

## THE EUCHARIST AND POPULAR RELIGIOSITY<sup>1</sup>

Teaching in Paris in the early 1160s, the liturgist John Beleth described the secret of the Mass in the following terms:

The secret is so-called because it is recited secretly, although in the past it was said aloud so that it was known by lay people. It happened, therefore, that one day shepherds placed bread on a rock which, at the recitation of those words, was changed into flesh, perhaps the bread was transubstantiated into the body of Christ since vengeance was most rapidly taken against them by divine agency. For they were struck down by a divine judgement sent from heaven. Hence it was decreed that in the future it be said silently. . . .<sup>2</sup>

The story originally appeared as a cautionary tale in the sixth century *Pratum spirituale* of John Moschus and was repeated in several medieval commentaries on the Mass, including the *Speculum ecclesiae* attributed to the twelfth century School of St. Victor and the *De missarum mysteriis* of Cardinal Lothar Segni, the future Pope Innocent III.<sup>3</sup>

The intriguing part about this story lies in its presumption that the words of consecration, or at least the words of the canon, consecrate by themselves regardless of the celebrant. Nor were the liturgists of the time alone in so teaching. The famous twelfth century theologian and reprobate, Peter Abelard, related in his *Theologia christiana* that he knew of two brothers, counted among the greatest masters, who taught that the divine words confectioned the sacrament whoever

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<sup>1</sup>Without the assistance, support, and criticisms of the Department of Theological and Religious Studies at the University of San Diego, I would not have been able to produce this paper. I would like to particularly thank my colleagues Dr. Orlando Espín and Fr. Dennis Krouse for their insights and suggestions.

<sup>2</sup>"Secreta dicitur, quia secreto pronuntiatur, cum olim tamen alta uoce diceretur, unde et ab hominibus laicis sciebatur. Contingit ergo, ut quadam die pastores super lapidem quandam ponerent panem, qui ad horum uerborum prolationem in carnem conuersus est, forsitan transsubstantiatus est panis in corpus Christi, in quos diuinitus factus est acerrima uindicta. Nam percussi sunt diuino iudicio celitus misso. Vnde statutum fuit, ut de cetero sub silentio diceretur. . . ." *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, chap. 44, ed. Heribert Douteil, *Iohannes Beleth, Summa de ecclesiasticis officiis*, Corpus christianorum, Continuatio medievalis, 41A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1976): 78.

<sup>3</sup>*Pratum spirituale* chap. 196 (PL 74: 225C-226D); Pseudo-Albinus, *De diuinis officiis*, chap. 40 (PL 101:1256D); *Speculum ecclesiae*, chap. 7 (PL 177: C-D), and Lothar of Segni, *De missarum mysteriis*, l. 1, chap. 1 (PL 217: 840C-D). On the dating of these commentaries on the Mass, see Roger Reynolds, "Liturgy, Treatises on," *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* 7:624-33, and Gary Macy, "Commentaries on the Mass During the Early Scholastic Period," in *Medieval Liturgy*, ed. Lizette Larson-Miller (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997): 25-59.

might recite the words even if he were not ordained or even if she were a woman. The brothers have been identified by modern scholarship as Bernard and Thierry of Chartres, the leaders of the famous school located in that city.<sup>4</sup>

In the middle of the twelfth century, then, respectable theological opinion could hold that there was no necessary connection between consecration and sacramental ordination. The fact that such a theological opinion existed raises the yet more intriguing question of who exactly did lead liturgies in the early Middle Ages, since ordination was not seen as necessary, at least by some theologians, to effect the presence of the risen Lord. The assumption of modern liturgists and historians has been that possibly from the fourth century and certainly from the Carolingian reforms of the eighth century, liturgies could only be celebrated by ritually ordained ministers. A new reading of the evidence, however, at least suggests the possibility that no absolute distinction between laity and the ritually ordained existed before the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Yves Congar, in a article written in 1984, pointed out that the latin words *ordinare* and *ordinatio* could, and often did, refer merely to an assignment to a particular role or rank in society or more simply to an appointment to the administration of a particular locale. Thus, kings, popes, archdeacons, and abbots were equally spoken of as "ordained" when they took on their particular assignments.<sup>5</sup> Especially given this more limited meaning, ordination was not seen as irreversible until the thirteenth century. Before that time, deposed clergy were considered laity and even reordained when recanting from heresy.<sup>6</sup>

Further, persons understood as laity in later centuries did exercise functions that would later be reserved to ritually ordained clergy. Roberto Rusconi has demonstrated that later Franciscan legends felt it necessary to change their early records to posthumously ordain early members of the order who clearly acted as confessors.<sup>7</sup> Abbesses as well still retained the practice of confessing their own

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<sup>4</sup>"Nouimus et duos fratres qui se inter summos connumerant magistros, quorum alter tantum uim diuinus uerbis in confidendis sacramentis tribuit, ut a quibusdam ipsa proferantur aequae suam habeat efficaciam, ut etiam mulier et quislibet cuiuscumque sit ordinis uel conditionis per uerba dominica sacramentum altaris conficere queat." *Petri Abaelardi opera theologica*, ed. E. Buytaert, *Corpus christianorum, Continuatio medievalis* 12 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969): 302. On the identification of these brothers as Bernard and Thierry, see Buytaert, *Petri Abaelardi opera theologica*, and M.-D. Chenu, "Un cas de platonisme grammatical au XIIIe siècle," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 31 (1967): 666-68.

<sup>5</sup>Yves Congar, "Note sur une valeur des termes 'ordinare, ordinatio,'" *Revue des sciences religieuses* 58 (1984): 7-14.

<sup>6</sup>Paul F. Bradshaw, "Medieval Ordination," in *The Study of Liturgy*, ed. C. Jones, G. Wainwright, et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992): 377-78.

<sup>7</sup>"I Francescani e la confessione nel secolo XIII," *Francesconesimo e Vita Religiosa dei Laici nel '200* (Assisi: Università degli studi di Perugia, 1981): 251-309. On the whole question of the laity hearing confessions in the Middle Ages, see A. Teetaert, *La*

nuns through the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.<sup>8</sup> Extensive study has been done on the major dispute of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries over episcopal control of lay preaching.<sup>9</sup> Many laity of that period clearly felt that preaching was not the exclusive preserve of the clergy. It is possible, then, that the celebrants of the eucharistic liturgy were "ordained" only in the sense that they were assigned for this purpose to a particular community, without any understanding of entering some permanent clerical state. Certainly, groups considered heretical by the late twelfth century held eucharistic liturgies celebrated by what their enemies deemed to be laity, most notably the Waldensians. It may well be these groups were continuing the older practice of ordination as assignment, a practice which had become heretical by the time of their condemnation.<sup>10</sup>

Evidence for liturgies led by nonsacramentally ordained clergy, apart from that of the heretical Waldensians, would naturally be extremely rare. Once the clerical state had been clearly defined and set apart by sacramental ordination, there would be no need to go through the great expense of copying liturgical manuscripts which indicate a nonritually ordained celebrant since they would no longer be of any use. Yet just such evidence may be contained in a set of *ordines* for the distribution of communion from the tenth and eleventh centuries. Since one of the *ordines* has the prayers in the feminine, it is clear that the women officiated at these services and they surely constituted a group later deemed to be mere laity.<sup>11</sup> Although described as communion services by Jean Leclercq, he admits that "nevertheless, in their ensemble they really constitute a long eucharistic prayer."<sup>12</sup> While modern liturgists would understand these communion services as a form of *missa sicca* (mass without a consecration) it is not altogether clear that they were so understood by the participants. Given that

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*confesion aux laïques dans l'Église latine depuis le VIII jusq'au XIV siècle* (Paris: Universitas Catholica Louvaniensis, 1926).

