Ser. 269.1, 2; 270.6; 271/PL 38, 1234-35, 1243, 1245.

⁸⁶Ser 271/PL 38, 1245.

⁸⁷Ser. 266.2; 269.1/ PL 38, 1225, 1234.

⁸⁸Augustine, ser. 71.12.18/PL 38, 454.

He persuades, cajoles, threatens and anathematizes in the interest of preserving what he sees as the life, integrity, and future of the Catholic Church.

In a very different time and setting, Julian of Norwich also associated the Spirit with contrition and reconciliation.⁸⁹ As noted above, war, schism, plague, exorbitant taxation, peasant revolts, papal chaos and ecclesial corruption contributed to an atmosphere of fear, doubt and instability in fourteenth-century England.⁹⁰ No doubt Julian was aware that in sermons local bishops attributed the scourges of plague and schism to the sinfulness of the community. In contrast, her message about contrition is couched in terms of hope, not fear and blame.⁹¹

For Julian, it is the Spirit who leads the believer to sorrow for sin, confession and penance (39/244). From contrition one is led to prayer and thus to soulful rest and an eased conscience. She says,

So sins are forgiven by grace and mercy, and our soul is honourably received in joy, as it will be when it comes into heaven, as often as it comes by the operation of grace of the Holy Spirit, and the power of Christ's Passion (40/246).

⁸⁹In the Long Text, Julian refers to the Holy Spirit explicitly about fifty times, a not insignificant number in itself, but small compared to the role given to the second person.

⁹⁰See Francis X. Newman, ed. *Social Unrest in the Late Middle Ages*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 39 (Binghamton NY: 1986); Richard Kieckhefer, *Unquiet Souls: Fourteenth Century Saints and Their Religious Milieu* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Barbara Tuchman, *A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous 14th Century* (New York: Knopf, 1984); Gordon Leff, *The Dissolution of the Medieval Outlook: An Essay on the Intellectual and Spiritual Change in the Fourteenth Century* (New York: Harper, 1976); Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death: The Arts, Religion, and Society in the Mid-Fourteenth Century* (New York: Harper, 1964); Dennis Hay, *Europe in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (New York, 1966); Morton W. Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman as a Fourteenth-Century Apocalypse* (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1962); Johann Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, trans. R. J. Payton and U. Mammitzch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995 [1924]).

⁹¹Official explanations for the plague were either cosmic, i.e., a malign conjunction of planets or the "drying" effects of comets that affected the air; or religious, i.e., punishment for human sin. Thomas Brinton (1320–1389), a contemporary of Julian, bishop of Rochester and a famous preacher of his age, castigated those who subscribed to cosmic causes. In a sermon he says, "since the corruption of lust and the designs of wickedness are greater today than in Noah's time—for a thousand forms of vice are practiced today which did not exist then—let us not impute the scourges of God to planets but rather to our sins." Thomas Brinton, *The Sermons of Thomas Brinton, Bishop of Rochester (1373–1389)*, ed. Mary Aquinas Devlin, vol. 2 (London, 1954) sermon 70, 323. Cited in John B. Friedman, "'He Hath a Thousand Slayn this Pestilence': The Iconography of the Plague in the Late Middle Ages," in *Social Unrest in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Newman, 76, 82–83.

Julian also tries to mitigate the paralysis that a servile fear of God can generate. In chapter 74 of the *Shewings*, Julian analyzes fear under four headings: fear of assault; of pain; of doubt; of reverence. For Julian, all of these fears are good because fear is the brother of love and thus can function to lead the soul to repentance. Julian relates the Holy Spirit to the second of these four fears—the fear of pain. Those who are fast asleep in sin, she says, are not able “to receive the gentle strength of the Holy Spirit, until they have accepted this fear of pain from bodily death and from spiritual enemies.” This fear moves us to seek the comfort and mercy of God by “the blessed touching of the Holy Spirit” (74/324). Souls who truly accept the teaching of the Holy Spirit hate sin more (76/328).

These narratives of the Spirit invite us to our own inquiry about how we expect the Holy Spirit to function in a pluralistic and often divided Church and world. How does the magisterium speak of the Holy Spirit in the Church today—from Pope John XXIII’s opening remarks at the Second Vatican Council to attitudes toward other religions, to recent declarations about the ordination of women? Do we call on the Spirit to effect dispositions of respect and reconciliation? Who among us—from persons on the margin to those who hold the highest offices—is guilty of the sin against the Holy Spirit by refusing to admit error and repent, closing off those flowing waters of Spirit-grace? What do we teach our children who are preparing for Confirmation about the Holy Spirit? Do we abuse the Holy Spirit by claiming the Spirit’s power for exclusive communities, for ideological positions, or simply by neglect? What specific values do we celebrate or want to celebrate on the feast of Pentecost?

(3) Preaching and Prophesying without Fear

At Pentecost, a prominent effect of the Holy Spirit was to wipe out fear and instill courage in the hearts of the apostles, allowing them to bear witness to the risen Lord (unfortunately at the expense of the Jews and of women, whose witness remains largely invisible).⁹² For example, when Augustine comments on the Pentecost event he often calls special attention to Peter. In his commentary on the gospel of John, he says,

And then that Spirit, pervading him thus with the fullness of richer grace, kindled his hitherto frigid heart to such a witness bearing for Christ, and unlocked those lips that in their previous tremor had suppressed the truth, that, when all on whom the Holy Spirit had descended were speaking in the tongues of all nations to the crowds of Jews collected around, he alone broke forth before the others in the promptitude of his testimony in behalf of Christ. . . . And if any one would enjoy the pleasure of gazing on a sight so charming in its holiness, let him read

⁹²“On the Gospel of John,” Tractate XCII.2. NPNF, VI, 363/PL 35, 1863. See also *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, Ps XCI.16. NPNF VIII, 451/Ps XC.8. PL 37, 1167. The root of our boldness and confidence is also attributed to Christ in Ephesians 3.11-13.

the Acts of the Apostles: (2.5) and there let him be filled with amazement at the preaching of the blessed Peter, over whose denial of this Master he had just been mourning; there let him behold that tongue, itself translated from diffidence to confidence, from bondage to liberty, converting to the confession of Christ the tongues of so many of His enemies, not one of which he could bear when lapsing himself into denial. And what shall I say more? In him there shone forth such an effulgence of grace, and such a fullness of the Holy Spirit, and such a weight of most precious truth poured from the lips of the preacher, that he transformed that vast multitude of Jews. . . .⁹³

In this rhetorically powerful passage, we glimpse how Augustine envisioned the working of the Spirit, and possibly his own identification with Peter's effective eloquence. One can conjecture that Augustine identified with Peter and desired that the Spirit function in him as it did in Peter at Pentecost. The elements of commonality are several. To begin, the *Confessions* reveal a kind of betrayal on Augustine's part prior to his conversion, after which he spent his life proclaiming the truth of the one true God he had encountered in Christianity. As a rhetor, Augustine also seemed to have high expectations of his preaching skills. In his response to a request for some help in catechizing the uninstructed from a Carthaginian deacon, brother Deogratias by name, Augustine says,

Indeed with me, too, it is almost always the fact that my speech displeases myself. For I am covetous of something better . . . when my capacities of expression prove inferior to my inner apprehensions, I grieve over the inability which my tongue has betrayed in answering to my heart. For it is my wish that he who hears me should have the same complete understanding of the subject which I have myself; and I perceive that I fail to speak in a manner calculated to effect that. . . .⁹⁴

Augustine perceived the decadence of his society and the forces of personal and social evil to be daunting, requiring in him extraordinary love and intelligence—gifts with which he describes the Spirit-filled Peter.

