

AUGUSTINIAN THEMES IN *LUMEN GENTIUM*, 8

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ABSTRACT

Pope Benedict XVI, since his election to the papacy, has urged Catholic clergy and theologians to interpret the documents of the second Vatican Council using a "hermeneutic of continuity." This thesis seeks to answer whether such a hermeneutic is possible by focusing on one aspect of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*. The methodology here employed is a critical analysis of one of the major patristic sources of *Lumen Gentium*'s teaching, St. Augustine of Hippo. In claiming St. Augustine's support for its doctrine, *Lumen Gentium* also offers an interpretation of his thought. For *Lumen Gentium*'s teaching to be plausible, we must be able to conclude that Augustine's teaching is essentially identical to it. In that connection, *Lumen Gentium*'s claim that the Church is both a spiritual and visible reality forces us to consider a controverted topic in Augustinian studies: can Augustine's "city of God" be identified with the hierarchical Church? In order to resolve that question, we will examine both the historical and eschatological aspects of the Church in Augustine's thought, with some reference (treated in an appendix) to the compatibility between his theory of predestination and his ecclesiology. Further, what the Council meant when it said that the Church of Christ "subsists in" the Catholic Church, and whether this change in terminology, along with its implications in the field of ecumenism, can be reconciled with St. Augustine's ecclesiology must be determined with a view to establishing the continuity between pre and post conciliar Catholic ecclesiology. St. Augustine developed his understanding of the nature of the Church in the early

years of his ecclesiastical career through his polemical battles with the Donatist schismatics, and so the history of that schism is related in an appendix.

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For Heather, whose unflinching support has sustained my efforts

For Peter Burnell, mentor and friend

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND A NOTE ON TRANSLATION/CITATION

All citations of St. Augustine's works, unless cited as a translation, are my own renderings of the Latin texts available in the *Patrologia Latina* series edited by Migne. The following abbreviations which appear in the body of my thesis follow the protocol outlined in *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (Allan D. Fitzgerald, ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999) xxxv-xlii). Vatican documents, unless otherwise indicated, are my own translations of the Latin texts, many of which are available on the Vatican website, www.vatican.va. These are cited by paragraph number, according to the current custom.

i. Augustine's Works

<i>bapt.</i>	<i>De Baptismo Contra Donatistas</i> <i>On Baptism Against the Donatists</i>
<i>civ. Dei</i>	<i>De Civitate Dei</i> <i>City of God</i>
<i>praed. sanct.</i>	<i>De Praedestinatione Sanctorum</i> <i>On the Predestination of the Saints</i>
<i>ench.</i>	<i>Enchiridion ad Laurentium de Fide, Spe et Charitate Liber Unus</i> <i>A Handbook on Faith, Hope and Love</i>
<i>en. Ps.</i>	<i>Ennarationes in Psalmos</i> <i>Explanations of the Psalms</i>
<i>ep.</i>	<i>Epistulae</i> <i>Letters</i>

ii. Other Works

<i>LG</i>	<i>Lumen Gentium</i> <i>Dogmatic Constitution on the Church</i>
<i>ST</i>	<i>Summa Theologiae</i> <i>Summa Theologica</i>

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INTRODUCTION A HERMENEUTIC OF CONTINUITY?

Those who study the history of the Catholic Church, especially when outlining the development of doctrine and practice, must keep in mind that the Catholic Church has certain truth claims about her nature and historical genesis which constitute in themselves a legitimate field of study. In this connection, it is important to note the doctrine of apostolic succession, whereby it is understood that the Catholic Church is related to the twelve Apostles by her origin in time, by the succession of bishops and by her teaching on matters of faith and morals. My study does not seek to examine these claims, but rather to understand a development of doctrine from within the parameters of the Church's self identification as the sole Church founded by Christ, which exists in temporal continuity with the present day Catholic Church.¹ It is only in this way that a study which seeks to relate the history of 20th century Catholic theology to the theology of the 5th century Christian Church makes any sense at all.

The 20th century saw a variety of theological movements within the Catholic Church and in other Christian communities. In the early part of the 20th century there arose in France the movement that came to be known as *la nouvelle théologie* or *ressourcement*. Those involved in this movement saw the need to return to the early sources of Christianity, especially scripture, in order to inform their views on liturgy, ecclesiology, spirituality, and all the branches of theology. There was a concentrated effort to reintegrate the separate branches of theology in this way, and to be less dependent on scholastic divisions of the sciences. In this way, the organic unity of

1. For the most recent reassertion and elucidation of this claim, see William Levada, "Commentary on the Document *Responsa Ad Quaestiones de Aliquibus Sententiis Ad Doctrinam de Ecclesia Pertinentibus*," *The Holy See*, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20070629_commento-responsa_en.html.

theology would be more apparent. One of the concerns of this movement was the practice of ecumenism, a ministry that seeks to restore unity to the many Christian communities that exist. *La nouvelle théologie*, so called by its opponents for what they perceived as its novel and quasi-heretical approach to theology, was at first under a cloud of suspicion due to anxieties over the modernist heresy of the late 19th and early 20th century,² but was eventually vindicated as an orthodox school of thought, winning the support of the majority of the Catholic hierarchy. By the time that the Second Vatican Council was convened, many of the scholars of this theological movement were held in such high esteem that the drafting of the council's documents was entrusted to them. The most prominent of these scholars were Jean Danielou and Henri de Lubac, but counted among them are others no less renowned than Louis Bouyer, Yves Congar, and Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI. Special mention must also be made of Karl Rahner, SJ, who although is not generally regarded as a *ressourcement* scholar, had perhaps the most dramatic influence over the drafting of the Council documents and in shaping the opinions of the Council Fathers, especially the influential "European Alliance".³

The contribution of the *ressourcement* scholars to the work of Vatican II can be seen in the use the documents make of scriptural and patristic references. For instance, in the first chapter of *Lumen Gentium: The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, it becomes apparent that the council fathers were seeking to buttress their teaching with the authority of the Fathers of the Church – those ecclesiastical writers of renowned intellect and holiness who belong to the early period of the Church. This period, however, is not sharply delineated, and in the west, St. Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153) is considered the last of the Fathers. But the age of the Fathers is generally considered to extend to St. Isidore of Seville (d. 636) in the west and to St. John Damascene (d. c. 754) in the east.⁴ The advantage of citing the Fathers was that there was always imbedded

2. See Aidan Nichols, "Thomism and the Nouvelle Theologie," *The Thomist*, no. 64 (2000): 1–19.

3. Ralph Wiltgen, *The Rhine Flows Into the Tiber* (New York: Hawthorne Books, Inc., 1967), 80, 285.

4. William A. Jurgens, *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, Vol. 1 (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press,

within their thought some reference and interpretation of scripture, and an organic relationship between faith and life. The influence of Henri de Lubac on *Lumen Gentium* is particularly evident, as its final structure and content are so similar to that scholar's book, *Meditations sur L'Église*, originally published in 1956.⁵

The Second Vatican Council produced four major documents that make up the core of the council's work. These constitutions seek to reaffirm Catholic teaching on the Church and her worship, while providing an impetus and guideline for reform. *Lumen Gentium: The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, outlines the nature of the Church and details her relationship to other religions. *Gaudium et Spes: The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, offers guidance in the Church's confrontation with modernity, adopting an optimistic outlook on modern developments. *Dei Verbum: The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*, reaffirms the Church's esteem and reverence for Sacred Scripture and encourages a renewal in Scripture studies. *Sacrosanctum Concilium: The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, discusses the nature and purpose of liturgical worship and provides guidelines for reforming the Roman liturgy.