<sup>8</sup>For a discussion of the powers exercised by abbesses in the Middle Ages, see Joan Morris, *The Lady Was a Bishop* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

<sup>9</sup>For an exhaustive discussion of this dispute, see Rolf Zerfaß, *Der Streit zum die Laienpredigt. Eine pastoral-geschichtliche Untersuchung zum Verständnis des Predigtamtes und zue sienen Entwicklung im 12. Und 13. Jahrhundert* (Frieberg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 1974).

<sup>10</sup>On the fundamentally conservative nature of the Waldensian liturgy, see Gary Macy, *Theologies of the Eucharist in the Early Scholastic Period* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984): 56-57.

<sup>11</sup>E.g., "[E]xaudi, quaeso domine, gemitum mei famulae tuae indignae et peccatricis supplicantis, et, quae de meritorum qualitate diffido, non iudicium, sed misericordiam consequi merear. Per d<ominum>." Emphasis mine. The entire text of this *Oratio ad accipiendum eucharistiam* has been published by Jean Leclercq, "Prières médiévales pour recevoir l'eucharistie pour saluer et pour bénir la croix," *Ephemerides liturgicae* 97 (1965): 329-31.

<sup>12</sup>Jean Leclercq, "Eucharistic Celebrations Without Priests in the Middle Ages," *Worship* 55 (1981): 160-68.

neither the moment of consecration nor the clerical state itself had yet been closely defined, these rituals may represent the last vestiges of liturgies lead by women for their own communities.<sup>13</sup>

An added difficulty to historical research into the status of liturgical celebrants in the Middle Ages is, obviously, that documents that speak of "ordained" clergy may be referring only to the commissioning of individuals to a particular post or function rather than to a permanent clerical state. Even laws demanding that only the "ordained" may perform certain functions may have a far different meaning than that which such proscriptions would have from the thirteenth century on. The word "priest" in Old English, for instance, presents a similar problem since the word *preost* meant any cleric while the liturgical celebrant was further specified by the term *mass-preost*.<sup>14</sup>

In fact, the first official ecclesiastical document specifically linking ritual ordination with consecration occurred in the decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. Here, too, the wording is suggestive. "And certainly no one is able to confect the sacrament except priests who have been ritually ordained according to the keys of the Church which Jesus Christ himself entrusted to the apostles and their successors."<sup>15</sup> Did Innocent III have in mind priests who were not ritually ordained; a practice which he meant to condemn?<sup>16</sup> In 1210, the pope

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<sup>13</sup>Medieval theologians speculated that the sign of the Cross, or the entire canon, or perhaps even the Lord's Prayer, could consecrate: see Macy, *Theologies of the Eucharist*, 57. On the gradual clarification of the clerical state and of the sacrament of ordination, see Bradshaw, "Medieval Ordinations," 377-79, and the still excellent articles by P.-M. Gy, "Notes on the Early Terminology of Christian Priesthood," in *The Sacrament of Holy Orders* (Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 1962): 98-115, and by G. Fransen, "The Tradition in Medieval Canon Law," *ibid.*, 202-18.

<sup>14</sup>Christopher N. L. Brooke, "Priest, Deacon and Layman, from St Peter Damien to St Francis," *The Ministry: Clerical and Lay*, ed. W. J. Sheils and Diana Wood (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989): 65-85, mentions this point as part of his excellent discussion of the gradual separation of the laity and clergy during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries.

<sup>15</sup>"Et hoc utique sacramentum nemo potest conficere, nisi sacerdos, qui rite fuerit ordinatus, secundum claves ecclesiae, quas ipse concessit apostoli eorumque successoribus Iesus Christus." *Constitutiones Concilii quarti Lateranensis una cum commentariis glossatorum*, ed. Antonio García y García, Series A: Corpus glossatorum, ii (Vatican City, 1981): 42. The passage occurs in the opening creed against the Cathars and the Waldensians and García y García believes that the wording may well be that of Innocent III himself (pp. 6-8).

<sup>16</sup>In 1208, Innocent used even more emphatic wording in a profession of faith to be demanded of the Waldensians: "Unde firmiter credimus et confitemur, quod quantumcumque quilibet honestus, religiosus, sanctus et prudens sit, non potest nec debet eucharistiam consecrare nec altaris sacrificium conficere, nisi sit presbyter ab episcopo, ut praediximus, ad illud proprie officium constitutus, et illa sollemnia verba, quae a sancta Patribus in canone sunt expressa, et fidelis intentio proferentis; ideoque firmiter credimus et fatemur, quod quicumque sine se posse sacrificium eucharistiae facere, haereticus est et perditionis core et suorum complicum est particeps et consors, et ab omni sancta Romana ecclesia

had written to the Bishop of Burgos and Abbot of Morimundo complaining about women in that diocese usurping clerical functions<sup>17</sup> and John Hilary Martin has suggested that the first clear theological argument against women's ordination, that of John Fishacre ca. 1240, "might be the result of some actual case, or concrete agitation on the matter."<sup>18</sup>

The first point, therefore, that I would like to make in this paper would be that the question of who celebrated liturgies in the early Middle Ages deserves much closer scrutiny. Historians and theologians should not assume that references to the "ordained" or even to priests earlier than the late twelfth century always refer to a permanently and ritually ordained group of males. Much more research is needed before any firm conclusions can be reached, but at the very least, we need to take great care not to read back into earlier centuries an institution which seems to have appeared only in the thirteenth.

By the middle of the thirteenth century all such ambiguities had been removed, however, and theologians and canonists had clearly established the connection between ordination and consecration. Only a validly ordained priest reciting the words of consecration with the intention of the Church could perform the miracle of transubstantiation. Interestingly enough, just at the time when consecration was being claimed as an exclusively clerical preserve, laity were claiming reception as their own through the use of popular devotions known as spiritual communion.

It is in the mid-twelfth century that specific references to the practice first appear. Theologians ca. 1140 debated the validity of the peculiar practice knights had of taking three blades of grass in place of viaticum on the battlefield. The School of Gilbert of LaPorree argued that the full benefits of sacramental recep-

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segregandus." *Professio Valdesii*, ed. A. Dondaine, *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 16 (1946): 231s.

<sup>17</sup>"Nova quaedam nuper, de quibus miramur non modicum, nostris sunt auribus intimata, quod abbatissae videlicet, in Bugensi et in Palentinensi dioecibus constitutae, moniales proprias benedicunt, ipsarum quoque confessiones in criminibus audiunt, et legentes evangelium praesumunt publice praedicare. Quum igitur id absenum sit pariter et absurdum, [nec a nobis aliquatenus sustinendum,] discretioni vestrae per apostolica scripta mandamus, quatenus, ne id de cetero fiat, auctoritate curetis apostolica firmiter inhibere, quia, licet beatissima virgo Maria dignior et excellentior fuerit Apostolis universis, non tamen illi, sed istis Domius claves regni coelorum commisit." *Corpus Iuris Canonici, Decretales* l. 5, t. 38, chap. 10, ed. E. Friedberg (Graz: Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, 1959): 2, cols. 886-87.