For Augustine, the Spirit's distinctive role is as agent of visible change. Frigid hearts, locked lips, diffidence, fear of speaking the truth, bondage and mourning for sin—all are transformed in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's presence is described as a fuller effulgence of grace, a presence that compelled Peter to witness to Christ with astonishing ease. Through Peter's words and actions, the truth and power of Christ, given through the Spirit, were visible and effective, leading to the conversion of those who were once Christ's enemies.

Hildegard of Bingen played a more explicit, public role as prophet and seer in the twelfth-century Church. An affluent and lax monasticism, a maturing and critical laity drawn to reform movements such as the Cathars, a complacent and

⁹³"On the Gospel of John," *ibid.*

⁹⁴*On the Catechizing of the Uninstructed* 2.3. NPNF III, 284/PL 40, 311.

corrupt clergy, and a series of bloody struggles between church and state, in which Frederick Barbarossa named three antipopes, set the scene for Hildegard's prophetic voice.

She struggled to overcome doubt and fear in speaking about her visions, and in assuming the strange role of female prophet in the Church. She received her first vision at the age of eight and it took some time for her to realize that the adults around her did not also see the bright, shimmering images.⁹⁵ Barbara Newman suggests that it would not be off the mark to describe Hildegard as a "weird child." Later in life, her fear of speaking about her experiences eventually made her ill and she recovered only when she had the courage to make her visions public.

Like Augustine, Hildegard identified the struggles of her own time with those of the apostles. She spoke of how the Trinity was declared openly in the world by the verdant virtues and tribulations of the apostles. She described how ravening wolves sought to tear them apart, but how their various calamities strengthened them for the struggle. It is through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that the Church was able to build up its faith and so she asked that her children also be adorned through the anointing by the Spirit (*Scivias*, II.4.3 and 6).

Hildegard, too, spoke eloquently of the Pentecost event. In her vision entitled "The Pillar of the Trinity" in book III of the *Scivias*, she says,

[T]he Holy Spirit came openly in tongues of fire . . . the Holy Spirit bathed them [the apostles] in Its fire, so that with their souls and bodies they spoke in many tongues; and . . . they cried out so that the whole world was shaken by their voices. . . . And the Holy Spirit took their human fear from them, so that no dread was in them . . . all such timidity was taken from them, so ardently and so quickly that they became firm and not soft, and dead to all adversity that could befall them. And they remembered with perfect understanding all the things they had heard and received from Christ with sluggish faith and comprehension; they recalled them to memory as if they had learned them from Him at that very hour (III.7.7).

As Caroline Walker Bynum notes, "it is hard not to see in her [Hildegard's] parable of the apostles a description of her own prophetic role."⁹⁶

But as a woman, Hildegard had to defend her right to speak. She described her time as "effeminate." Since male leadership was in disarray, God commissioned a woman to speak out against the evils of the time. The Spirit is repeatedly named as the source of her inspiration and the authorization of her speech. In the first book of the *Scivias*, Hildegard is addressed by God:

⁹⁵It has been suggested that Hildegard's medical condition may have been a form of migraine called *scintilla scotoma*.

⁹⁶Preface to Hildegard's *Scivias* (New York: Paulist, 1990) 6.

O you who are wretched earth, and, as a woman, untaught in all learning of earthly teachers and unable to read literature with philosophical understanding, you are nonetheless touched by My light, which kindles in you an inner fire like a burning sun; cry out and relate and write these My mysteries that you see and hear in mystical visions. So do not be timid, but say those things you understand in the Spirit as I speak them through you; so that those who should have shown My people righteousness, but who in their perversity refuse to speak openly of the justice they know, unwilling to abstain from the evil desires that cling to them like their masters and make them fly from the face of the Lord and blush to speak the truth, may be ashamed (I.2.1).

In another theological work, *The Book of Life's Merits*, Hildegard recalls that in 1158, at the age of sixty-one, she heard a heavenly voice.

From infancy you have been taught, not bodily but spiritually, by true vision through the Spirit of the Lord. Speak these things that you now see and hear. . . . Speak and write, therefore, now according to me and not according to yourself.⁹⁷

And her friend and secretary in her later years, the monk Guibert of Gembloux, writes about Hildegard,

The Apostle does not permit a woman to teach in the Church. But this woman is exempt from this condition because she has received the Spirit, and with a heart instructed in wisdom by his teaching, she has learned through her own experience what is written: "Blessed is the one whom you have instructed, O Lord, and out of your law you have taught him" (Ps 94.12). . . . But although the anointing of the Spirit, like a schoolmistress, teaches her all things inwardly and bids her . . . to offer confidently in public what it has taught her in secret so as to instruct her hearers, she is nonetheless mindful of her own sex and condition. . . . Yet she obeys the Spirit, not him whom the Spirit sends. . . . Beholding the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, she is being transformed into the selfsame image as by the Spirit of the Lord, from glory to glory.⁹⁸

Hildegard needed to take a number of creative turns to explain the anomaly of a female, Spirit-inspired prophet.⁹⁹ She explains that while women's softness may make them more vulnerable to the power of evil spirits, that same softness

⁹⁷Hildegard of Bingen, *Liber Vitae Meritorum*, trans. Bruce W. Hozeski (New York: Garland Publishing, 1994) 9-10.

⁹⁸Guibert of Gembloux, letter 16, *Analecta S. Hildegardis*, vol. 8 of *Analecta sacra*, ed. J.-P. Pitra (Monte Cassino, 1882) 386. Gembloux refers to 2 Cor. 3.17-18: "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."

⁹⁹See Barbara Newman, *Sister of Wisdom: St. Hildegard's Theology of the Feminine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) 112ff and "Divine Power Made Perfect in Weakness," in *Peace Weavers*, ed. J. A. Nichols and L. T. Shank (Kalamazoo MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987) 103-22.

also functions to make them more receptive to the Holy Spirit. According to Hildegard, the devil tempted Eve precisely because she was the easier target. But this same quality in Eve allows God to effect redemption with similar ease. If the devil had succeeded with Adam, God would have had a terrible time communicating grace through male solidity or hardness!¹⁰⁰ Hildegard's femaleness becomes her personal claim to that divine foolishness that is stronger and wiser than the wisdom of men.¹⁰¹

The context for Hildegard's prophetic voice is her view of the world as a cosmic struggle between the forces of good and evil. She is called to prophesy against both heresy¹⁰² and corruption in the Church. She images the Church as a huge tower in front of a pillar that symbolizes the humanity of Christ (III.9.7). Christ's humanity gives out a steady light to illumine the Church that is built by joining together living stones enkindled by the fire of the Holy Spirit (III.9.8). Around the tower's summit are seven bulwarks, built with wonderful strength which represent the "seven impregnable gifts of the Holy Spirit" (III.9.12). God sees to the protection and beauty of the new Bride by "manifesting the seven modes of the purifying inspiration of the Holy Spirit which drive away all adverse storms" (III.9.24). She identifies four particular gifts offered to persons to help them go forward—wisdom, justice, fortitude and sanctity—all "strongly united in inner vision and in love" (III.9.25-29).