The two documents on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*, are often pitted one against the other, or at least presented as not being in complete harmony with each other by certain theologians, and this has been a source of endless controversy.⁶ The call to be in dialogue with the world and a rather naïve optimism in its approach to progress led some theologians to read *Gaudium et Spes* as if it signalled a complete break from the Church as it existed before the council. This approach shaped the landscape of theological studies and ecclesial life for the next 30 years, and still has a great influence in many quarters of the Catholic Church. For example, historical studies of Vatican II and many works of theology composed after the council treat Vatican II as if it was the only ecumenical council that bore any real

1970), x

5. Henri de Lubac, *The Splendor of the Church*, 2nd ed., Michael Mason (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986).

6. See, for instance, Tracy Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition After Vatican II* (London: Routledge, 2003), 11-19

importance in the present age of the Church. For instance, Giuseppe Alberigo, the quondam head of the famous Institute for Study of Religion in Bologna and principle editor of the only major historical study of Vatican II to date claims that Pope John XXIII, “wanted a council that would mark the end of an era; a council, that is, that would usher the Church out of the post-Tridentine era, and to a certain extent out of the centuries-old Constantinian phase, and into a new phase of witness and proclamation.”⁷ One of the unfortunate excesses of some *ressourcement* and liturgical movement scholars was a seeming disdain for the medieval Church, and the desire to “leap back fifteen centuries” in order to revive the Church of the Patristic era.⁸ Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical *Mediator Dei* warned against that tendency and forbade liturgical innovations inspired by it, calling it a false antiquarianism.⁹ However, in spite of the sobriety and care that prevailed in the Church before the Council, Pope John XXIII’s rhetoric in convoking the Council, calling it a “new Pentecost,” immediately created an inordinate amount of excitement. To this day Pope John’s rhetoric is considered to be pregnant with theological significance and has even caused one theologian to declare recently that,

Vatican II becomes the paradigm compared to which predecessor councils can be seen to be more limited in the scope of their renewal, reform, and updating. In that perspective, Vatican II fulfills to a greater degree what a council is; it is the fullest kind of council, and as such is the concrete norm, compared to which other councils can be evaluated as to the scope and fullness of their participation in the originating grace of the church.¹⁰

However, in spite of this retrospective exaltation of the council itself, in seminaries and universities its texts were no longer considered authoritative but were to give way to the “Spirit of Vatican II” which was considered the real source of guidance in matters pertaining to the

7. Giuseppe Alberigo, *A Brief History of Vatican II*, trans. Matthew Sherry (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2006), 10.

8. See Romano Amerio, *Iota Unum: A Study of Changes in the Catholic Church in the XXth Century*, trans. John P. Parsons (Kansas City: Sarto House, 1996), 114.

9. Pius XII, “Mediator Dei,” *The Holy See*, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_20111947_mediator-dei_en.html, 62–65.

10. Thomas Hughson, “Interpreting Vatican II: ‘A New Pentecost’,” *Theological Studies* 69 (2008): 37.

practice of the Catholic faith.¹¹ This approach led to dissidence among the so-called liberal or progressive (though a better term would be revisionist) theologians on the one hand, and disobedience and schism among the so-called traditionalists, who accepted the revisionist account of the council and so repudiated the council itself, on the other.

It is almost unnecessary to note that since the close of the council, the Catholic Church no longer holds the same kind of authority among her adherents as obtained before the council. This observation is adequately witnessed to by the proliferation of dissent among both theologians and laity that followed the publication of *Humanae Vitae* in 1968, and the controversies of the 70's and 80's that arose in connection with the Liberation Theology movements in Latin America. In both of these examples, the Vatican condemned what it considered an inappropriate attempt to be in dialogue with the world; the *Humanae Vitae* controversy being over inappropriate technology/technique in the regulation of birth, the Liberation Theology conflict being over the use of a Marxist political philosophy in the interpretation of Christian revelation. It is not my place here to give an analysis of these events, but to provide the reader with the line of thought that will guide my study in its focus on the text *Lumen Gentium*. Although the view of the council discussed above has prevailed in the Church and her institutions for many years, the popes have, in the meantime, continually stressed the continuity between Vatican II and the earlier councils of the Church. In his address to the Roman Curia in December, 2005, Pope Benedict XVI both offered a critique of the so-called “hermeneutic of rupture”, and defended reading the council with a “hermeneutic of reform”:

On the one hand, there is an interpretation that I would call “a hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture”; it has frequently availed itself of the sympathies of the mass media, and also one trend of modern theology. On the other, there is the “hermeneutic of reform,” of renewal in the continuity of the one subject-Church which the Lord has given to us. She is a subject which increases in time and develops, yet always remaining the same, the one subject of the journeying People of God. The hermeneutic of discontinuity risks ending in a split between the pre-conciliar church and the post-conciliar church. It asserts that the texts of the Council as such do not yet express the true spirit of the Council... the hermeneutic of discontinuity is countered by the hermeneutic of reform as

11. See Joseph Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology: Building Stones for a Fundamental Theology*, trans. Sister Mary Frances McCarthy (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987), 390.

it was presented first by Pope John XXIII in his speech inaugurating the Council on 11 October 1962 and later by Pope Paul VI in his discourse for the Council's conclusion on 7 December 1965. Here I shall cite only John XXIII's well known words, which unequivocally expressed this hermeneutic when he says that the Council wishes "to transmit the doctrine, pure and integral, without any attenuation or distortion." And he continues: "our duty is not only to guard this precious treasure, as if we were concerned only with antiquity, but to dedicate ourselves with an earnest will and without fear to that work which our era demands of us..."¹²

This hermeneutic of "renewal in continuity" has been promoted by Pope Benedict for many years, and my inspiration for this thesis was originally taken from this statement enunciated by then-Cardinal Ratzinger in his book, *Principles of Catholic Theology*:

If our criticism of the events of the decade after the council has guided us to these insights, if it has brought us to the realization that we must interpret Vatican Council II as a whole and that our interpretation must be oriented toward the central theological texts, then our reflections could become fruitful for the whole Church and could help her to unite in sensible reform. The "Constitution on the Church" is not to be evaluated in terms of the "Pastoral Constitution", and certainly not in terms of an isolated reading of the intention expressed in the prefatory paragraphs, but vice versa: only the whole in its proper orientation is truly the spirit of the Council.¹³

The possibility of this kind of reading of the Council documents is taken for granted by so-called conservative Catholics, who condemn both progressives and traditionalists as dissenters, the former for effectively ignoring the Council documents, the latter for being critical of them.¹⁴ However, the history of the Council itself and its consequent reception do not, at any rate, permit such a facile reconciliation with tradition. Ralph Wiltgen, in a book published just after the end of the Council,¹⁵ demonstrates that the documents were themselves the result of compromises often bitterly achieved. The European bishops of the countries along the Rhine had effective control over much of the Council's proceedings and influenced the opinions of the majority. By their own admission they had made the section of *Lumen Gentium* dealing with collegiality

12. Benedict XVI, "Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia Offering Them His Christmas Greetings," *The Holy See*, www.vatican.va/holy_father/Benedict_16th/speeches/2005/December/documents/hf_ben_xvi_sp_e_20051222_roman-curia_en.html.

13. Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 390.

14. Alan Schreck, *Vatican II: The Crisis and the Promise* (Cincinnati: Servant Books, 2005), Chapters 1–3.

15. Ralph Wiltgen, *The Rhine Flows Into the Tiber* (New York: Hawthorne Books, Inc., 1967).

ambiguous, thus forcing the Pope to intervene with the introduction of an explanatory note for the chapter.¹⁶ The decades after the Council, as previously mentioned, were rife with dissent in the name of the “spirit of Vatican II.” It was in that same spirit that the hierarchy of the Church refused to condemn dissenting views in no uncertain terms, choosing to formulate its teaching in positive terms. The implementation of the liturgical reforms called for in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* led to the proliferation of liturgies that were unrecognizable as Catholic, and the abandonment of Latin along with an emphasis on the inculturation of vernacular traditions seemed to be a complete rejection of the cultural patrimony of the Church. Romano Amerio, who was a *peritus* at the Council, traces these effects to the Council itself, both in the rationalistic spirit of the Council Fathers and the ambiguity of the texts themselves.¹⁷

Properly interpreting any Council of the Church is not an easy task. The various disciplinary canons have to be evaluated in light of the historical conditions, the condemnations and definitions must be read in light of the proper historical context. This task is particularly difficult when dealing with Vatican II, which has no canons, no condemnations and no new definitions. In order to lighten the burden, this study restricts itself to paragraph eight of *Lumen Gentium*, keeping in mind the words of Paul VI on the occasion of its promulgation: “There is no better comment to make than to say that this promulgation really changes nothing of the traditional doctrine...that which was assumed, is now explicit; that which was uncertain, is now clarified; that which was meditated upon, discussed and sometimes argued over, is now put together in one clear formulation.”¹⁸

Lumen Gentium, as a dogmatic constitution, sought to outline the basics of ecclesiology. It is composed of eight chapters, each dealing with some aspect of ecclesiology and ecclesial life.

16. Ibid., 228–34, 242.

17. See Amerio, *Iota Unum*.

18. Quoted in William Levada, “Commentary on the Document *Responsa Ad Quaestiones de Aliquibus Sententiis Ad Doctrinam de Ecclesia Pertinentibus*,” *The Holy See*, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20070629_commento-responsa_en.html.

The first chapter discusses the nature of the Church, drawing on a rich variety of biblical typology. The second chapter discusses the role of the members of the Church considered as the People of God. Chapters three, four and six discuss the roles of the ordained ministers, laity and those bound by religious vows in that order, with the fifth chapter emphasizing the “universal call to holiness” of all believers. The seventh chapter considers the Church in her eschatological perspective, emphasizing that she will only be fully realized in eternity, while the last chapter discusses the role of Marian devotion as it relates to ecclesiology and offers Mary as the perfect example of what it means to be a Christian, what it means to be “Church”.

St. Augustine figures prominently in *Lumen Gentium*, and is cited more often than any other Father or theologian, and his influence is especially visible in the first chapter which describes the nature of the Church. The chapter ends with a direct quote from *de civitate Dei*, implying that the Augustinian City of God is the same as that People of God which constitutes the subject of the second chapter: “The Church ‘progresses in her pilgrimage between the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God,’ announcing the cross and death of the Lord until he comes.”¹⁹ The quote from Augustine embedded within this text is taken from Book 18 of *de civitate Dei*, which offers a historical survey of the courses of the two cities, the city of God and the city of man. By citing St. Augustine, *LUMEN GENTIUM* not only seeks to buttress its claims about the nature of the Church with Augustinian concepts, but also offers an interpretation of St. Augustine’s writings as being in line with the teaching of the present day Catholic Church. St. Augustine of Hippo is credited with having done the most to develop ecclesiology in the early Church, and subsequent studies on the nature and mission of the Church have relied heavily upon concepts that he developed.²⁰

19. *Lumen Gentium* 8 “‘*Inter persecutiones mundi et consolationes Dei peregrinando procurrat ecclesia, crucem et mortem Domini annuntians, donec veniat.*’”; See also *de civitate Dei*, 18.52.2; 1 Cor. 11:26

20. See Stanislaus J. Grabowski, *The Church: An Introduction to the Theology of St. Augustine*, (St. Louis: Herder Book Co., 1957), xiv

For my thesis, I propose to focus in on the doctrinal formulations presented in *Lumen*

Gentium 8, which reads:

Christ, the One Mediator, constituted and unceasingly sustains his holy Church, the community of faith, hope, and charity as a visible society here on earth, by which he lavishes truth and grace on all. But the society built up with hierarchical organs and the mystical Body of Christ, the visible company and the spiritual community, the terrestrial Church and the Church endowed with heavenly goods, are not to be considered as two things, but form one complex reality that binds together a human and divine element. Therefore, on account of no weak analogy it is likened to the mystery of the incarnate Word. For just as the assumed nature served the divine Word as a living organ of salvation indissolubly united to Him, in a not dissimilar way the social framework of the Church serves the Spirit of Christ who is vivifying her to the increase of her body.

This is the unique Church of Christ, which we profess in the creed to be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic, which our Savior, after his resurrection, handed over to be fed by Peter, and entrusted it to him and the rest of the apostles to be spread throughout the world and ruled, and he established it in perpetuity as a column and foundation of truth. This church, founded and ordered in this world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the successor of Peter and the bishops in his communion, although outside of its company many elements of sanctification and truth are found which, as gifts proper to the Church of Christ, impel towards Catholic unity.²¹

When considering this passage, one can identify two main points that must be dealt with in reference to the ecclesiology of St. Augustine. The first is the claim that the Church is at the same time a visible and a spiritual reality. Augustinian scholars are not all in agreement with

21. *Unicus Mediator Christus Ecclesiam suam sanctam, fidei, spei et caritatis communitatem his in terris ut compaginem visibilem constituit et indesinenter sustentat, qua veritatem et gratiam ad omnes diffundit. Societas autem organis hierarchicis instructa et mysticum Christi Corpus, coetus adspectabilis et communitas spiritualis, Ecclesia terrestris et Ecclesia coelestibus bonis ditata, non ut duae res considerandae sunt, sed unam realitatem complexam efformant, quae humano et divino coalescit elemento. Ideo ob non mediocrem analogiam incarnati Verbi mysterio assimilatur. Sicut enim natura assumpta Verbo divino ut vivum organum salutis, Ei indissolubiliter unitum, inservit, non dissimili modo socialis compago Ecclesiae Spiritui Christi, eam vivificant, ad augmentum corporis inservit (cf. Eph 4,16).*

Haec est unica Christi Ecclesia, quam in Symbolo unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam profitemur, quam Salvator noster, post resurrectionem suam Petro pascendam tradidit (cf. Io 21,17), eique ac ceteris Apostolis diffundendam et regendam commisit (cf. Mt 28,18ss.), et in perpetuum ut columnam et firmamentum veritatis erexit (cf. 1Tim 3,15). Haec Ecclesia, in hoc mundo ut societas constituta et ordinata, subsistit in Ecclesia catholica, a successore Petri et Episcopis in eius communionem gubernata, licet extra eius compaginem elementa plura sanctificationis et veritatis inveniantur, quae ut dona Ecclesiae Christi propria, ad unitatem catholicam impellunt.