<sup>18</sup>"The Ordination of Women and the Theologians in the Middle Ages," *Escritos del Vedat* 36 (1986): 145. Fr. Martin's study is an excellent and thorough discussion of the medieval discussion of women's ordination and is contained in *Escritos del Vedat* 36 (1986): 115-77, and 38 (1988): 88-143. For an exhaustive discussion of the canonists' position on the ordination of women, see Ida Raming, *The Exclusion of Women from the Priesthood: Divine Law or Sex Discrimination?* trans. Norman R. Adams, (Metuchen NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1976).

tion were effected by the practice.<sup>19</sup> Stephen Langton, teaching in Paris between 1187 and 1193, asked whether a sick person seeking the Eucharist ought to be given unconsecrated bread as a substitute if the priest had no consecrated bread at hand. Yes, Langton replied, and although such a reception has not all the graces of regular communion, it has the same value for eternal life.<sup>20</sup> William of Auxerre, writing in the early thirteenth century was the first writer to encourage the laity to offer their petitions at the elevation of the Mass, and urged spiritual communion for the laity during the sacramental communion of the priest.<sup>21</sup> By the middle of the thirteenth century the practice of spiritual communion could and did take many forms. Commentaries on the liturgy, in fact, urged spiritual communion as the common form of reception, replacing sacramental communion which ordinarily occurred only once a year following the legislation of the Fourth Lateran Council.

The theology of the eucharist developed in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries reflected this practice and emphasized the quintessentially symbolic nature of the both the liturgy and even of the real presence itself. First elaborated by the School of St. Victor at Paris in the mid-twelfth century, this theology would find its major exponent in the first Franciscan master, Alexander of Hales. Basing himself on earlier writers, and especially Pope Innocent III, Alexander argued that reception depended upon the recognition of the sign value of the symbols (in latin, *sacramentum*) by the recipient.<sup>22</sup> In Alexander's com-

<sup>19</sup>For the references to this practice, see Macy, *Theologies*, 101.

<sup>20</sup><sup>a</sup>Item infirmus petit eucharistiam. Sacerdos non habet. Queritur an debeat dare purum panem. Quod videtur quia nonne prodest ei tantum illa voluntas quantum si reciperet eucharistiam cum nullus subsit ibi error. Ad hoc dicimus non tantum valet purus panis quantum ad cumulum gratie sed tantum valet ad vitam eternam." Stephan Langton, *Questiones*, Cambridge, St. John's College, MS C.7 (57), fol. 255v1.

<sup>21</sup><sup>a</sup>Et notandum tamen quia sub utraque specie est totus Christus quo facto sacerdos elevat corpus Christi ut omnis fideles videant et petant quod prosit ad salutem vel ad ostendendum quia non est aliud dignus sacrificium." William of Auxerre, *Summa de officiis ecclesiasticis*, Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, latin MS 15168, fol. 88r2. "Postea sacerdos communicat sacramentaliter ut ipse et populus spiritualiter et sicut dictum est aliis dat duas partes, scilicet, dyacono et subdiacono vel ipse comedit." Ibid., fol. 89v2.

<sup>22</sup>Ideas similar to those espoused by Alexander exist in late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century writers. Cf., for instance, Innocent III, *De sacro altaris mysterio*, liber 4, chap. 16: Nam in quo similitudo deficeret, in eo sacramentum non esset, sed ibi se proderet, et fidei locum auferret, neque jam crederetur quod ita fieri non oportet. Itaque quantum ad nos servat per omnia corruptibilis cibi similitudinem, sed quantum ad se non amittit inviolabilis corporis veritatem. PL 215: 867D. See also Peter of Capua, *Summa "Uetustissima ueterum"* (1201-1202): "Et potest dici quod etiam in ipso sumente manet materiale corpus donec in eo est aliqua forma ipsius panis. Non tamen incorporatur ei quia cibus est anime non corporis ut dicit Augustinus." Vatican City, Biblioteca Vaticana, Vaticana latina MS 4296, fol. 70r1 and Jacques de Vitry, *Historia occidentalis* (ca. 1219-1225): "Forma igitur gustatur, sentitur, dentibus atteritur. Corpus autem non in uentrem descendit, sed ob ore ad cor transit. Comeditur sed non consumitur." ed. J. F.

mentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, written ca. 1222–1223,<sup>23</sup> he explained that since the body of Christ is spiritual food, only an intellectual nature is capable of receiving it. As Augustine had pointed out, the outward sign leads to the inner reality and only the intellect can so reach beyond the sign to the reality behind it. Animals then receive simply the outer forms, the taste of bread and wine, whereas humans can understand symbols. Therefore only humans can access the presence of the Lord underlying the symbol (*sacramentum*) of bread and wine.<sup>24</sup>

Writing between 1220 and 1236 in a work now known as the *Quaestiones disputatae* "Antequam esset frater," Alexander suggested that there are three kinds of union possible in the Eucharist. One can be united in thought, in love and in nature to Christ. Those who existed before the coming of Christ could be united in thought and love, but not in nature. Angels, too, having a different nature than Christ, cannot receive him naturally. Then, too, Christ can be received with more or less love, and more or less understanding. This means there are different degrees of reception of Christ. Perfect reception would take place only in heaven, Alexander intimated. Those who receive the sign alone, like Jews and pagans, are united only to the sign, as if it were mere bread. Again there is a union of those who both believe and understand the reason for the sign. Finally, there is the greater union of those who believe and love, and this is spiritual reception.<sup>25</sup>

Alexander discussed the question of whether only rational creatures have the ability to receive this sacrament. It would seem that irrational creatures must be able to receive, since once transubstantiation takes place, the body of Christ remains as long as the species of bread and wine remain. If an animal receives the species of bread, it ought as well to receive the body of Christ. If, however,

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Hinnebusch, *The Historia Occidentalis of Jacques de Vitry*, Spicilegium Friburgense, Texts Concerning the History of Christian Life 17 (Fribourg, 1972): 231.

<sup>23</sup>On the dating of Alexander's works, see Alexander of Hales, *Quaestiones disputatae* "Antequam Esset Frater," ed. Collegium S. Bonaventurae, Bibliotheca franciscana scholastica medii aevi, 19-21 (Florence: 1960): 34\*-36\*.

<sup>24</sup>E.g., "Quaestio est propter quid, si corpus Christ ibi est, non sumitur a brutis animalibus. — Responsio est ad hoc, quod differt sensus in brutis et in nobis. Est enim in nobis ordinatus ad rationem, in brutis vero non. Quia ergo corpus Christi sub sacramento non dicit tantum quod ad sensum pertinet, sed quod ad rationem, quod sensus est a brutis sumitur, scilicet species panis; quod in ordine ad rationem est non sumitur, scilicet corpus Christi." Alexander of Hales, *Glossa in quatuor libros sententiarum*, ed. Collegium S. Bonaventurae, Bibliotheca franciscana scholastica medii aevi, 15 (Florence: 1957): 204. Cf. also 161-62.