There are other parallels between Hildegard's portrayal of the Spirit and her own prophetic role. For the most part, Hildegard's texts reveal a critical, confident, thundering prophet. The Spirit plays a key role in her call to the Church to repent and it is the Spirit who warns those who choose the path of iniquity (II.4.14).¹⁰³ It is through the Spirit's fiery gift that the Church builds up its fortitude so that it can never be thrown down by an error of wickedness (III.4.4). In her vision on Confirmation, Hildegard writes,

Therefore this tower that you see represents the flaming forth of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which the Father sent into the world for love of His Son, to enkindle the hearts of his disciples with fiery tongues and make them stronger in the name of the Holy, True Trinity. Before the coming upon them of the Holy Spirit in fire, they were sitting shut up in their house, protecting their bodies, for they were timid about speaking of God's justice and feeble in facing their enemies' persecution. . . . But by Its [Holy Spirit] coming they were so confirmed that they did not shrink from any penalty, but bravely endured it. And this is the strength of that tower, which strengthened the Church so much that the insane fury of the

¹⁰⁰Hildegard of Bingen, *Scivias*, I.2.10.

¹⁰¹Newman, "Divine Power Made Perfect in Weakness," 104-105.

¹⁰²See Ulkrike Wiethaus, "Cathar Influence in Hildegard of Bingen's Play, 'Ordo Virtutum,'" *American Benedictine Review* 38/2 (June 1987): 192-203.

¹⁰³Noah and the flood provide another vehicle for the Holy Spirit's warning to a human race on the verge of perishing, "polluted with black wickedness" *Scivias* (II.3.19).

devil can never overcome it (II.4.1).

But on another level, she emphasized the passive dimension of her prophetic call, taking care not to put herself forward in roles that were unacceptable for women. In one of her best-known images, Hildegard speaks of God's elect as wind instruments that remain silent until the divine musician plays them. The prophet sings not with her own voice but with that of Another.¹⁰⁴ The Spirit also had a tamer side. In Hildegard's discussion of baptism, the Holy Spirit appears in the form of a gentle animal, "whose place is held by the man who speaks to and teaches the person to be baptized in simplicity of heart" (II.3.32). And in a letter to Pope Eugenius III, Hildegard described her own vocation through the image of a small feather, touched by the king so that it flew miraculously, sustained by the wind of the Spirit so that it would not fall.¹⁰⁵

In her struggle for ecclesial justice and orthodoxy, Hildegard, "the Sibyl of the Rhine," called upon the Spirit who reveals the hidden mysteries, strengthens the disciples, confirms all justice and brings forth and enkindles sure doctrine in the Christian people. The Spirit's testimony is that "death cannot resist the justice of God" (II.4.8).

As we move ahead to fourteenth-century England, we find a different form of prophecy in Julian of Norwich. We have no evidence that Julian was ever accused of heterodoxy, nor was she a staunch public defender of orthodoxy against heresy as was Hildegard. Rather, Julian confronted the Church's teaching in quite explicit ways. Her struggle with orthodoxy,¹⁰⁶ and her conviction that *all* revelation, including her own, is always of a provisional nature, remind us of the freedom of the Spirit to blow where it will. Julian wrestles mightily with issues of lower and higher authority (*Shewings*, 45/256-58). She wonders about the meaning of "all will be well" in the face of the Church's teaching on hell. She acknowledges that the Church makes true judgments about good and evil, but maintains that her vision of God's judgment with regard to sin belongs to a different and superior realm. She credits her understanding and knowledge of these two judgments to "the gracious leading of the Holy Spirit" (45/257). She respects and defers to the Church's teaching that sin must be punished, and yet she refuses to abandon what she discovered through her revelations, that she saw no blame in God.

¹⁰⁴Letter 45. PL 197:217D. Cited in B. Newman, "Divine Power Made Perfect in Weakness," 109.

¹⁰⁵*The Letters of Hildegard of Bingen*, 1:7; and letter 2 to Pope Eugenius written in 1148, *ibid.*, 32-33. Hildegard also receives wings from the Spirit: "'O daughter, run! For the Most Powerful Giver whom no one can resist has given you wings to fly with. Therefore fly swiftly over all these obstacles!' And I, comforted with great consolation, took wing and passed swiftly over all those poisonous and deadly things." *Scivias* I.4.2.

¹⁰⁶See Nuth, *Wisdom's Daughter*, 16-22.

One cannot but admire Julian's ability to uphold the truth that the Spirit is present in *all* Christians and therefore functions both to legitimize and to limit the charism of office. With a reverent and holy fear, Julian spent a lifetime discerning the wondrous and disturbing truths of her revelations. Her struggle included many moments of puzzlement and some of doubt (70/316-17). But in the end, she trusted her understanding of the God the Spirit had revealed, no doubt in part because she was committed to offering a word of "good news" to herself and to a suffering community whom she had to convince of hope against waves of depression and despair (28/227; 39/245; 41/248; 42/251-52; 64/307; 69/315; 73/323; 74/324; 76/329; 77/331; 78/332; 79/334; 82/338). She received a message of comfort from God, and reading both the "signs of the times," and the hearts of the faithful, challenged the message of threat, guilt and damnation offered by some churchmen.

These Spirit narratives provoke us to delineate the sources and contours of our fears, and to petition the Spirit for release from them. They also lead us to identify destructive forces in church and society and to examine why we do or do not work against them. Abraham Heschel queries about prophets: "What gave them the strength to 'demythologize' precious certainties, to attack what was holy, to hurl blasphemies at priest and king, to stand up against all in the name of God?" The prophets, he says, "must have been shattered by some cataclysmic experience in order to be able to shatter others."¹⁰⁷ Who are our prophets, that is, those who open themselves to the Spirit and witness to God's presence by their words and above all, by their actions? The sources of the prophet's courage in the tradition are multiple—openness to the Spirit; summons from God; a sensitive conscience; the ability to "cross over" imaginatively to the sufferings of others; boldness of feeling that has the potential to engage others in the struggle. Like fourth-century Hippo, twelfth-century Bingen, and fourteenth-century Norwich, our own time calls for a prophetic word to real persons in concrete historical situations of sin and suffering.¹⁰⁸

(4) Holy Spirit as Transformer of the Affections

A distinctive hallmark of Western pneumatology is its emphasis on the Holy Spirit as the bond of love between the first and second persons of the Trinity. Augustine's psychological analogy of the Trinity established a further link between the Spirit and will or love. It is noteworthy that Augustine was the first

¹⁰⁷Abraham Heschel, *The Prophets: An Introduction* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1962) 12. Heschel describes prophecy as "exegesis of existence from a divine perspective" (xiv).

¹⁰⁸See M. Colman O'Dell, "Elizabeth of Schönau and Hildegard of Bingen: Prophets of the Lord." O'Dell describes Hildegard as a "prophet of fire" because of her emphasis on fire and heat. In *Peace Weavers*, 86-88, 94.

theologian to develop a firm identification of the Holy Spirit with love. This insight has had a widespread, positive influence on all of Western theology of the Holy Spirit. In the tradition, this connection has led to an association of the Spirit with the transformation of the affections in contemplation and in love of neighbor.

For Augustine, the Spirit at Pentecost allowed Christians to fulfill the law in loving God and neighbor, "not only without the sense of its being burdensome, but even with a joyful mind."¹⁰⁹ God the Holy Spirit, who is Love, is given to us and inflames us to the love of God and neighbor.¹¹⁰ And this love is to be extended even to one's enemies.¹¹¹ As we have seen, for Augustine, the quickening love of the Spirit that effects unity also bears fruit. In the midst of the struggle of life, the Holy Spirit's love enables believers to love their neighbors as themselves (Gal 5.14). Augustine concludes the *Enchiridion* by emphasizing that the aim of all commandments is love, a love that embraces love of God, love of neighbor, on which hang the law, the prophets, the gospel and the apostles.¹¹²

Perhaps the most moving, poetic expressions of Augustine's treatment of the Holy Spirit are those in which he links the Holy Spirit with desire. In his sermons and in his commentary on John, themes of promise, resurrection, sabbath¹¹³ and the eschaton are woven together in the reach toward the future. He speaks of fervor,¹¹⁴ of the drive that compels one to migrate home, a place of peace symbolized by the dove. The tongues at Pentecost caused the dead to be "pricked in their hearts and converted."¹¹⁵ "Therefore, that you may love God, let God dwell in you, and love Himself in you, that is, to His love let Him move you, en-

¹⁰⁹*On the Catechising of the Uninstructed*, 23.41. NPNF III, 308/PL 40, 340. And in *De spiritu et littera*, 5, we read:

Through the Holy Spirit whom we receive there wells up in our hearts a delight and love of the highest good who is God . . . that by this pledge and gift we may yearn to cling to God, to be on fire . . . so that from the one from whom we receive our being we may also receive our delight and happiness. For even if we know what we should do, even then, unless we feel love and delight in doing it, we do not do it. But so that we may feel this delight, "the love of God is poured out into our heart"—not through the free choice that comes from ourselves—"but through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (NPNF V, 84/PL 44, 203).