such a statement, some seeing in Augustine a sharp distinction between the hierarchical Church as it exists on earth and the heavenly “city of God,” while others identify the city of God with the Church itself. The second is the meaning of the passage “This Church constituted and organized in the world as a society, *subsists in* the Catholic Church,” which has been the subject of debate within the Catholic Church for the past forty years. The passage continues on to speak of “elements of sanctification and truth...found outside of its visible structure.” This passage has obvious implications for the practice of ecumenism, and the question arises as to whether the Augustinian ecclesiology that is appealed to in the document can serve as any kind of foundation for it. Also, many have seen the introduction of the Latin phrase *subsistit in* as a softening of the Catholic Church’s position vis-a-vis its self-identification as the one Church of Christ. This topic has already been dealt with by many other writers. The current study does not seek to provide an original conclusion to these matters, but merely uses an approach that has not been adequately exploited by others; namely, a study of one of the patristic sources the Council employed in its documents in order to shed some interpretative light on the text. To that end, the first chapter will be focused primarily on Augustine’s ecclesiology, in order to determine whether the ecclesiology of Vatican II is in fact compatible with it. The second chapter will examine two conflicting opinions on the interpretation of the phrase *subsistit in*, assess their relative worth, and bring Augustine’s thought to bear on the subject. If the first chapter yields a positive conclusion and the second chapter presents an interpretation that is coherent with Augustine’s position, the current study will contribute to showing the possibility and plausibility of interpreting the Council in light of a “hermeneutic of continuity.”

CHAPTER 1
THE VISIBLE CHURCH AND THE CITY OF GOD

Introduction

Lumen Gentium 7 expounds the doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ, emphasizing the role of the sacraments in incorporating members into that Body and the role of the Holy Spirit as the animating principle of the Body. This Body is then described in paragraph 8 as having a concrete existence in the world:

Christ, the One Mediator, constituted and unceasingly sustains his holy Church, the community of faith, hope and charity as a visible society here on earth, by which he lavishes truth and grace on all. But the society built up with hierarchical organs and the mystical Body of Christ, the visible company and the spiritual community, the terrestrial Church and the Church endowed with heavenly goods, are not to be considered as two things, but form one complex reality that binds together a human and divine element. Therefore, on account of no weak analogy it is likened to the mystery of the incarnate Word. For just as the assumed nature served the divine Word as the living organ of salvation indissolubly united to Him, in a not dissimilar way the social framework of the Church serves the Spirit of Christ who is vivifying her to the increase of her body.

To those familiar with the Catholic Church's understanding of itself this statement is unsurprising, but in that the document relies on Augustinian texts in its formulation of the doctrine of the mystical Body,¹ it can be said to offer an interpretation of St. Augustine's position on this topic. The centrality of the concept of the Church as People of God in chapter 2 of *LUMEN GENTIUM* shows to an even greater extent the Council's reliance on Augustine: the last paragraph of the first chapter quotes directly from *de civitate Dei* in its emphasis on the pilgrim Church,² and the initial description of the Church as People of God in the second chapter uses the

1. Of the three footnotes found in paragraph seven of *Lumen Gentium*, two refer to St. Thomas, two to Pius XII, one to Leo XIII, St. John Chrysostom, Didymus, and St. Augustine. However, with the exception of Chrysostom and Didymus, these sources have Augustine as their immediate or remote background.

2. "The Church "progresses in her pilgrim实施 between the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God," announcing the cross and death of the Lord until he comes."

same biblical references exploited by Augustine in his description of the city of God. The identification of the Church as the Augustinian city of God, however, is not without problems. In particular, there has been a tendency among Augustinian scholars to separate the visible institution of the Church from the concept of the City of God. This has led to an understanding of the Church as a primarily invisible and spiritual society of the predestined. The distinction arises from focusing on one aspect of the Church at the expense of the other. For example, Michael McCarthy, referring to the work of Emilien Lamirande and Pasquale Borgomeo, says that in spite of their having “brought into relief the complexity of Augustine’s thought” by attention to Augustine’s exegetical practices, their failure to connect these practices to their social and cultural function of building the Church bears the unhappy result that “a common paradigm, which finds in Augustine two distinct ecclesiologies--the Church visible and invisible, the earthly Church and the heavenly Church--continues to influence our perception and leads to claims that Augustine’s sense of the Church is marked by an ‘ultraspiritualism’ or Platonic idealization that ignores the concrete ecclesial reality.”³ It will be our concern in this chapter to determine how closely *Lumen Gentium’s* doctrine on the subject corresponds to St. Augustine’s.

The Church and The City of God

Robert Markus, writing in 1970, considered the question about the identification of the Church as the City of God in St. Augustine’s thought as having been settled in favor of the Catholic position and that it is now a debate of “no more than historical interest.”⁴ Markus cites a 1950 article by F. E. Cranz as proof for this claim. In that article, Cranz argued against the position of Hans Leisegang who thought of the heavenly city/city of God as the exemplar form of the Church on earth which was, in turn, the exemplar form of the earthly city. Although that article by Cranz and the more recent studies available seem to indicate a growing consensus that

3. Michael C. McCarthy, “An Ecclesiology of Groaning: Augustine, the Psalms and the Making of the Church,” *Theological Studies* 66 (2005): 28.

4. Robert Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 121.

the Church and the City of God are identical in St. Augustine's thought, that position is by no means held by all. Indeed, it is a commonplace of textbooks on the history of the middle ages to deny the identification categorically without additional commentary as in Cruz and Gerberding's *Medieval Worlds*: "Although the Kingdom and Church of God on earth exhibit elements of the Heavenly City, they should never be equated with it."⁵ Moreover, it is not only in general histories that this kind of interpretation can be found. A similar position can be detected in the great biography of Augustine by Peter Brown, who relies on the interpretation of Leisegang: "the compact particularism of Israel and the world-wide unity of the Catholic Church are *shadows* of the Heavenly City."⁶ John Rist, a classicist and philosopher, also interprets Augustine as denying the identity of the City of God and the Church: "it would certainly have been tempting--if unreasonable--for him to suppose that, if not the Christian Empire, at least the Christian Church might be identified with the City of God."⁷ That Markus was premature in his judgment that the problem is now merely of historical interest is surely evidenced in the widespread acceptance, conscious or not, of Leisegang's position.

Cranz, in his critique of Leisegang, offered an analysis of *de civitate Dei* 15.2 which proved that the city of God in its earthly pilgrimage is not merely an image of the heavenly city. He determined by an examination of that passage that whereas the people of Israel before the advent of Christ were part of the city of man that is an image or prophecy of the city of God to come,⁸ the Church is not an image of the city of God but the thing itself. He then goes on to show that Augustine uses the terms *ecclesia*, *civitas*, and *regnum coelorum* somewhat interchangeably. From this Cranz concludes about the Church that:

5. Jo Ann H. Moran Cruz and Richard Gerberding, *Medieval Worlds: An Introduction to European History, 300–1492* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004), 73; Cf., Barbara Rosenwein, *A Short History of the Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 28.

6. Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), 323 (my *emphasis*)

7. John M. Rist, *Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 228.

8. F. Edward Cranz, "De Civitate Dei, XV, 2, and Augustine's Idea of the Christian Society," *Speculum* 25, no. 2 (April 1950): 218.