<sup>25</sup>*Quaestiones disputatae*, 966-97, no. 199, esp. p. 967: "Item, alia est unio speciei tantum, ut in iis qui manducant secundum quod est sacramentum solum, sicut panem aliquem, ut Iudaei vel pagani. — Item est unio secundum rationem signi, ut in eo qui credit et intelligit; et maior adhuc est eo qui credit et diligit, ut in iis qui spiritualiter accipiunt; et sic secundum quod maior unio, maior manducatio."

by sacramental reception is meant that the recipient touches or accesses the reality behind the sign as well as the sign alone, then neither animals, nor Jews, nor pagans can be said to receive symbolically (*sacramentaliter*). True to the principles established earlier, Alexander asserted that to receive symbolically, properly speaking, is to be united either in nature or faith or charity with Christ. Certainly animals cannot then receive. Even Jews and pagans, however they might share in the same human nature as Christ, do not receive symbolically since they do not understand the reality underlying the signs.<sup>26</sup>

Alexander's discussion of reception is extremely important. Not only do I know of no earlier medieval author who had so explicitly argued that reception was dependent on the intentionality of the receiver, but Alexander's theology would be very influential. It was adopted by the majority of thirteenth and fourteenth century theologians and canonists, making it far more influential during those centuries than that of Thomas Aquinas, who was one of the few theologians who at least partially disagreed with Alexander.<sup>27</sup>

One important example of a theologian who followed the teaching of Alexander is Nicholas of Lyra, the Franciscan exegete who became a master at the University of Paris in 1309. He wrote his famous commentary on Scripture between 1322 and 1339, and died while teaching at Paris in 1349. The commentaries are not his only works, however. Among his other writings is a short work entitled *Dicta de sacramento* which was later published in Cologne in 1480, and then reprinted in 1485, 1490, 1495 and a final time in Paris in 1513. Although widely read in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, modern scholars have virtually ignored this work.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 699-700, nos. 205-10. E.g.: "Respondeo: manducare sacramentaliter, ut proprie dicitur, est attingere rem sub sacramento; ergo ubi nullo modo attingitur, nec per modum crediti, nec per modum cogniti, nullo modo est manducatio sacramentalis vel sacramentaliter; sed est quodam modo manducatio carnalis, et adhuc, proprie non est ibi manducatio carnalis, quia non est ibi divisio substantiae, cum non sit ibi nisi divisio accidentium solum. . . . Ad hoc quod obicitur de Iudaeo vel pagano, dico quod plus est in hac manducatione quam in manducatione irrationalis creaturae, quia unio est ibi in natura. Tamen quia non est ibi cognitio rei sub specie, et cum manducatio sacramentalis importet accipere species et attingere rem quae est sub sacramento fide, non manducant sacramentaliter."

<sup>27</sup>For a further discussion of this issue, see Gary Macy, "Reception of the Eucharist According to the Theologians: A Case of Diversity in the 13th and 14th Centuries," *Theology and the University*, Proceedings of the Annual Convention of the College Theology Society 1987, ed. John Apczynski (Lanham MD: University Press of America, 1990): 15-36, and idem, "A Reevaluation of the Contribution of Thomas Aquinas to Thirteenth-Century Theology of the Eucharist," in *The Early Universities*, ed. Nancy Van Dusen (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, to appear 1997). On the influence of Alexander's theology, see Vitorin Doucet, *Doctor Irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales ordinis minorum Summa Theologica*, vol. 4, liber 3 (*Prologomena*) (Florence: Quaracchi, 1948).

<sup>28</sup>For a recent summary of what is known about Nicholas's life and works, see the *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, 9:126.

The treatise is a discussion of the conditions necessary for worthy reception of the Eucharist, in which Nicholas suggests twelve requirements for a worthy reception. One must be a human, a viator (that is, still in this life), a believer, an adult, mentally competent, fasting devoutly, without awareness of mortal sin, not guilty of notorious crimes, having a clean body, not prohibited by the appearance of a miracle, having a proper minister and finally having a right intention.<sup>29</sup>

Fascinating as some of these requirements might be, my discussion will be limited to the two conditions most interesting for this study, that the recipient be a human and that he or she must be a believer. The first condition, according to Nicholas, immediately excludes both animals and angels. If one asks what an animal receives when it eats the sacrament, Nicholas responded that some argue that the Body of Christ ceases to be here. This is the opinion of St. Bonaventure, although Nicholas does not name him. Nicholas rejects this opinion, however, both on the grounds of authority, and because God has made a special pact with the Church that as long as the species exist after consecration the Body of Christ will remain united to them. Nicholas then posited that animals receive really but not sacramentally.<sup>30</sup>

Nicholas explained further when he discussed why the recipient must be a believer. If one asks what unbelievers receive in the sacrament, Nicholas responded that they receive as animals do. Nicholas argued that there is a difference between receiving the symbol (*sacramentum*), and receiving symbolically (*sacramentaliter*). To receive symbolically, one must understand the signified reality under the sign, and this neither unbelievers nor animals can do.<sup>31</sup> They

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<sup>29</sup>"He sunt conditiones necessaria requisite ad idoneum susceptorem sacramenti eucharistie per quas potest responderi ad plures questiones consuetas fieri. Requiritur enim quod sit homo, viator, fidelis, adultus, mente predictus, ieiunus deuotus, sine conscientia peccati mortalis, crimine non notatus, corpore mundus, apparitione miraculosa non prohibitus, a ministro idoneo tempore debito, intentione recta." Nicholas of Lyra, *Dicta de sacramentis* (Cologne, 1495). The edition is unfoliated.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid. "Prima conditio est quod sit (homo) per quod statim excluditur omne brutum animal et angelis siue bonus siue malus. Sed si queratur Numquid brutum animal suscipit sacramentum. Dixeratur aliqui quod immediate quando brutum suscepit sacramentum desinit ibi esse corpus Christi. Sed hoc reprobatur a magistro sententiarum in quarto de consecratione. Et similiter in decretis de conse. di.ii.ca. Qui bene non custodierit. Et ideo dicitur ab aliis aliter et melius ut videtur quod quamdiu species ille sacramentales mutare non fuerint per calorem naturalem stomachi: tamdiu remanet ibi corpus Christi. Vnde sicut habemus ex speciali facto diuino quod ad vltimam dispositionem corporis humani deus infundit creando ipsam animam et eam tenet in corpore durante tali dispositionem: sic etiam deus statuit pactum cum ecclesia quod tamdiu esset ipsum corpus Christi sub sacramento quamdiu permanent ille species quam prius afficiebantur et aspiciebant panem sicut subiectum a quo postea miraculose separantur et manu tenentur et propter illud est ut redderet deus ecclesiam certam quando ibi esset corpus Christi et quando non. Recipit ergo brutum realiter et non sacramentaliter et hoc exponam inferius in tertia conditione."

<sup>31</sup>Ibid. "Tertio dixi (fidelis) et intelligo non illum qui de fide solum instructum est sed illum qui iam accepit sacramentum baptismi et factus est per hoc de familia Christi. Ex

can, however, receive the bare symbol of bread and wine under which the body and blood lie. The connection between the bread and the body Christ and between the wine and the blood of Christ continue to exist in such a reception. There is, however, no connection between the recipients and the body and blood since the bread and wine are not recognized as the signs they are. There are two separate relationships here. The relationship between the real presence and the symbols which remains as long as the symbols are recognizable as such, and a quite separate relationship between the real presence and the recipient. This second relationship exists only when and if the recipient recognizes the symbol as a pointing to the real presence.