¹¹⁰*On the Trinity*, XV.17.31. NPNF III, 217/PL 42, 1082. The Holy Spirit is given once upon earth (John 20.22) on account of the love of our neighbor and a second time from heaven, on account of the love of God (Acts 2.4). XV.26.46. NPNF III, 224/PL 42, 1093.

¹¹¹Letter CXXX.VI.13. NPNF I, 463/PL 33, 499.

¹¹²*Enchiridion*, 121. NPNF III, 275-76/PL 40, 288.

¹¹³"On the Gospel of John," Tractate CXXII.8. NPNF VII, 442/PL 35, 1963.

¹¹⁴Ser. XXI.19. NPNF VI, 324/(Ser. LXXI) PL 38, 454. "On the Gospel of John," Tractate VI.2. NPNF VII, 40/PL 35, 1425.

¹¹⁵"On the Gospel of John," Tractate XCII. 1. NPNF VII, 363/PL 35, 1863.

kindle, enlighten, arouse you."¹¹⁶ Ultimately for Augustine, it is the Holy Spirit who brings us to God; who teaches us the way of charity; bends the knee to God for us so that we may know the supereminent knowledge of the love of Christ; and brings us to rest.¹¹⁷ Even though the explicit naming of the Spirit in the *Confessions* is rare, Augustine does explain in his commentary on Genesis (1.2) in book XIII why the Holy Spirit alone was said to be "borne over the waters." He says:

In your gift we rest; there we enjoy You. . . . By your Gift we are inflamed, and are borne upwards; we wax hot inwardly, and go forwards. We ascend your ways that be in our heart (Ps 84.5), and sing a song of degrees; we glow inwardly with your fire, with your good fire, and we go, because we go upwards to the peace of Jerusalem; for glad was I when they said unto me, "Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Ps 122.1). There your good pleasure has placed us, that we may desire no other thing than to dwell there for ever.¹¹⁸

In contrast to Augustine, Hildegard cuts a more steely, matter-of-fact figure. In the *Scivias*, one of Hildegard's explicit discussions of the Spirit's role in transforming the affections had to do with parents coercing children to become nuns or clerics. The last of ten children in a noble family, Hildegard herself was "tithed" to religious life at the age of eight. Later, as abbess of two Benedictine convents, she was well aware of the difference between a coerced following of Christ and a genuine conversion. She employs the analogy of a field to which only God can give dew, send rain, confer fresh moisture or draw warmth from the sun. She has God speak, "So too, you can sow a word in human ears, but into his heart, which is my field, you cannot pour the dew of compunction, or the rain of tears, or the moisture of devotion, or the warmth of the Holy Spirit, through all of which the fruit of holiness must grow" (II.5.46).

For Bonaventure, on the other hand, the teaching of the Spirit is located specifically in the affective realm. In his commentary on the gospel of John, he makes a distinction between two kinds of knowledge. Commenting on John 16.13—"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth"—he asks how the Holy Spirit can teach, since to teach is an act of wisdom and therefore belongs to the Son not the Spirit. Bonaventure responds that the act of teaching belongs to the entire trinity but that sometimes it is linked with the Son

¹¹⁶Sermon LXXVIII.4. NPNF VI, 492/PL 38, 491. In another place, the image of the two kingdoms carries this sentiment. "Why then was it the will of the Lord, seeing that the Spirit's benefits in us are the greatest, because by Him the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, to give us that Spirit after His resurrection? In order that in our resurrection our love may be inflamed, and may part from the love of the world to run wholly towards God. For here we are born and die: let us not love this world; let us migrate hence by love; by love let us dwell above, by that love by which we love God." "On the Gospel of John," Tractate XXXII.9. NPNF VII, 196/PL 35, 1646.

¹¹⁷*Confessions* XIII.vii.8. NPNF I, 192/PL 32, 847-48.

¹¹⁸*Confessions*, XIII.ix.10. NPNF I, 193/PL 32, 848-49.

and other times with the Spirit. The knowledge that is speculation is attributed to the Son, while that which belongs to experience and devotion—the latter a prerequisite for contemplation—is attributed to the Holy Spirit.¹¹⁹

And in the *Collationes in Hexaemeron*, Bonaventure devotes a conference to the ways in which the Scriptures sustain affective dispositions.¹²⁰ He is worried about how to keep the intellect in line when it is tempted by vain curiosities and becomes arrogant. One answer lies in enlightened affections. The intellect is ordained toward the affective dispositions, which, when enlightened, allow the intellect to pass from the speculative to the practical. The most exalted affection, of course, is charity, which arises out of the fruits of the Spirit and is the goal of the Scriptures and of life. The proper function of charity for Bonaventure is to rectify the affective power and make it capable of loving everything that has being and to attach itself to the highest Good.¹²¹ “Neither acts of justice nor miracles nor the understanding of mysteries are of any use without charity.” Bonaventure then offers the example of “a little old woman who owns a small garden.” Even if she has nothing but charity, she will bring forth better fruit than “a great master who owns an enormous garden and knows the mysteries and natures of things.”¹²²

Bonaventure often speaks of the Holy Spirit specifically in terms of intimate affections. He links the spiritual senses of smell, taste, and touch to the affective order.¹²³ Bonaventure plays on the Pentecostal images of fire and breath in multiple keys. Fire is bright in appearance, warm in effect and quick in movement. Love like breath exhales warmth. Through love, grace warms and arouses the heart.¹²⁴ The context for speaking of the Holy Spirit as “transcendent intimacy”¹²⁵ is at times ministry, but more often, prayer or contemplative union.

In his well-known spiritual treatise, the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, one would expect Bonaventure to give a more prominent role to the Holy Spirit. But the *Itinerarium* was written in 1259, a year before the impending age of the Spirit was to dawn,¹²⁶ and two years after Bonaventure became Minister of the

¹¹⁹*Commentary on John*, 16.25. (VII, 461).

¹²⁰*Hex.* XVIII. (V, 414-19).

¹²¹*III Sent.* 27.1.3 (III, 597).

¹²²*Hex.* XVIII. 25, 26. (V, 418).

¹²³Bonaventure speaks of experiential, affective knowledge of God in terms of sensation rather than knowing. The great contemplatives feel rather than know God: “magis sentiunt quam cognoscant.” *III Sent* 35, q.1, ad 5 (III, 775); *Commentary on John*, 1.43 (VI, 256).

¹²⁴*Sermo IX* (IX, 341).

¹²⁵*Sermo de trinitate* (IX, 355).