This society is heavenly in essence and destination, but it was foreshadowed on earth by Israel and a part of it has been given earthly reality by Christ. Over against this true Christian society, there is human society in general, the earthly city and the earthly kingdom. This society, which includes human kingship and empire, has no positive relation, in particular no relation of image, to the Christian society of heaven. Nor has the coming of Christ and the spread of Christianity destroyed the continuity of the earthly city and its kingship; the Roman Empire is still Babylon.⁹

There are two issues that Cranz's analysis leaves unexplored. First, Cranz assumes that *ecclesia* denotes the institutional Church and not simply a spiritual gathering of believers; second, the claim that Israel is part of the city of man and an image of the city of God seems to imply that there is a fundamental discontinuity between Israel and the Church. Does calling Israel an image of the city of God mean that there is an essential difference between it and the Church, and if not, what kind of difference does it indicate? Further, as will be explained, this question raises the issue of whether Augustine's ecclesiology is compatible with his doctrine on predestination. This latter point has relevance to the Catholic Church's teaching on the universal salvific will of God and the possibility of salvation outside the visible *catholica*.

The Eschatological Church

In response to the first problem, it will be helpful to point out another fairly common way of denying the identity of the Church and the city of God: defining the city of God as an entirely eschatological concept seems to indicate an essential difference between it and the notion of *ecclesia*. Etienne Gilson provides us with an example:

The difficulty in which we find ourselves when confronted by the divergent texts involved, stems from a confusion which spontaneously arises in our minds between two pairs of opposed terms: State and Church, on the one hand; earthly city and City of God, on the other...we must not confuse the earthly city, which is a *mystical* entity according to Augustine's own expression, with this or that city actually realized in time or space. And on the other hand, the Church is not the City of God, surprising though this may seem. The City of God is the society of all God's elect, past, present and future. Now there were obviously just men among the elect prior to the establishment of Christ's Church, and even now there are, outside the Church and perhaps even among her persecutors, future members of the elect who will submit to her discipline before they die. Above all, in so far as the City of God is the Church, there are many men in it who will not be numbered among the elect...Now, what is to remain then (i.e. at the final judgment) will

9. Ibid., 219.

obviously not be the Church, on the one hand, and the State, on the other; it will be the divine society of God's elect and the diabolical society of the reprobate.¹⁰

Even if we agree with Gilson that the term *civitas Dei* is understood properly as an eschatological term, that does not preclude its use for referring to a temporally bound society. Augustine often goes from one meaning to the other in a fluid and non-systematic way which, according to Stanislaus Grabowski, makes it difficult if not impossible to assign a specialized meaning to his terms:

If one is ever aware in reading St. Augustine's *City of God* of the several aspects under which he views the Church, and if one is mindful of the facility with which he shifts from one aspect to another while speaking of one and the same Church, there can hardly be any serious difficulty in identifying all that he says concerning the "city of God" with the Church, the mystical body of Christ.¹¹

In doing this, Augustine followed his own advice to refrain from specialized language as presented in *de doctrina Christiana*: "But good teachers take, or should take, the greatest care to ensure that a word which cannot be good Latin unless it is obscure or ambiguous, but which is used in colloquial speech in a way that avoids obscurity and ambiguity, is not used as it is used by educated people but rather as the uneducated tend to use it."¹²

Moreover, that Augustine identifies the Church as the city of God is attested to by many passages, a few of which are helpfully pointed out by Johannes van Oort in his book *Jerusalem and Babylon*:

A few passages from Augustine's writings may illustrate the extent to which he identifies the city of God with the Church. In the *City of God*: '...the city of God is the holy Church...' (VIII, 24); '...the city of God, which is his Church...' (XIII, 16); '...of the city of God, which is of the Church...' (XV, 26); '...Christ and His Church, the city of God...' (XVI, 2). Likewise in his expositions on the Psalms, this identification occurs time and again; for example: '...about the city of God, which is about the Church...' (En. in Ps. 71, 18); '...what is the city of God but the holy Church?' (En. in Ps. 98, 4).¹³

10. Etienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine*, trans. L. E. M. Lynch (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1961), 180–81.

11. Grabowski, *The Church*, 538.

12. Saint Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*, R. P. H. Green (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 4.10.24.

13. Johannes van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon: A Study Into Augustine's City of God and the Sources of His Doctrine of the Two Cities* (The Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1991), 127.

Van Oort goes on to attribute to Wilhelm Kamlah an important development in our understanding not only of the term *civitas Dei* but also of the term *ecclesia*: “He (Kamlah) shows that ultimately *ecclesia* and *civitas Dei* have the same meaning for Augustine: both are eschatological terms.”¹⁴ If, then, we were to apply this conclusion to Gilson’s logic, neither term could be attributed properly to the Church as it exists in the here and now since both are eschatological terms. Even a cursory reading of the passages cited by van Oort in their proper context will undoubtedly dispel such a notion; all of them describe an earthly society which is at war with the devil and on a journey to its heavenly homeland.

Furthermore, this use of eschatological terms to designate a temporal reality is consonant with Augustine’s pastoral concerns for the reason that knowledge of a thing in its final cause is what enables man to direct all things to the highest good, which is the basis for moral action: “Appetite is close to reasoning knowledge; since concerning those corporeal things that are experienced by the sense of the body, it reasons by means of that which is called the science of action; if [it reasons] well, *that it may refer the thing known to the end of the highest Good*; but if badly, so that it may enjoy them as though it may rest in such goods with a false beatitude.”¹⁵ Knowledge of the object’s final cause is necessary in order to direct it to its ultimate end, and so is the most important consideration of an existing reality. The perfect intellectual knowledge of the angels allows them to refer created things to the praise of the creator with great facility:

For there is a great difference whether something is known in its purpose(*ratione*), that for which it was made, or whether it is known in itself... All these [created things] are known by the angels in one way; [they are known] in the Word of God where they have their proper causes(*causas*) and purposes(*rationes*) that is, that for which they were made, remaining unchangeably, and are known in another way in themselves; the former way more clearly, the latter by a more obscure cognition just as an art is compared to its work. Nevertheless, the works are referred to the praise and veneration of the same Creator as the morning light shines upon the minds of those contemplating.¹⁶

14. Ibid.

15. *De Trinitate*, 12.12.17. “*Rationi autem scientiae appetitus vicinus est; quandoquidem de ipsis corporalibus quae sensu corporis sentiuntur, ratiocinatur ea quae scientia dicitur actionis; si bene, ut eam notitiam referat ad finem summi Boni; si autem male, ut eis fruatur tamquam bonis talibus in quibus falsa beatitudine conquiescat.*”

16. *De Civitate Dei*, 11.29. “*Multum enim differt, utrum in ea ratione cognoscatur aliquid,*

It should come, then, as no surprise that Augustine prefers to consider and expound the nature of the Church in terms of its final cause. This not only allows him to continually remind his audience that the present reality is provisional and that they ought to direct their actions to that final reality, but also permits him to see the eternal dimensions of the mystery as it exists at the present time. This is why one of the predominant themes of *de civitate Dei* is the notion of the pilgrimage of the city of God to its heavenly homeland. The city of God already has an affinity to its eschatological fulfillment; present reality derives its essence from the final cause. If there is no society that can properly be called the city of God existing presently, there is no eschatological fulfillment of that city to tend towards.¹⁷

That the Church is a temporally existing community is corroborated further by a perusal of books 15-18 of *de civitate Dei* which discuss at length the historical development of the city of God. In 15.26 Augustine explains briefly the significance of Noah's ark and refers us to his discussion of this symbol in *contra Faustum* 12.15-24. From this discussion of the ark as a prophetic symbol of Christ and the Church, it is clear that the Church is a social body that participates in the sacraments and is animated by faith, hope and charity. This Church contains in it both clean and unclean animals, that is, both sinners and saints, who enter it through baptism as through the open door of Christ's side. The inclusion of sinners shows without doubt that he is speaking of a temporally existing society.