Nicholas is consistent in his use of these distinctions. Children before the age of reason can receive really, but not symbolically, just like animals and infidels. In the same way, those who are mentally incompetent should only receive if they are capable of giving some sign of devotion, or if they were recently capable of such a sign. In short, there must be some evidence that these people are capable of understanding the signification of the symbols. If not, they are not capable of symbolic reception.<sup>32</sup>

Nicholas stated the importance of asserting the continued presence of the Body and Blood of the Lord in the Eucharist somewhat more strongly than Alexander. As long as the species exist, so does the Body and Blood, despite what happens to the symbols of bread and wine. He equally strongly asserts, however, that the presence is only there for those capable of understanding both that the species of bread and wine are a sign, and of what they are signs. Neither animals, nor infidels, nor children, nor the mentally incompetent can understand the sign value of this ritual, and therefore they do not have access to the real presence. For them, this might as well be ordinary food.

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quo statim patet quod cathecumino quamtuncque habenti fidem perfectam non debet hoc sacramentum administrari. Sed si queratur Numquid infidelis recipiendo sacramentum recipit corpus Christi dicendum de ipso sicut de bruto supra tactum est quod sumit realiter sed nullo modo sacramentaliter in quantum infidelis. Si queras Numquid idem est sumere sacramentum et sacramentaliter sumere. Dico quod non quia sumere sacramentaliter addit supra sumere sacramentum modum sumendi videlicet quod referat signum in signatum suum credendo et si opus est confidendo ore quod sub illis speciebus veraciter contineatur corpus Christi quod non facit infidelis nec etiam brutum."

<sup>32</sup>Ibid. "Nunc autem pueri ante annos discretionis et si possunt eucharistiam realiter sicut quemcumque alium cibum comedere, non tamen possunt hoc sacramentum sacramentaliter manducare nec eo uti ut sacro signo, referendo significandum in signatum sed ut communio signo, et sic propter carentiam discretionis non percipiunt ibi veraciter continere corpus Christi." *Ibid.* See also: "Si autem sit amentes sic quod non fit furiosus sed tantummodo loquens inania et a vero sensu alienatus. Adhuc distinguendum est, quia vel pretendit actus et signa deuotionis tunc potest ei ministrari, si vero nullum actum aut signum deuotionis pretendit, recurredum est ad tempus precedens passionem quia si tunc petierit et deuotionem pretenderit et obstat aliquid aliud periculum, licite potest sibi dari."

Nicholas's treatise is a thoughtful presentation of the theologically important insight of Alexander that since the Eucharist is a sign, therefore only those capable of understanding this sign are capable of any form of relationship with the Body of Christ really present under the symbols of bread and wine. It is this relationship that is central.

For most medieval theologians, however, a mere recognition of the real presence in the ritual of the Eucharist did not itself offer any aid in salvation. The real presence alone, in fact, had no spiritual effect. In the language of the School of St. Victor, the real presence was the *res et sacramentum*, but not the *res* of the ritual. That is to say that whole point of the ritual, which the latin word *res* implies, resided not in the real presence. That presence itself was a symbol pointing beyond itself to another far more important reality, the *res*, the thing itself, the point of the entire exercise. Theologians from the twelfth century on were nearly unanimous in their agreement that the *res*, the end result of the Eucharist was spiritual communion and that this form of communion could and did take place apart from the sacramental reception. Most commonly, this *res* was described as living a life of faith and charity.<sup>33</sup> In effect, the predominant the-

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<sup>33</sup>Peter the Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, Albert the Great, Bonaventure and Duns Scotus all describe the *res sacramenti* in this fashion. Since these texts are readily available to scholars, I will include here a sample of texts less often consulted.

"Unde: 'Quid paras dentem et ventrem? Crede et manducasti.' Qui credit in Deum, comedit ipsum; qui incorporatur Christo per fidem, id est membrum ejus efficitur, vel unitate corporis ejus firmiter solidatur." Innocent III, *De missarum mysteriis*, PL 217: 866D.

"Modus sumendi duplex est, sacramentalis et spiritualis: Sacramentaliter sumunt boni et mali; nam sacramentaliter sumere est ipsam carnem veram Christi sumere, sive inde percipiatur fructus, id est ecclesiastica pax, sive non. Spiritualiter sumunt soli boni: spiritualiter sumere est fructum provenientem ex carne Domini sumere; id est esse de unitate Ecclesiae, sive sumatur corpus Christi sive non." Peter of Poitiers, *Sententiarum libri quinque*, PL 211: 1252D-1253A.

"Quidam spiritualiter tantum ut boni eremite. Unde Augustinus, 'ut quid paras dentem et ventrem? Crede et manducasti'. Quidam spiritualiter et sacramentaliter ut boni sacerdotes." Prepositinus of Cremona, *Summa Theologicae*, edited by Daniel Edward Pilarczyk, *Praepositini Canellarii de Sacramentis et de Novissimis [Summa Theologicae Pars Quarta]*, collectio Urbaniana, Textus ac documenta, 7 (Rome: Editiones Urbanianae, 1964): 93

"Item dicit Augustinus in libro de remedio penitentiae anime, 'Ut quid paras dentem et ventrem? Crede et manducasti.' Ergo si habet quis fidem huius articuli et aliorum qui necessarii sunt ad salutem, fidem dico virtutem, sufficit ei ad salutem etsi numquid sumat sacramentaliter carnem Christi. Ergo semper possumus non sumere hoc sacramentum sine detrimento virtutis." Magister Martinus, *Questiones*, Cambridge, St. John's College, MS C.7 (57), fol. 123v1.

"*Nam prostrati sunt in deserto sicut enim in bonis ulto melius id quod per figuram significatur quam ipsa figura spes enim melior est quam sacramentum ipsius rei. Unde corpus Christi quod traxit de virgine sit sacramentum unitatis ecclesiatice. Magna apparet eius excellentia non tamen dicimus quod unitas ecclesiae sit melior vel dignior quam*

ology of the Eucharist in the late Middle Ages understood the liturgy as intimately and intrinsically tied to the moral life. The liturgy celebrated and strengthened an active Christian life, a purpose for which the real presence was in fact incidental.

Again, one example will have to suffice. An anonymous work entitled *Speculum de mysteriis ecclesiae* came from the hand of a person familiar with the liberal arts and with the school of St. Victor in Paris.<sup>34</sup> The *Speculum* appears

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corpus Christi." Stephen Langton, *Glossa in glossam Petri Lombardi*, Cambridge University, University Library MS Ii.4.23, fol. 205v2.

"In sacramento isto duplex est caro Christi: unas naturalis, quam assumpsit de Virgine, et quantum ad illam, manducamus corpus Christi; et ibi est etiam caro Christi mystica, id est unitas ecclesiastica, quae est per compaginem caritatis, et quantum ad istam revera manducamus, id est Christo incorporamur. Sed quia prima caro est causa secundae, id est naturalis causa mysticae, potius dicimur manducare quam manducari." Gui of Orchelles, edited by Damian and Odolph Van den Eynde, *Tractatus de sacramentis, Guidonis de Orchellis, Tractatus de sacramentis ex eius Summa de sacramentis et officiis ecclesiae*, Franciscan Institute Publications, text series, 4 (St. Bonaventure NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1953): 76.

"Alii corpus Christi tantum spiritualiter manducant. De quibus dicit beatus Augustinus: 'Ut quid paras dentem et ventrem? crede et manducasti.' Hoc modo qui credit in Christum fide per caritatem operante manducat ipsum, licet sub forma sacramenti ipsum non recipiat. Incorporatur enim Christo per fidem et eius membrum efficitur et, in unitate ecclesie Christo capiti uinculo caritatis adherens, unus spiritus efficitur cum eo." Jacques de Vitry, *Historia Occidentalis*, 214.