¹²⁶The age of the Spirit was to be an era of contemplation and insight into the meaning of scripture. Francis was known for his gift of insight into the hidden, spiritual meaning of the Scriptures, a gift that Bonaventure links with prophecy. See *Legenda*

Franciscans. John of Parma had been General since 1247, and while admired for his personal and administrative gifts, resigned in February of 1257 at the prompting of Alexander IV because of his Spiritualist sympathies. Surely this situation influenced Bonaventure's choice of words in the invocation at the beginning of the *Itinerarium*. Bonaventure calls upon the Father of Lights, the Lord Jesus Christ, through the intercession of Mary and the blessed Francis, so that his feet might be guided into the way of peace, that is, contemplative mystical union.¹²⁷ One cannot help but ask: Where is the Holy Spirit?

Yet Bonaventure speaks of the way to union in a thoroughly trinitarian fashion and links the Holy Spirit with the more advanced, affective stages of the contemplative life. Both the cosmos and the human mind bear the traces and vestiges of the Trinity. At the end of chapter 4, "The Consideration of God in His Image Reformed Through the Gifts of Grace," Bonaventure speaks of the mind as the house of God inhabited by Divine Wisdom, daughter, spouse, friend of God; member, sister, coheir of Christ; temple of the Holy Spirit. Following Augustine closely, Bonaventure cites Romans 5.5 and 1 Cor 2.11—the Spirit pours forth love into our hearts and is the means by which one can know the things of God.

And in the final, culminating chapter, in which Bonaventure describes the soul's mystical transport through the cross of Christ, the Holy Spirit makes a dramatic appearance.

In this passing over, if it is to be perfect, all intellectual activities ought to be relinquished and the loftiest affection transported to God, and transformed into Him. This, however, is mystical and most secret, which no one knows except him who receives it (Apoc. 2.17), and no one receives it except him who desires it, and no one desires it except he who is penetrated to the marrow by the fire of the Holy Spirit, Whom Christ sent into the world (Lk 12.49). This is why the Apostle (1Cor 2.10-11) says that this mystical wisdom is revealed by the Holy Spirit.

And since, therefore, nature avails nothing and human endeavor but little, little should be attributed to inquiry, but much to unction; little to the tongue, but very much to interior joy; little to the spoken or written word, but everything to the Gift of God, that is, to the Holy Spirit.¹²⁸

Through prayer, desire is enkindled by the fire of the Holy Spirit. And while Christ is the way, the door, the ladder and the vehicle of this mystical transport,¹²⁹ the Gift that is the Holy Spirit makes it possible. Thus, for Bonaventure, one of the distinctive activities appropriated to the Holy Spirit has to do with the final contemplative goal of life. This crowning mystical transport is adumbrated

maior 2.1 (VIII, 507-508); 11.2 (VIII, 536); 12.12 (VIII, 542).

¹²⁷*Itin.*, ProI., 1. (V, 295).

¹²⁸*Itin.* VII.4,5. (V, 312-13).

¹²⁹*Ibid.*, VII.1. (V, 312).

in the Prologue where Bonaventure says without explicitly referring to the Holy Spirit,

Wherefore, it is to groans of prayer through Christ Crucified, in Whose blood we are cleansed from the filth of vices, that I first of all invite the reader. Otherwise he may come to think that mere reading will suffice without fervor, speculation without devotion, investigation without admiration, observation without exultation, industry without piety, knowledge without love, understanding without humility, study without divine grace, the mirror without divinely inspired wisdom.¹³⁰

And in the final pages of the *Breviloquium*, written around 1255–1257, Bonaventure describes the final judgment, the cosmic denouement of salvation history with its rewards and punishments. Interestingly, the single explicit reference to the Holy Spirit is in connection with the rewards of a glorified body, an aspect of the human person related to the affections.¹³¹ Bonaventure reveals his Aristotelian sympathies, noting that the soul cannot be fully happy without the body, since they have a natural ordination to one another. Since the soul is enlightened with the vision of eternal Light, Bonaventure says, the body also must shine with great splendor; display subtlety and spirituality; be beyond suffering; and possess supreme agility. These gifts allow the human body to assimilate to heavenly bodies. "Hence," he says, "this fourfold gift to the human body not only perfects it in itself but also conforms it to the heavenly dwelling and the Holy Spirit. Through the Spirit, the fullness of delights and the rapture of bliss flow from God the Head down upon the skirt of the garment, the bodies of humans" (Ps.132.2).¹³²

Julian too, associates the Holy Spirit with the affections. For her, our very ability to desire and seek God, to yearn for—and occasionally to find—God, is the fruit of the Spirit's touch. This gift, she reassures the struggling Christian, is as good as contemplation for the labouring soul (*Shewings*, 10/195; 5/184).

Julian's God is a joyful God and she associates the Holy Spirit particularly with delight. One of the distinctive marks of Julian's teaching is her portrayal of the joy the Trinity experiences in Christ's passion. Julian recounts God's words to her:

And in these three sayings: It is a joy, a bliss and an endless delight to me, there were shown to me three heavens, and in this way. By "joy" I understood that the Father was pleased, and by "bliss" that the Son was honoured, and by "endless delight" the Holy Spirit. The Father is pleased, the Son is honoured, the Holy

¹³⁰*Itin.* Prol., 4. (V, 296).

¹³¹"quod anima sit plene beata, nisi restituatur ei corpus, ad quod resumendum habet inclinationem naturaliter insertam; nec regiminis ordo sustinet, quod restituatur corpus spiritui beato nisi per omnia illi conforme et subiectum, quantum potest corpus spiritui conformari." *Brev* VII.7.4. (V, 288-91).

¹³²*Ibid.*, VII.7. (V, 290). See also *Sermo I* (IX, 333).

Spirit takes delight (23/218; also 55/286).¹³³

In her revelations, Julian meets a God whose love is startling and disconcerting. Not only is this God intimate and familiar. This is also a God whose joy is anchored in creation and especially in human beings. Julian used a striking metaphor to express this quality in God. She says, "For it was revealed that we are his crown, which crown is the Father's joy, the Son's honour, the Holy Spirit's delight, and endless marvellous bliss to all who are in heaven" (51/278).

The joy and delight that Julian finds in God is catching. By the end of the text, readers are infected with similar sentiments. Julian repeatedly images the persons of the Trinity, Mary, and the faithful as intimately coinhering with one another at many levels. Images of clothing, of protective enclosing and being enclosed by God [and Mary] are plentiful (53/283; 54/285; 56/289; 57/292; 68/313; 81/337). God is even like our skin: "For as the body is clad in the cloth, and the flesh in the skin, and the bones in the flesh, and the heart in the trunk, so are we, soul and body, clad and enclosed in the goodness of God" (6/186). This mutual coinherence of the persons of the Trinity includes all of creation and is the source of joy, honour and delight for all (55/286). The Spirit's role in creation is one of desire—a desire that brings about results.

The place which Jesus takes in our soul he will nevermore vacate, for in us is his home of homes and his everlasting dwelling. And in this he revealed the delight that he has in the creation of man's soul; for as well as the Father could create a creature, and as well as the Son could create a creature, so well did the Holy Spirit want man's spirit to be created, and so it was done. And therefore the blessed Trinity rejoices without end in the creation of man's soul, for it saw without beginning what would delight it without end (68/313; see also 58/293).

These texts testify to the variety and intensity of the medieval appreciation of the role and effects of the Holy Spirit as Love. Today, the affections have come again into the theological spotlight. Themes of love,¹³⁴ *eros*,¹³⁵ friendship,¹³⁶

¹³³The translators chose the term "delight" over Julian's more homely term, "liking." The Old English reads: "In this thre wordes: It is a ioye, a blysse and ane endeles likyng to me, ware schewed to me thre hevens . . . for the endeles lykyng the haly gaste. The fadere is plesed, the sonne ys worschippyd, the haly gaste lykes." Cited in J. P. H. Clark, "Nature, Grace and the Trinity," *The Downside Review* 100 (1982): 205.