A further approach to the question of the identity of the city of God and the Catholic Church is to examine Augustine's notion of what constitutes a people and what he identifies as

secundum quam factum est, an in se ipso...Omnia haec aliter in Verbo Dei cognoscuntur ab angelis, ubi habent causas rationesque suas, id est secundum quas facta sunt, incommutabiliter permanentes, aliter in se ipsis; illa clariore, hac obscuriore cognitione, velut artis atque operum; quae tamen opera cum ad ipsius Creatoris laudem venerationemque referuntur, tamquam mane lucescit in mentibus contemplantium."

17. Thus I consider van Oort's "emphasis on the idea of perigrination" which leads him to conclude that, "To him (Augustine) there was absolutely no form of *imperium christianum*, nor was the Church to be identified with the city of God on earth,"(pg. 92) somewhat puzzling, especially since he demonstrates the identity of the Church and the city of God so effectively throughout his work.

the principle of its unity. In book 19.24, Augustine proposes a new definition of what can be considered a people: “But if a people is not defined in that way (that is, as a community bound together by justice), but in another way as if it were said: ‘A people is a union of a multitude of rational beings joined in a communion of agreement with respect to the things it loves,’ indeed, those things which it loves are to be considered so that it may be seen what kind of people it is.”¹⁸ This definition can apply to any society whatsoever, and when applied to the city of God and the city of the devil we arrive at their classic definition already stated by Augustine in *de civitate Dei* 14.28: “Two loves therefore made two cities, that is the love of self to the point of contempt of God made the earthly, but the love of God to the point of contempt of self made the heavenly.”¹⁹ This definition of the city of God as a society bound together by love of God has clear ecclesiological significance. In his polemical works against the Donatists, Augustine refers again and again to the unifying bond of charity, which loves the unity of the Church as the *sine qua non* of the love of God: “And he has not the love of God who loves not the Church’s unity...”²⁰ The fact that the same love is the unifying factor of both the city of God and the Church certainly indicates that they are synonymous.

The Church and Israel

The question of the relationship between Israel and the Church in Augustine’s thought has weighty implications; if by calling Israel an image of the city of God Augustine means that they are essentially different societies, we encounter the further difficulty of reconciling his ecclesiology to his thoughts on predestination. G. G. Willis, in his book *Saint Augustine and the Donatist Controversy*, said, “He (Augustine) never synthesized his theories of the church and predestination, though he often assumes that all the predestined still on earth are incorporated

18. “*Populus est coetus multitudinis rationalis rerum quas diligit concordi communione sociatus, profecto, ut videatur qualis quisque populus sit, illa sunt intuenda, quae diligit.*”

19. “*Fecerunt itaque civitates duas amores duo, terrenam scilicet amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei, caelestem vero amor Dei usque ad contemptum sui.*”

20. *De Baptismo Contra Donatistas*, 3.16.21. “*Non autem habet Dei caritatem, qui Ecclesiae non diligit unitatem...*”

into the visible communion of saints. In reviewing his beliefs, therefore, we must be content to hold the two aspects in tension."²¹ More recently, Donato Ogliari also defended the same thesis, saying, "Although Augustine taught that predestination and election should be understood from both a christological...and a corporate/ecclesiological perspective...we are led to conclude that he eventually introduced an insoluble tension between his concept of eternal predestination of the *electi* and the role of the universal mediation of Christ and the Church."²² This "tension" arises from a consideration of the Church as being comprised only of the elect, and that some of the elect are found outside the visible *Catholica*. Harnack, on whom both Willis and Ogliari rely, states that the

final consequence of Augustine's doctrine of grace teaches that salvation depends on God's inscrutable predestination (election and grace) and on that alone. Therefore the Church cannot be anything other than the elect...*Thus the thought of predestination shatters every notion of the church...* and renders valueless all divine ordinances, the institution and means of salvation. The number of the elect is no Church. The elect of God are to be found inside and outside the Church...²³

The judgment that Augustine's ecclesiology is incompatible with his theory of predestination arises primarily from the notion that God's predestination precedes his foreknowledge and, because predestination is applied to the individual by God's eternal and immutable decree, it does not seem to have any intrinsic connection to the mediation of Christ and the Church.²⁴ This judgment is confirmed by Augustine's assertion that some who had lived before the Incarnation, namely, the just of Israel and certain righteous pagans, were able to achieve salvation *extra ecclesiam* as it were. Therefore Augustine's insistence on the necessity of adhering to the visible *catholica* is tenuous at best. If, however, Israel, which was an image of

21. Geoffrey Grimshaw Willis, *Saint Augustine and the Donatist Controversy* (London: SPCK, 1950), 125.

22. Donato Ogliari, "The Role of Christ and the Church in Light of Augustine's Theory of Predestination," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 79, no. 4 (2003): 362.

23. Adolf Harnack, *History of Dogma*, trans. James Millar (London: Williams and Norgate, 1898), 166.

24. In his article, Ogliari outlines and rejects three possible responses to this problem. Since this problem is so closely connected to the topic of my thesis, I will address it in an appendix.

the city of God, can in a certain sense be identified with the Church, then the most cogent obstacle to a proof of the compatibility between Augustine's ecclesiology and theory of predestination will be removed.

Returning to the progress of the city of God outlined in books 15 to 18 of *de civitate Dei*, we learn from the Old Testament that the city of God was always present in the world, but had not yet reached its definitive form and so is called an image of the city of God rather than the thing itself: "Indeed, a certain shadow and prophetic image of this city served it to be signified rather than to be made present on earth, at which time it was necessary that it be represented, and it was also called the holy city itself by merit of being a signifying image and not by merit of being the clear reality as was to be."²⁵ Each stage in the development of God's covenant with his chosen people makes the city of God more apparent, as can be seen in the election of Abraham as the head of the nation of Israel: "Already let us now see the progress of the city of God even from that point in time which happened in the case of our father Abraham, whence its conception began to be more evident, and whereby the divine promises which we now see to be fulfilled in Christ are found more clear."²⁶ The nation of Israel and its historical progress always points beyond itself to the fulfillment of the divine promises in Christ. The fundamental presupposition, then, in calling Israel an image of the city of God is the unconditional identification of the Church as the city of God.