"Huius et hoc modi soluta sunt iam per distinctionem predicatam tamen notandum quod primus modus dupliciter distinguntur; secundum duos modos manducandi corpus Christi. Unde consistit in solo sacramento quo manducant tam boni quam mali; illius consistit in virtute sacramenti et hoc modo sumit corpus Christi qui manet in unitate ecclesie. Unde Augustinus de verbis evangelii ait 'Quid est Christum manducare? Non est hoc solum in sacramento corpus eius accipere, sed in Christo manere et habere ipsum in se manentem.' Spiritualiter enim manducat qui in unitate Christi et ecclesie quam ipsum sacramentum signat manet. Nam qui discordat a Christo nec carnem Christi manducat nec s[anguinem] bibit etsi tante rei sacramentum ad iudicium cotidie accipiat. De hac spirituali manducatione ait Augustinus 'Ut quid paras ventrem et dentem; crede et manducasti.' Robert of Courçon, *Summa*, British Library Royal MS 9.E.14, fol. 65r2.

"In sacramentorum . . . Continentur autem tria in hoc sacramento: forma visibilis panis et vini: veritas corporis et sanguinis Christi et virtus spiritualis. id est. virtus unitatis et charitatis .id est. eterna coniunctio et dilectio Christi ad ecclesiam." *Glossa ordinaria* on the *Decretum, De consecratione*, dist. II, chap. 1 (*In sacramentorum*), *Decretum Gratiani Nouissime*, fol 598v1-2.

<sup>34</sup>For a discussion of the original mistaken attribution of this work to Hugh of St. Victor, cf. Barthélemy Hauréau, *Les oeuvres de Hugues de Saint-Victor. Essai critique* (Paris, 1886): 199–203. Heinrich Weisweiler, "Zur Einflussphäre der 'Vorlesungen' Hugos von St. Victor," *Mélanges Joseph de Ghellinck, S.J.* (Gembloux, 1951): 534–70, offers the best discussion of the work, demonstrating its dependence on the lectures of Hugh of St. Victor as preserved in the *reportatio* of Laurentius (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Laud. 344), on the *De Sacramentis*, and on the *Summa Sententiarum*, thus placing it clearly within the influence of the Victorine school. The author of the *Speculum* describes

to have been a well-read book in the twelfth century and forms one of the important sources for Simon of Tournai's theological summa, *Institutiones in sacram paginam*.<sup>35</sup> Although it is difficult to date this work with accuracy, it appears to have been written ca. 1160–1175.<sup>36</sup>

The commentary on the Communion simply reads: "The communion, which is sung after this, signifies all of the faithful in communion with the body of Christ, which the minister receives sacramentally in behalf of all, that both he and they might receive spiritually."<sup>37</sup> The author certainly understands the reception of the body and blood to be important only in the personal spiritual realm.

Following the teaching of Hugh of St. Victor, the *Speculum* argues that a sacramental reception of the Eucharist alone accomplishes nothing, only a spiritual reception gives the grace of salvation.<sup>38</sup> The spiritual reception consists, however, in uniting, consecrating and conforming ourselves to Christ in faith and love.<sup>39</sup> The author goes so far as to argue that spiritual reception alone suffices for salvation when not in contempt of the ritual.<sup>40</sup> In short, the author describes

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himself as more familiar with logic than theology: "Cum autem libentius, quia facilius et audentius, logicas quam theologas, jure consuetudinis, revolvam sententias: dubitare coepi, an contradicere, an potius scribere mallet." *PL* 177: 335A).

<sup>35</sup>The influence of the *Speculum* on Simon of Tournai has been traced by Damien Van den Eynde, "Deux sources de la Somme théologique de Simon de Tournai," *Antonianum* 24 (1949): 19–42. The *Speculum* was also used by another commentary on the Mass, the *Tractatus de sacramento altaris* of Stephen of Autun. Barthélemy Hauréau, *Les oeuvres de Hugues de Saint-Victor* (pp. 201–202), lists fifteen manuscripts of this work. For references to research on this work, including a list of English manuscripts unknown to Hauréau, see Macy, *Theologies of the Eucharist*, 65 and n. 120 of chap. 3.

<sup>36</sup>Damien Van den Eynde, "Deux sources de la Somme théologique de Simon de Tournai," p. 41, and "Le Tractatus de sacramento altaris faussement attribué à Étienne de Baugé," *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 19 (1952): 241, dates this work ca. 1160. He takes as his *terminus post quem* the publication of the sentences of Peter Lombard (1153–1158) which the *Speculum* uses. Since the *Speculum* does not use John Belet, nor any of the other later commentators, and since Belet was such a popular work, Van den Eynde argues that the *Speculum* was written before the appearance of Belet's work (1160–1164). It would be safer, however, to date this work between the publication of Peter Lombard's work and that of Simon of Tournai, roughly 1160–1175.

<sup>37</sup>"Communio, quae post cantatur, innuit omnes fideles corpori Christi communicare, quod pro omnibus minister assumit sacramentaliter, ut sibi et omnibus sumatur spiritualiter." *PL* 176, 373C. A similar opinion is offered by the thirteenth century *Glossa ordinaria* on the *Decretum*: Dist. II, c. 56 (*Non iste panis*) "Accipere si sit sacerdos; si laicus tempore constituto, vel potius mystice spiritualem notat sumptionem: unde glossa ibi *accipere quotidie*, id est, quotidie te prepara habilem ad suscipiendum." *Decretum Gratiani Nouissime . . .* (Venetiis, 1525): fol. 607V1.

<sup>38</sup>"Sacramentalis autem communio est communis bonis et malis, quae sine spirituali non prodest." *PL* 176, 366A–B. Cf. Hugh of St. Victor, *De sacramentis christianae fidei*, I.II, pars 8, c. 5 and c. 7 (*PL* 176: 465B–C, 467C–D).

<sup>39</sup>*PL* 177, 365D.

<sup>40</sup>"Spiritualis autem sumptio, quae vera fide percipitur, sine sacramentali, ubi non est

the entire liturgical action and even the real presence as a commemorative aid, and not an absolutely necessary aid, for the spiritual life of a person dedicating his or her life to Christ. The individual and his or her attitude and response to the liturgy determine its efficacy, despite the author's strong belief in a real presence.

This brings me to the second point of my paper. To argue either that reception of the Eucharist in the later Middle Ages was infrequent, or that eucharistic devotion in the Middle Ages centered on the real presence is not quite accurate. Spiritual reception, which from a medieval perception was true reception, took place at least in every liturgy for all the devout whether they received sacramentally or not. Devotion centered not only around the real presence, but equally, if not more strongly, around spiritual reception. The real presence alone could not aid in salvation; this was the role of spiritual reception. Indeed, unworthy sacramental reception could lead to damnation, something which could never occur in spiritual reception. Late medieval eucharistic theology clearly and emphatically described the liturgy as the embodiment and celebration of an active life of faith and charity and this emphasis plays a far more important role in eucharistic theology than does transubstantiation.

I believe it no accident that poverty was considered no shame in the Middle Ages and that, according to Brian Tierney in his study of charity in medieval England, "taken all in all, the poor were better looked after in England in the thirteenth century than in any subsequent century until the present one."<sup>41</sup> People were expected to live the Eucharist in a very real way and evidence exists to show that to some extent at least, they succeeded.