¹³⁴Maurice Nédoncelle, *Love and the Person*, trans. Ruth Adelaide (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966); Daniel Day Williams, *The Spirit and Forms of Love* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968); Jean Leclercq, *Monks and Love in Twelfth-Century France* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979); Sebastian Moore, "The Language of Love," in *Lonergan Workshop 3*, ed. F. Lawrence (Chico CA: Scholars Press, 1982) 83-106; Mary G. Durkin, *Feast of Love: Pope John Paul II on Human Intimacy* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1983); Irving Singer, *The Nature of Love*, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985-1987); Julia Kristeva, *Tales of Love* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987); P. M. Cooley et al., eds. *Embodied Love: Sensuality and Relationship as Feminist Values*

passion,¹³⁷ desire,¹³⁸ emotions¹³⁹ and the "heart"¹⁴⁰ abound. The theological and

(San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988).

¹³⁵E.A. Maio, "The Imagery of Eros: A Study of the Influence of Neoplatonism on the Mystical Writings of St. John of the Cross" (diss., UCLA, 1967); Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, trans. Philip S. Watson (New York: Harper & Row, 1969); Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (Boston: Beacon, 1974); Philip Sherrard, *Christianity and Eros: Essays on the Theme of Sexual Love* (London: SPCK, 1976); Sebastian Moore, *The Fire and the Rose Are One* (New York: Seabury, 1980); Anthony T. Perry, *Erotic Spirituality: The Integrative Tradition from Leone Ebreo to John Donne* (University AL: University of Alabama Press, 1980); Audre Lorde, *A Burst of Light* (Ithaca NY: Firebrand Books, 1988); Rita Nakashima Brock, *Journeys by Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power* (New York: Crossroads, 1988); Carter Heyward, *Touching Our Strength: The Erotic as Power and the Love of God* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989); Alan Soble, ed., *Eros, Agape and Philia: Readings in the Philosophy of Love* (New York: Paragon House, 1989); Paul Avis, *Eros and the Sacred* (London: SPCK, 1989); Alexander C. Irwin, *Eros Toward the World: Paul Tillich and the Theology of the Erotic* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991); Fredrica R. Halligan and John Shea, eds. *Fires of Desire: Erotic Energies and the Spiritual Quest* (New York: Crossroad Herder, 1996).

¹³⁶Jean Leclercq, "L'amitié dan les lettres au moyen age," *Revue du moyen age latin* 1 (1945): 391-410; Christopher Kiesling, *Celibacy, Prayer and Friendship* (New York: Alba House, 1978); Gilbert Meilaender, *Friendship: A Study in Theological Ethics* (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981); Alan Jones, *Exploring Spiritual Direction: An Essay on Christian Friendship* (New York: Seabury, 1982); Rosemary Rader, *Breaking Boundaries: Male/Female Friendship in Early Christian Communities* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983); Sally McFague, *Models of God* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987); Diogenes Allen, *Love: Christian Romance, Marriage, Friendship* (Cambridge MA: Cowley Publications, 1987); Brian Patrick McGuire, *Friendship and Community: The Monastic Experience, 350-1250* (Kalamazoo MI: Cistercian Publications, 1988); Paul Waddell, *Friendship in the Moral Life* (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989); Mary Hunt, *Fierce Tenderness: Toward A Feminist Theology of Friendship* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989); Leroy Rouner, ed., *The Changing Face of Friendship* (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

¹³⁷Rosemary Haughton, *The Passionate God* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981); Richard Rohr, "Pure Passion: The Holiness of Sexuality," *Sojourners* 11/9 (1982): 14-18; Sam Keen, *Passionate Life: Stages of Loving* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983); Carter Heyward, *Our Passion for Justice: Images of Power, Sexuality and Liberation* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1984); Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Niklas Lukmann, *Love as Passion: A Codification of Intimacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987); V. Fabella and M. A. Oduyoye, eds., *With Passion and Compassion: Third World Women Doing Theology* (Maryknoll NY: Orbis, 1988); Elizabeth A. Dreyer, *Passionate Women: Two Medieval Mystics* (New York: Paulist, 1990).

spiritual traditions are enriched by psychological, physiological, literary, and social scientific perspectives. Feminist theologians are in the midst of a major recovery of wisdom traditions. Ethicists explore the role of the heart in morality. Still others ground the theological task in a mystical falling in love with God. And many Christians in the wider faith community aim at a contemplative existence that has been described as a "loving gaze at the world."

Nonetheless, medieval accounts of the Spirit's role in transforming the affections offer insufficiently tapped linguistic, conceptual, metaphorical and imagistic resources to aid us in our theologies and in our hungers to experience the lure of God's love, the conversion of our desires, and in our prayer to love God, friends, neighbors and enemies well.

III. SILENCES OF THE SPIRIT

My search has resulted in the discovery of an abundance of Spirit images and narratives, a rich vein that can, I believe, be mined in the interests of a constructive pneumatology and a renewed Christian life. However, one must wonder at the Spirit silences as well. Can we account for them? Are there historical or ecclesial factors that might have colored attitudes toward the Spirit? One such factor is the presence of "fringe" movements, often apocalyptic in tone, that showcased the Spirit's powers acting in individuals and communities. Who participated in these movements? What were their goals? How did church leaders respond?

For example, any discussion of Bonaventure's theology of the Holy Spirit must take into account the intense interest among some medieval Franciscans in

¹³⁸Aline Rousselle, *Porneia: On Desire and the Body in Antiquity* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983); Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986); Antoine Vergote, *Guilt and Desire: Religious Attitudes and Their Pathological Derivatives* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1988).

¹³⁹Wayne Proudfoot, "Religious Experience, Emotion and Belief," *Harvard Theological Review* 70 (1977): 343-67; D. Saliers, *The Soul in Paraphrase: Prayer and the Religious Affections* (New York: Seabury, 1980); Beverly Wildung Harrison, "The Power of Anger in the Work of Love," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* supplement 36 (1981): 41-57; Robert C. Roberts, *Spirituality and Human Emotion* (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1982), "Emotions as Access to Religious Truth," *Faith and Philosophy* 9 (1992): 83-94, "Thomas Aquinas on the Morality of the Emotions," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 9 (1992): 287-305; Michael P. Morrissey, "Reason and Emotion: Modern and Classical Views on Religious Knowing," *Horizons* 16/2 (1989): 275-91.

¹⁴⁰Richard H. Bell, ed., *The Grammar of the Heart: New Essays in Moral Philosophy and Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988); Annice Callahan, *Spiritualities of the Heart* (New York: Paulist Press, 1990).

the prophetic tradition associated with Joachim of Fiore.¹⁴¹ One can agree with Marjorie Reeve's statement that Bonaventure both condemned and embraced various aspects of this prophetic tradition. No doubt aware firsthand of the dangers of some aspects of apocalyptic thought, he is anxious to dissociate himself from any trinitarian conception of history and from ideas about the Holy Spirit that eclipse Christ in any way.¹⁴² In addition, given Bonaventure's experience with the Spiritual Franciscans; the condemnation of Joachim's ideas on the Trinity at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and of Gerard of Borgo San Donnino's *Introductorius in Evangelium Aeternum* by Alexander IV in 1255; and given the intense emotions associated with the prediction that the year 1260 would inaugurate the third age of the Holy Spirit—one can safely wager that he would practice restraint and weigh carefully *any* talk about the Holy Spirit! But on the other hand, Bonaventure clearly regards Francis as *alter Christus* and identifies him with the "Angel of the Sixth Seal" of Apocalypse 7.2;¹⁴³ speaks of the ages of history in terms of the three persons;¹⁴⁴ and especially toward the end of his life, read the "signs of his times" as ripe for impending crisis.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹See David Burr, "Bonaventure, Olivi and Franciscan Eschatology," *Collectanea Franciscana* 53 (1983): 23-40, "Franciscan Exegesis and Francis as Apocalyptic Figure," In *Monks, Nuns, and Friars in Medieval Society* (Sewanee TN: 1989) 51-62; Bernard McGinn, "The Abbot and the Doctors: Scholastic Reactions to the Radical Eschatology of Joachim of Fiore," *Church History* 40 (1971): 30-47; Joseph Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1971) 104-108; 117-18.