In book 17, Augustine lingers on the psalms; his interpretation of Psalm 45 shows again that Jerusalem, representing Israel by synecdoche, was an image of the city of God, but that the Church is the city of God itself. The queen in the psalm is the 'city of the Great King,' Sion 'in the spiritual sense,' and Jerusalem 'in that same spiritual sense,' which is in bondage to Babylon

25. *civ. Dei*, 15.2. "*Umbra sane quaedam civitatis huius et imago prophetica ei significandae potius quam praesentandae servivit in terris, quo eam tempore demonstrari oportebat, et dicta est etiam ipsa civitas sancta merito significantis imaginis, non expressae, sicut futura est, veritatis.*"

26. *Ibid.*, 17.12. "*Nunc iam videamus procursum civitatis Dei etiam ab illo articulo temporis, qui factus est in patre Abraham, unde incipit esse notitia eius evidentior, et ubi clariora leguntur promissa divina, quae nunc in Christo videmus impleri.*"

before the coming of Christ. Only a part of the Israelites, those who live by faith, belong to the city of God which is made into an identifiable society after the death of the Lord, and can then embrace people of all nations:

That people of the gentiles whom Christ did not know in his corporal presence but, Christ having been preached to it, believed in him so that it would be rightly said concerning it: “in the hearing of the ear it has obeyed me, because faith is from hearing”; that people, I say, added to the true Israelites both in flesh and in faith, is the city of God which also bore Christ himself according to the flesh when it existed only among the Israelites.²⁷

In Book 18, Augustine asserts that there were also non-Israelites that are counted as members of the spiritual Jerusalem before Christ but that,

it ought not be believed to have been conceded to anyone except to those whom the one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, was divinely revealed, who was foretold to the ancients to be about to come in the flesh, just as he has been announced to us to have come, so that through him one and the same faith may lead all the predestined among the city of God, the house of God, the temple of God, to God.²⁸

After a typological elucidation of the house of God and temple of God as foreshadowing the Church to come,²⁹ Augustine reiterates that there are evil men in the Church who will not be separated until the end.³⁰ Again, the exegetical method concerned reinforces the notion that Israel was an image of the heavenly city, but that the Church is the heavenly city itself. But does this use of typology lessen Israel’s identity as the city of God? It seems that since Israel is an image of the city of God which is made ‘incarnate’ so to speak in its foundation by Christ, it cannot be said to be the city of God in an unqualified sense. One clear implication of this way of looking at the relationship between the Church as it exists now and the people of Israel before

27. Ibid., 17.16.2. “*Populus ergo iste gentium, quem non cognovit Christus praesentia corporali, in quem tamen Christum sibi annuntiatum credidit, ut merito de illo diceretur: In obauditu auris obaudivit mihi, quia fides ex auditu est; iste, inquam, populus additus veris et carne et fide Israelitis civitas est Dei, quae ipsum quoque secundum carnem peperit Christum, quando in solis illis Israelitis fuit.*”

28. Ibid., 18.47. “*Quod nemini concessum fuisse credendum est, nisi cui divinitus revelatus est unus mediator Dei et hominum, homo Christus Iesus, qui venturus in carne sic antiquis sanctis praenuntiabatur, quemadmodum nobis venisse nuntiatus est, ut una eademque per ipsum fides omnes in Dei civitatem, Dei domum, Dei templum praedestinos perducatur ad Deum.*”

29. Ibid., 18.48.

30. Ibid., 18.49.

the coming of the Christ is that the Incarnation of the Son of God is the absolutely central and decisive moment in human history. Since the city of God has been given its definitive structure by Christ's foundation of the Church on the Apostles, the unbaptized cannot be considered members of the city of God unless they are tending explicitly toward membership in the community of salvation. Ogliari sees the salvation of the faithful of Israel as a "retroactive" mediation of Christ's grace that gives them the possibility of salvation without having to belong to the Church and hence an inconsistency in Augustine's teaching on the necessity of baptism.³¹ However, Augustine does not hesitate to say that the Church itself has been in existence since the beginning of the human race³² and explicitly links the Jewish practice of circumcision with baptism.³³ Hence the Israelites, by foreshadowing the city of God, are also a part of that city as the passage from *de civitate Dei* 17.16.2 clearly demonstrates. Even some pagans could be saved before Christ, provided they were joined spiritually to the community of Israel in anticipation of its savior as can be seen in the passage from *de civitate Dei* 18.47 quoted above. This passage parallels Augustine's determination that catechumens who die without baptism are to be counted among the members of the heavenly city.³⁴

In all cases (Israelite/Catholic, "Righteous Pagan"/catechumen) it is the grace of Christ the Redeemer that incorporates the believer into the city of God. However, this grace of the Redeemer takes different forms in Israel and the Church, being conferred by different types of sacraments as Augustine says in his commentary on Psalm 72: "The sacraments are not the same, because some are sacraments giving salvation, others promising a Savior. The Sacraments of the New Testament give salvation; the Sacraments of the Old Testament promised a Savior."³⁵ The earthly nature of the Old Testament promises hid the mystery of salvation from many;

31. Ogliari, "Predestination," 359–60.

32. *civ. Dei*, 16.2.

33. *bapt.*, 4.24.

34. *Ibid.*, 4.21.

35. *Ennarationes in Psalmos*, 73.2. "*Sacramenta non eadem, quia alia sunt Sacramenta dantia salutem, alia promittentia Salvatorem. Sacramenta Novi Testamenti dant salutem; Sacramenta Veteris Testamenti promiserunt Salvatorem.*"

consequently, with the coming of Christ and the changing of the sacraments, they have become “easier, fewer, more salvific, happier.”³⁶ Rather than indicating a greater ease of incorporation into the city of God prior to the Incarnation, this difference of sacraments shows the restricted nature of salvation at that time. Israel, like the Church, was a visible society with a sacramental system for the mediation of salvation with an internal supernatural principle of cohesion, namely, faith and hope in the Redeemer, and the loving fulfillment of the works of the law. Augustine divides Israel, like the Church, into two camps; the spiritual and the carnal. The spiritual Israelites were the children of Abraham both in flesh and in faith. This is evident even in the Old Testament, since both Ishmael and Isaac are the sons of Abraham by means of carnal descent, but only Isaac is his spiritual progeny.³⁷ Even for the spiritual descendants of Abraham, the precepts of the law, serving as shadows of the sacraments and precepts of the new law, were always incapable of fulfillment. Because of this, the law revealed to the Israelites their need for the savior and pointed to the law of grace in Christ.

This, therefore, is the advantage of the Law, that it shows man to himself so that he may know his weakness and see how by means of the prohibition carnal concupiscence is increased rather than healed. For those things that are forbidden are sought after more ardently, while the carnal man is compelled to observe that which is commanded spiritually. But that he who fulfills the spiritual Law is spiritual, does not come about by the Law itself, but by grace; this is not by command but by a benefit; not by the commanding letter but by the helping Spirit...Therefore the advantage of the Law is so that man may be convinced of his weakness and be forced to beg for the medicine of grace which is in Christ.³⁸

With the coming of Christ and the founding of the Church with her sacramental life, the precepts of the law become not only unnecessary, but even harmful, as their continued

36. *en. Ps.*, 73.2. “...*faciliora, pauciora, salubriora, feliciora.*”

37. *Epistulae*, 196.3.12.

38. *ep.*, 196.2.5. “*Haec est igitur utilitas Legis, quia ostendit hominem sibi ipsi, ut sciat infirmitatem suam et videat quemadmodum per prohibitionem augeatur potius carnalis concupiscentia quam sanetur. Appetuntur enim ardentius quae vetantur, dum id quod spiritaliter iubetur, carnalis observare compellitur. Ut autem sit spiritalis, qui Legem impleat spiritalem, non fit ipsa Lege, sed gratia; hoc est, non imperio, sed beneficio; non iubente littera, sed iuvante Spiritu...Utilitas itaque Legis est, ut hominem de sua infirmitate convincat, et gratiae medicinam quae in Christo est, implorare compellat.*”

observance implies a Pelagian notion of merit.³⁹ The Church is now the true Israel, and Christians the true children of Abraham.⁴⁰ The diffusion of the Church throughout the world after Christ fulfills the Old Testament prophecies and widens the scope of God's salvific action. Consequently it seems that in Augustine's thought, calling Israel an image of the city of God highlights its provisional nature which reaches its fulfillment in the foundation of the Church by Christ. The reality of the Church is there from the beginning, but is progressively revealed throughout the Old Testament, reaching its zenith in Christ's foundation of its definitive temporal structure, and yet even this mode of its existence pales in comparison to what awaits it in the glory of heaven.