Medieval eucharistic theology has gotten a bum rap. Far too often, the extensive and often moving treatises of this period are mined merely for their discussions of transubstantiation (our obsession, not theirs) or the opinions of hundreds of medieval writers are reduced to the final work of one hefty Dominican. Thomas's work, interesting as it remains, was an idiosyncratic voice in thirteenth century eucharistic theology and by the end of that century, a voice which ceased to convince. If historians and theologians are to fairly represent the theology of the Middle Ages, they simply must get beyond Thomas and I strongly recommend the far more interesting and influential theology of symbol developed by Hugh of St. Victor and Alexander of Hales.

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contemptus religionis, sufficit." Ibid., 366B.

<sup>41</sup>Brian Tierney, *Medieval Poor Law: A Sketch of Canonical Theory and its Application in England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959: 109. For a summary of the medieval attitudes toward poverty, see Bernard Hamilton, *Religion in the Medieval West* (London: Edward Arnold, 1986): 132-41, esp. 141: "Consequently, it was not considered socially acceptable to adopt a patronizing attitude toward the poor and destitute, for that would have been taken as evidence of retarded spiritual growth. This, perhaps, is the best measure of the Church's success in making people understand what the virtuous life, as conceived in Christian terms, was about."

Does my defence of medieval eucharistic theology imply that I disagree with Dr. Mary Collins in her approval of Fr. Edward Kilmartin's claim that the scholastic synthesis has no future?<sup>42</sup> Not at all. In fact, I would argue that the "scholastic synthesis" not only has no future; it had no real past. The "scholastic synthesis" was (or is) a construct of the nineteenth century based on sixteenth century commentaries on Aquinas. It bears little relationship to the rambunctious, daring, and contentious diversity of the real thirteenth century theologians. Advocates of the "scholastic synthesis" conveniently forget that using Aristotle as the basis for ones theology in 1260 was just as controversial as using Marx as the basis for ones theology in 1960 and got people in just as much ecclesiastical hot water.

The scholastics were confident (some contemporaries argued even reckless) in their belief that anything true must come from God, even if it came from "the pagan Aristotle [or] the Saracen Averroes."<sup>43</sup> The true heirs of the real thirteenth century theologians are not those who desperately wrap themselves in Aristotle's musty toga, but those who are trying on the more modern raiment of Marx and Gramsci. The real heritage of true scholastic theology ought to be their intended boldness and their perhaps unintended but very real diversity.<sup>44</sup>

But let us return to the medieval theology of reception to make one final historical observation. The most interesting aspect of their theology, at least for me, is the centrality of spiritual communion, for spiritual communion was entirely a lay matter. No minister was necessary to make a spiritual communion, since even the miracle of transubstantiation was unnecessary for this devotion. The lay practice of spiritual communion and the theology of spiritual reception effectively removed the priest as the exclusive mediator of the presence of the Risen Lord just as the theology and practice of ordination were attributing the power of consecration solely to the ordained. Spiritual communion could even occur as an admonition to clergy not to deny sacramental communion to those who so desired it. I need not rehearse here the miracles recounted by Caroline Walker

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<sup>42</sup>Mary Collins, "The Church and the Eucharist," *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America* 52 (1997).

<sup>43</sup>"I curse the fact that the pagan Aristotle, the Saracen Averroes and certain other infidel philosophers are held in such great esteem, veneration and authority by certain scholars, especially in the study of sacred theology." Thus the Franciscan theologian, John Peter Olivi, writing in 1285. The quote is contained in David Burr, "Quantity and Eucharistic Presence: The Debate from Olivi through Ockham," *Collectanea Franciscana* 44 (1974): 7.

<sup>44</sup>For discussion of the diverse opinions about transubstantiation in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, see David Burr, *Eucharistic Presence and Conversion in Late Thirteenth-Century Franciscan Thought*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1984): 74, and Gary Macy, "The Dogma of Transubstantiation in the Middle Ages," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 45 (1994): 11-41.

Bynum in which Jesus himself gave devout lay women the sacrament when when it was withheld by the clergy.<sup>45</sup> These incidents were merely the most dramatic forms of spiritual communion without, and in fact, despite the benefit of clergy.

This is the third point that I would like to make concerning the eucharistic theology and practice of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. What occurred during this period, I would suggest, was what Catherine Bell describes as a "negotiation" between the ordained and the nonordained participants in the eucharistic ritual for control of the means of access to the divine. Put into the language of modern social science, this negotiation would be a struggle for access to the processes of objectification and embodiment of the social whole.<sup>46</sup> In other words, if ritualization within a social group is one means, and perhaps the major means, by which a society creates and maintains its structures, then in the late twelfth and early thirteen centuries, a new society was slowly being invented. Liturgies which clearly separated clergy and laity mirrored and also created a society with two clearly separated realms. Here the ever more fervent devotion to the real presence in the Eucharist, witnessed by eucharistic miracles, tabernacle lights, the removal of the chalice from the laity and the elevation of the host would serve to reinforce the miraculous power of the priest to make the Risen Lord present.<sup>47</sup> Eventually the two realms of priesthood and laity were understood as metaphysically different; the clergy eternally differentiated from the laity by the indelible mark received by ritual ordination.<sup>48</sup>

This "clericalization" of western society, which began with the Gregorian reform movement in the eleventh century was complete by the mid-thirteenth century and continued unabated, despite major revision during the Reformation, until the present day, more particularly, of course, in the Roman Catholic community. It is important to note that given Bell's analysis of the ritual nature of society, this new society created in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries continued to exist only because the participants, both ordained and non-ordained, continued to ritually recreate that society.

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<sup>45</sup>*Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) 116-19, 127-29, 130-32, 140-42, 236-37.

<sup>46</sup>*Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992): 197-223.

<sup>47</sup>This connection is made by Brooke, "Priest, Deacon, and Laity," 68, where he ascribes the idea to me! I honestly did not see this connection until it first was pointed out to me by Fr. Dennis Krouse. Only later did I read Brooke's article where he, too, connected the increasing separation of the clergy from the laity with the rise in eucharistic devotion.

<sup>48</sup>According to Nathan Mitchell, "Not until the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries did the church's official teaching, expressed in ecumenical councils, directly affirm the view that order is a sacrament which is permanently effective and 'imprints character'." *Mission and Ministry: History and Theology in the Sacrament of Order* (Wilmington DE: Michael Glazier, 1982): 254.

In the renegotiation of ritual power which took place during that period, the clergy, as specialists, allocated to themselves the sole right to make the Risen Lord present in the Eucharist. This particular aspect of the change has been studied by scholars (and either praised or lamented depending on the author's particular theological stance).<sup>49</sup> It is very important to point out, however, the other side of the coin. By allocating to themselves control over popular devotions, especially spiritual communion, the laity "negotiated" or redefined the understanding of the Eucharist to allow for a form of immediate access to the divine by which the laity bypassed the power of the clergy without denying or confronting the clergy's exclusive power to consecrate.<sup>50</sup> This particular aspect of the renegotiation deserves much more careful study by scholars than it has yet received. In this sense, the laity, too, were celebrants, but celebrants of "unofficial" rituals as opposed to the celebrants of "official" liturgies. Ritual specialists would exist, then, in both the clerical and lay worlds and both would provide access to the divine without challenging the authority of the other. Here I am indebted to the seminal work of Orlando Espín which points out the intricacies of the parallel access to the divine provided by "popular" and "official" Roman Catholicism in the Latino experience.<sup>51</sup>