¹⁴²See Marjorie Reeves, *Joachim of Fiore and the Prophetic Future* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976) 36-37. See also M. Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: A Study in Joachimism* (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993 [Oxford, 1969]); Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), *Apocalyptic Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), *The Calabrian Abbot: Joachim of Fiore in the History of Western Thought* (New York: Macmillan, 1985); Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn, eds., *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1992); Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1992) 189-214.

¹⁴³*Legenda maior* (VIII, 504-49); *Legenda minor* (VIII, 577-79); *Hex.* XVI, 16 (V, 405). See also "The *Legenda Maior*: Bonaventure's Apocalyptic Francis," in *The Apocalyptic Imagination in Medieval Literature* by Richard K. Emmerson and Ronald B. Herzman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992) 36-75; and S. Bihel, "S. Franciscus fuitne Angelus Sexti Sigilli?" *Antonianum* 2 (1927): 57-90.

¹⁴⁴*Hex.* XV.9. (V, 399) and XV.20 (V, 401).

¹⁴⁵*Hex.* I.6-9. (V, 330). For Bonaventure, one negative eschatological sign was the presence of Aristotelian errors in theology. "False theologians and true spiritual men will be the opposed signs of the dawning age for the seraphic doctor." Bernard McGinn, "The Abbot and the Doctors: Scholastic Reactions to the Radical Eschatology of Joachim of Fiore," *Church History* 40 (1971): 45.

Another source of unease about the Spirit is the claim that the Spirit communicates divine truth in an unmediated fashion. The Holy Spirit has been named as the source of visions, direct divine inspiration, and insight into the Scriptures and tradition by those without formal learning. On the "orthodox" side, one can name the gift of tongues to the disciples at Pentecost; Francis of Assisi's miraculous understanding of the Scriptures; Hildegard of Bingen's prophetic visionary inspiration. But on the "heterodox" side, the Spirit was also claimed by fervent Christians who spoke out against the *status quo*, condemned abuses in church and society and offered a variety of alternatives that ranged from solid to silly. Many in this group remain infamous as heretics who were persecuted, condemned, and destroyed by history's winners.

In several instances, women played a prominent role in these Spirit-inspired movements. For example, in her book, *From Virile Woman to WomanChrist*, Barbara Newman examines two medieval groups who, inspired by Joachite teaching, believed that the third age of the Spirit involved an incarnation of the Spirit in female persons, namely Bohemian princess Guglielma of Milan (d.1282) and Na Prous Boneta (d.1328). One of Guglielma's followers, Maifreda of Pirovano, a member of the Umiliati, who lived in northern Italy in the early fourteenth century, was granted the title of pope, vicar of the Holy Spirit, by a small heretical sect. She was to have celebrated mass at Santa Maria Maggiore on Pentecost when the Holy Spirit would rise from the dead—incarnate in Guglielma—to confer blessings on her people. She and at least two other women of her congregation ended up at the stake.¹⁴⁶

One must also ask about the struggles of those whose Spirit-inspired speech challenged official doctrinal positions. Julian's texts seem not to have been received with the same acclaim as those of her peers, Richard Rolle, Walter Hilton and the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*. In contrast to the plethora of surviving manuscripts of these latter writers, there is only one copy of Julian's short text, dated between 1450 and 1500. The long text survives from the Middle Ages only in extract and in complete form in two seventeenth-century manuscripts.¹⁴⁷ Colledge and Walsh attribute Julian's unpopularity to the difficulty of her text, but her willingness to raise questions about Church teaching could signal another reason.

¹⁴⁶See Barbara Newman, *From Virile Woman*, 182. Also Stephen Wessley, "The Thirteenth-Century Guglielmites: Salvation Through Women," in Derek Baker, *Medieval Women* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978) 289-303; and Felice Tocco, ed., "Il Processo dei Guglielmiti," *Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei: Classe di Scienze Morali, Storiche e Filologiche*, ser. 5, vol. 8 (Rome, 1899) 309-42; 351-84, 407-32, 437-69. Cited in Newman, 295. Yves Congar also addresses the "femininity" of the Holy Spirit in *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 3:155-64.

¹⁴⁷See introduction by Edmund Colledge and James Walsh in *Julian of Norwich: Showings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978) 21-22; and Nicholas Watson, "The Composition of Julian of Norwich's *Revelation of Love*," *Speculum* (July 1993): 638.

Joan Nuth thinks it likely that Julian knew about the prosecution of the so-called "Free Spirit" heresy to which even the most orthodox mystics or any female who presumed to teach or preach could be suspect.¹⁴⁸ After a lull, the Inquisition took on new fervor between 1353 and 1377 and again in the 1390's when Julian would have been writing her *Shewings*.¹⁴⁹

Such groups and individuals have been dismissed as extreme, dangerously anarchic and heretical, not worthy of serious historical examination. But a more careful probing of the historical record usually reveals a more complex picture. Barbara Newman reminds us that recent research on medieval women's piety has led to a reconsideration of esoteric motifs of a feminine Holy Spirit which may have functioned to criticize the established Church.

Beyond the Middle Ages, one must consider the effects on pneumatology of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, as well as of various other social and cultural developments. Catholics reacted to Protestant trust in the Spirit's empowerment of the laity. Protestants reacted to the spawning of fringe movements that looked to the Spirit for legitimation. But an attentive reading of the political situation in Calvin's Geneva, of Anabaptist letters from prison, or later developments such as Zinzendorf's doctrine of the motherly office of the Spirit, quickly lead one away from wholesale dismissal or condemnation. All of these more radical "Spirit" movements need to be revisited by social and theological historians.

Joseph Chinnici notes the disappearance of citations from mystical texts between 1620 and 1680 in England, France and Italy, and suggests that appeal to

¹⁴⁸It has been suggested that Julian's term "even-Christians" may have been borrowed from the Lollards. See Shannon McSheffrey, *Gender & Heresy: Women and Men in Lollard Communities, 1420-1530* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995); R. N. Swanson, *Church and Society in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989) 252-363; Eleanor McLaughlin, "Les femmes et l'hérésie médiévale," *Concilium* 111 (1976): 73-90; Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1992); R. I. Moore, *The Origins of European Dissent* (New York, 1977); Robert E. Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1972).