If Bell is correct in her analysis of ritual, and I believe she is, some such sort of renegotiation was inevitable. To quote Bell, "The criteria for authentication (of a ritual) are nothing less than a satisfying sense of adherence to precedent in addition to a close resonance with lived experience—in other words, a collective confidence in the continued well-being of the society along with an individual sense of participation in a process of redemptive activity."<sup>52</sup> If clergy were to claim control over the Eucharist as well as the other "official" rituals of the Church, then some other means had to be found for the laity to continue to find an individual sense of participation in redemption. As Espín has pointed out, popular devotions not only clearly play this role, but they also provide a close and personal connection with the lived experience of individual communities. Popular devotions are necessarily grounded in the local community—this statue which is in our town, this procession, these clothes; now, here and for us. Popular devotions provide the "close resonance with lived experience" which can be lacking in a liturgy formed under the tight control of an international or even a national magisterium. A balance was struck in the late twelfth and early thir-

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<sup>49</sup>See, for instance, the excellent discussion of this issue in Bernard Cooke, *The Distancing of God: The Ambiguity of Symbol in History and Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990). A more standard discussion occurs in *The Study of the Liturgy*, section IV, "Ordination".

<sup>50</sup>Bell, 197-223.

<sup>51</sup>See especially his *The Faith of the People: Theological Reflections on Popular Catholicism* (MaryKnoll NY: Orbis Press, 1997).

<sup>52</sup>Bell, 213.

teenth centuries between official rituals with their specialists and unofficial rituals which could also have their specialists. Clergy obtained official access to the divine by means of tightly controlled universally undifferentiated liturgies. Laity retained direct access to the divine by means of widely diverse, locally grounded and largely unregulated popular devotions.

This renegotiation of the roles of the clergy and of the laity in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries was one of the most momentous such shifts in the history of the Eucharist. The shift was so successful that the settlement reached by the end of the thirteenth century has been and often still is read back into all of earlier Christian history. From this point of view, this paper is clearly a call for further research into the diversity of both practice and theory concerning the Eucharist during that half of Christian history misleadingly lumped into the single epithet, or perhaps more accurately, epitaph, "the Middle Ages." We have allies back then, subversive memories that remind us that the way it is now is not necessarily always the way it was then. Things have changed substantially before, and we certainly need not fear them changing substantially in the future. To paraphrase that great historian and former president of this august body, Walter Principe, history is freedom from the tyranny of the present.<sup>53</sup> I would never advocate a return to the Church of the tenth and eleventh centuries, but the fact that they were substantially different from the Church of the thirteenth century allows us the freedom to dream of a Church substantially different from that of the early twentieth century.

My concerns, however, are not just historical. My sense is that Roman Catholics in the United States are in the midst of another momentous "renegotiation" of the ritual power of the Eucharist. Of course, for many Catholics and particularly for Hispanic Catholics, the old allocation of "official" and "unofficial" ritual power still remains in force. But for many others, a striking shift in the allocation of ritual power has already occurred. According to the Notre Dame Study of Catholic Life, laity, and particularly women have taken over many important liturgical roles, even roles previously reserved for ordained men.<sup>54</sup> I won't bore you with the statistics; most of you know them far better than I. I would only point out that, from a historical perspective, the clear and careful separation between clergy and laity established in the thirteenth century is quietly disappearing from parish life. To give but one example. The results of the Notre Dame Study's analysis of confession today led the researchers to conclude that

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<sup>53</sup>An excellent summary of Fr. Principe's position is contained in his presidential address to the Catholic Theological Society of America, "The History of Theology: Fortress or Launching Pad," *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America* 43 (1988): 19-40.

<sup>54</sup>The results are summarized in Joseph Gremillion and Jim Castelli, *The Emerging Parish: The Notre Dame Study of Catholic Life Since Vatican II* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987) esp. 30-76 and 119-43. Again, I am indebted to Fr. Dennis Krouse for pointing out the importance of this study for my own research.

"We suspect these figures [on attendance at penance rituals] reflect some misunderstandings among parishioners about the relationships among private confession to a priest and the resultant absolution, private confession directly in prayer to God or another person, public confession in the Confiteor during Mass, and mixed public/private confession in the communal penance service."<sup>55</sup> In short, when asked about their participation in the sacrament of penance, those questioned saw all of the above described actions as equally fitting the definition of the ritual of penance. The situation described in the study closely parallels the practice of penance as it existed in the Middle Ages before the clergy claimed the sole right to the power of the keys in the thirteenth century. Parishioners today are no longer distinguishing clearly between those rituals performed by the permanently ordained clergy and those rituals performed by laity. In parishes where the laity already celebrate the liturgy of the Word, distribute communion, and even lead the congregation in communion services in the absence of official clergy, it will hardly be surprising that the demarcation between those officially and permanently ordained, and those "ordained" in the older sense of being ritually appointed to a particular role will be largely lost on the younger generation of Catholics. I am not a liturgist, nor do I study modern parish life, but I suggest, as a historian, to those that do, that despite the protests of the magisterium, a new negotiation of ritual power is taking place in the pews as I speak, and it is a renegotiation which minimizes the difference between permanent and temporary forms of "ordination."

Again to use the analysis of Catherine Bell, the rituals that now constitute parish life in the United States are creating and mirroring a very new Church, indeed a new form of Catholicism, every time a liturgy is said, or a parish group meets. As a product of the 1950s and 1960s, I must admit that it is difficult for me to quite imagine the shape that new form of Catholicism will take, but I do know that it is already happening, that it cannot be stopped, and that a new and wonderfully exciting Church is appearing all around us. And fortunately for the Church, perhaps, I very much doubt that either the magisterium or we theologians can do much to stop it. At best we can be participants in the new negotiation of ritual power.

To close, let me make one further observation. As I look out at this crowd of distinguished theologians, I see a group for whom the great Vatican Council of thirty years ago was *the* defining moment. One of the most important tasks of this generation has been to implement the insights of that Council most often in the context of, and often in opposition to, that preconiliar Catholic life which makes up our shared heritage. Thirty years from now, there will be not be one

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<sup>55</sup>This passage is not included in Gremillion and Castelli, but does occur in the original study by David Legge and Thomas Trozzolo, "Participation in Catholic Parish Life: Religious Rites and Parish Activities in the 1980s," *Notre Dame Study of Catholic Parish Life* 3 (April 1985): 4.

person at the CTSA convention who will have had any meaningful experience of Catholicism as it existed before Vatican II.<sup>56</sup> If present trends continue, the majority of that audience will be laity and the majority of the laity will be women. They will have grown up in parishes where leadership, liturgy and social action are, for the most part, organized and celebrated by laity, and again, mostly lay women. As Dr. Bernard Cooke points out in his new book on the Eucharist, this is a sign of great hope for eucharistic celebration, and I share his optimism for the future.<sup>57</sup> For the first time in seven hundred years, something really new and wonderful is stirring and I, for one, am thrilled to be part of it.

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<sup>56</sup>Even those young Catholic being trained in the older devotions and theology will not have experienced the pre-Vatican Church since such moves now are clearly reactionary and nostalgic in nature, something the same devotions and theology could not have been before Vatican II. The entire cultural framework for such devotions and theology has shifted, thus changing their very meaning.

<sup>57</sup>*The Future of the Eucharist* (Mahwah NJ: Paulist Press, 1997). Dr. Cooke does, however, assume a continued role in the liturgy for the permanently ordained clergy. I would disagree with his analysis on this point.