¹⁴⁹Julian was a contemporary of Wycliffe who was first investigated around 1377 and then banned from Oxford in 1382. The Lollard movement spawned by his writings attracted both powerful patrons and simple folk who supported its criticism of the wealth and corruption of the church; its questioning of the role of sacraments; the denial of hell and purgatory; and its doctrine that the perfect were no longer capable of sin. All of these themes are concerns in Julian's text. This development can partially explain Julian's concern with orthodoxy in the longer text, but the short text predates these events. Nuth also notes the Council of Vienne decree, *Cum de quibusdam mulieribus*, cited throughout the fourteenth century as the "authoritative document legitimizing investigations of women 'commonly known as beguines' who dared to 'discourse on the Trinity and the divine essence'" (Joan Nuth, *Wisdom's Daughter*, 19-21).

the Holy Spirit became associated with the forces of anarchy. He also notes that the rise of science with its effects on epistemology removed the Holy Spirit from the language field into the realm of the "unknowable," the "mysterious," the "emotional," and the "enthusiastic." Later choices to speak of the Church as the perfect society rather than as the mystical body no doubt helped move the Spirit further onto the sidelines.¹⁵⁰

CONCLUSION

How then are we to respond to the question: Was the Holy Spirit Cinderella in the Middle Ages? Surely even this brief walk through select aspects of the Western medieval tradition has shown that narratives of the Spirit abound—narratives that suggest a lively if not always dominant presence of the Spirit in the lives, communities and theologies examined. No doubt pneumatology has been impoverished to the extent that theologians limit themselves to systematic texts, omitting those texts where Spirit experiences are most likely to surface, that is, prayers, sermons, meditations, liturgical texts, accounts of mystical experience.

I also conclude that the Holy Spirit's presence was associated with an identifiable constellation of activities rooted in biblical language and imagery deeply embedded in the consciousness of these communities. In each case, descriptions of the work of the Spirit functioned in distinctive ways depending on the authors' perceptions of the needs of the communities addressed.

These narratives alert us to the range of ways different communities called upon, and spoke of the Spirit out of their concrete experience in all its messiness and particularity. The links between a community's experience of the Spirit, its choice of words and images to speak of that experience, and its more ordered, theological expression, continue to be forged. In his book, *We Drink From Our Own Wells*, whose title is taken from Bernard of Clairvaux's treatise for Eugenius III, *De consideratione*, Gustavo Gutierrez reminds us rather dramatically, "The solidity and energy of theological thought depend precisely on the spiritual experience that supports it. Any theological or religious reflection that does not help in living according to the Spirit is not a Christian theology."¹⁵¹ By

¹⁵⁰Joseph Chinnici, "Have you seen the one whom my heart loves?": Contemplative Prayer and the Ambiguities of History," and "The Politics of Mysticism: Church, State, and the Carmelite Tradition," unpublished papers, 1994.

¹⁵¹Gustavo Gutierrez, *We Drink From Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of A People*, trans. Matthew O'Connell (Maryknoll NY: Orbis, 1984) 37. At 147n.2, Gutierrez cites Marie-Dominique Chenu's sentiment that the interest and grandeur of theological systems lie in their being expressions of a spirituality. One gets to the heart of a theology by grasping it in its origins "via that fundamental intuition that serves to guide a spiritual life and provides the intellectual regimen proper to that life." *Le Saulchoir: Una Scuola de teologia* (Casale Monferrato: Marietti, 1982 [1937]) 59.

attending to these more primary narratives, the theologian can ensure that systematic and doctrinal statements are faithful to the symbols and images that gave rise to the concept.¹⁵²

On the other hand, in comparison with the overwhelmingly christocentric nature of the Western tradition, the Holy Spirit can be said to have been given but a supporting role. One is led to wonder about the Spirit-chaos that was ordered too soon and sometimes too harshly; about the Spirit-novelties that were not allowed to be born or to perdure; about the Spirit-silences that resulted in an impoverishment of the community's awareness of the infinite ways in which God pours out Godself into hearts and into a troubled world.

The Spirit has always been connected with prophecy; with eschatological tendencies; with the divine energy associated with criticism of the *status quo* and ecclesial abuse; with the affections; with "fringe" movements within the Church (that are able to ensnare emotional women, we are frequently reminded); as well as with fresh institutional alternatives.¹⁵³ When Christians uneasy about the sin or mediocrity of the Church cast about for divine ammunition, the Holy Spirit has always been ready to hand. Some who enlist the Spirit steer a steady course that genuinely renews the Church—often at great cost; others are persecuted and driven out unjustly in the interest of an order that smacks of "power-over" and control. Still others abuse the Spirit in frivolous and scandalously destructive ways.

As individuals and as Church we are never through with the task of discerning more carefully good and bad spirits. When does wise caution become irrational fear of the legitimate, freeing, renewing, and inevitably upsetting power of the Spirit's presence? In what ways do we fear and block the Spirit's function as the guardian of the "divine madness"?¹⁵⁴ Hans Küng—who speaks out of a lifetime of loyal ecclesial opposition—reminds us that there is but one Holy Spirit—the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Spirit of the Church and the Spirit of individual believers (and, I would add, the Spirit of the cosmos). To believe in the Spirit, he says, means to trust that God can be present in, and seize hold of, our innermost selves. In the freedom of the Spirit, we find "new

¹⁵²See LaCugna, *God For Us*, 359.

¹⁵³Abraham J. Heschel describes the prophet as one who intensifies responsibility; who is impatient of excuse and contemptuous of pretense and self-pity. He calls them exegetes "of existence from a divine perspective." The prophet is one who is sensitive to evil and who feels fiercely. *The Prophets: An Introduction* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1962) xiv, 3, 5, 7. David Tracy names as the two principal foci of his theology a hermeneutics in which the "other," not the "self," is the dominant focus; and a conviction "that only a prophetic-mystical form of theology for naming God" is helpful today. "God, Dialogue and Solidarity: A Theologian's Refrain," *The Christian Century* 107/20 (10 Oct 1990): 902.

¹⁵⁴See Todd Breyfogle and Thomas Levergood, "Conversation with David Tracy," *Cross Currents* (Fall 1994): 293-98.

courage, comfort and strength again and again in all the great and the small decisions, fears, danger, premonitions and expectations of life."¹⁵⁵

I suggest that the Spirit was neither absent nor lost in abstraction for our ancestors in the faith. Rather the Spirit was imagined, spoken about, called upon, depended upon, and at times, abused and neglected. But consistently and in diverse ways, the Spirit brought the light of understanding, the oil of healing, the courage of prophecy, comfort to the afflicted, affliction to the comfortable, and direction for a life of virtue. Surely engagement with these texts can contribute to the creation of constructive pneumatologies and to a livelier presence of the Spirit among the faithful.

I close, as I began, with a prayer to the Holy Spirit—the sequence *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*, probably written by Stephen Langton in the first part of the thirteenth century.¹⁵⁶

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|---|---|
| I. Come, Holy Spirit,
and send out a ray
of your heavenly light. | VI. Without your divine power
there is nothing in humans,
nothing that is harmless. |
| II. Come, protector of the poor,
come, giver of gifts,
come, light of our hearts. | VII. Wash what is unclean,
water what is arid,
heal what is wounded. |
| III. Come, kindly comforter,
sweet guest of our soul
and sweet freshness. | VIII. Bend what is stiff,
warm what is cold,
guide what has gone astray. |
| IV. Rest in hardship,
moderation in the heat,
relief in pain! | IX. Give to those who believe in you
and who trust in you
your seven sacred gifts. |
| V. O most blessed light,
fill the innermost hearts
of those who believe in you. | X. Give the reward of virtue,
give the end of salvation,
give lasting happiness! |

ELIZABETH A. DREYER
Hamden, Connecticut

¹⁵⁵Hans Küng, "Epilogue: How Should We Speak Today About the Holy Spirit?" in *Conflicts About the Holy Spirit*, ed. H. Küng and J. Moltmann, *Concilium* 128 (New York: Seabury Press, 1979) 115-16.

¹⁵⁶In *The Library of Christian Classics*, vol. 10, *A Scholastic Miscellany: Anselm to Ockham*, ed. and trans. Eugene R. Fairweather (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1956) 359-60. Also cited in Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 1:109-10.