Hence, returning to the notion of retroactive salvation, the just of Israel have been saved by Christ's redemptive death, but the operation of that grace would be better termed "anticipatory"; the *antiquos sanctos* were already in possession of the beatific vision at the time of Christ's descent into hell, as Augustine says in *Epistola 164*:

Whence I have not found what he (Christ) conferred to those just men who were in Abraham's bosom when he had descended into hell, from whom I see that he had never departed according to the beatific presence of his divinity, just as on the very same day

39. *ep.*, 196.2.7, 8.

40. They should not on that account be called Jews or Israelites: "Since those things hold themselves thus, nevertheless we ought not confuse the custom of human speech by a senseless loquacity nor mix frequently used words with a confused meaning in matters requiring discernment, such that some desire, by an unusual vocabulary, to call Jews those who are Christians and are called Christians by most customary appellation; or when he who is and is called a Christian would rather delight in the name of Israelite; and what ought always be understood in mystery and should rarely be brought forth from the mouth, this one, in his daily habit of speaking, chooses to repeat often by a foolish insolence and, if it can be said, ignorant wisdom. *Quae cum ita se habeant, non tamen debemus consuetudinem sermonis humani inepta loquacitate confundere, et in rebus discernendis frequentata vocabula perturbata significatione miscere, ut eos qui Christiani sunt et appellatione usitatissima Christiani vocantur, inusitato vocabulo aliquis affectet appellare Iudaeos; vel cum sit ipse voceturque Christianus, Israelitae potius nomine delectetur; et quod in mysterio debet semper intellegere, parcius autem ore proferre, hoc in quotidiana loquendi consuetudine magis eligat frequentare inepta insolentia, et, si dici potest, imperita scientia.*" (*ep.*, 196.4.14) An additional reason for this is that the carnal Israel still has significance in the life of the Church; their continued existence gives proof to the world that Christians did not make up the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Christ and the Church. Cf. *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Jews and Judaism".

on which he died, he also promised the thief that he would be with him in paradise, when he was about to descend in order to loose the pains of hell.⁴¹

Although Augustine is unsure what exactly Christ brought to those saints of old⁴² the descent into hell certainly fulfilled the promise of a savior that was signified by the sacraments of the Old Testament. Augustine had reservations about saying that the ancients were in hell due to the lack of an unambiguous scriptural reference, but he nevertheless accepted the teaching and distinguished between the abode of the damned (*infernus*) and that of the saints (*mors*). The saints of the Old Testament, although they immediately experienced a certain beatitude, still needed to be rescued by Christ from the nether regions:

For if it seems to be not absurdly believed that even the ancient saints who kept faith in the coming Christ were indeed in a place removed from the torments of the impious, but yet in the midst of hell until the blood of Christ and his descent to that place rescued them from there, surely thereafter the good faithful ones already redeemed by that poured out price do not experience hell at all even until, with their bodies restored, they may receive the goods which are merited.⁴³

Since the sacraments of the Old Testament were provisional, so was the limited beatitude of Abraham's bosom. And yet even the beatitude the saints enjoy now will be surpassed when their bodies are restored:

But if someone asks what need there is for the spirits of the dead to receive their bodies in the resurrection if that highest beatitude can be offered to them without the body, indeed this complaint is more difficult than can be perfectly completed in this work... since this body is no longer animal, but through the future change will have received a spiritual equality with the Angels, will have the perfect manner of its nature, obedient and commanding, vivified and vivifying, with such unspeakable ease that what was a burden will be its glory.⁴⁴

41. *ep.*, 164.3.8 “*Unde illis iustis qui in sinu Abrahae erant, cum ille in inferna descenderet, nondum quid contulisset inveni, a quibus eum secundum beatificam praesentiam suae divinitatis numquam video recessisse: sicut etiam eodem ipso die quo mortuus est, promisit latroni quod cum illo in paradiso fuisset futurus, quando ad solvendos inferni dolores fuerat descensus.*”

42. St. Thomas Aquinas argues that Christ brought them glory, that they were *beati in spe*, but not yet *perfecte beati in re* (*Summa Theologiae* IIIa, 52.4 ad 1).

43. *civ. Dei*, 20.15. “*Si enim non absurde credi videtur antiquos etiam sanctos, qui venturi Christi tenuerunt fidem, locis quidem a tormentis impiorum remotissimis, sed apud inferos fuisse, donec eos inde Christi sanguis et ad ea loca descensus erueret, profecto deinceps boni fideles effuso illo pretio iam redempti prorsus inferos nesciunt, donec etiam receptis corporibus bona recipiant, quae merentur.*”

44. *De Genesi ad Litteram*, 12.35.68. “*Sed si quem movet, quid opus sit spiritibus defunctorum corpora sua in resurrectione recipere, si potest eis etiam sine corporibus summa illa beatitudo*

Conclusion

Having determined that Augustine identified the Church with the city of God, a visible society with an internal supernatural and eschatological principle of existence, it is safe to say that the description of the Church as an earthly society endowed with heavenly riches as outlined in *Lumen Gentium* 8 is thoroughly Augustinian. Further, the Augustinian emphasis on the Church in pilgrimage to her eschatological fulfillment made evident in the temporal progress of the city of God from the beginning of world, to its gradual revelation among the Jews, its definitive inauguration by Christ and continual journey to the end of time is well represented in the final chapters of *Lumen Gentium*. Chapter seven emphasizes the end for which the Church exists, namely eternal beatitude in union with her risen Lord. The Church's present union with the saints in glory and her solicitude for those in purgatory awaiting glorification is reaffirmed, and the reality of judgment and the possibility of final damnation is warned. In all of this, the Church's orientation is always towards Christ. And it is in light of Christ's centrality and finality that the final chapter discusses the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the life of the Church. By making Mary the epilogue to the document on the Church, the council fathers wished to emphasize that the Church is a living reality, born out of God's desire to save all men. Mary, presented as the symbol and anticipation of the Church, shows that the Church has concrete reality not just as a social, hierarchic and juridical institution, but that it is a living and growing organism that responds to God's call in obedience. In Mary, the call to "be Church" is most fully realized, and so she is the model of all Christians. Even this emphasis on the Marian dimension of the Church has roots in St. Augustine's teaching.⁴⁵ Although the ecclesiology presented in *Lumen Gentium* offers a faithful interpretation of St. Augustine's thought on the social and

praeberi; difficilior quidem quaestio est, quam ut perfecte possit hoc sermone finiri... cum hoc corpus iam non animale, sed per futuram commutationem spiritale receperit Angelis adequata, perfectum habebit naturae suae modum, obediens et imperans, vivificata et vivificans, tam ineffabili facilitate, ut sit ei gloriae quod sarcinae fuit."

45. *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Mary, Mother of God".

spiritual dimensions of the Church, there now arises the question of the Church's identity: among the many existing Christian communities in existence, which ones can claim to be this Church of Christ? The next chapter will examine the controversial phrase *subsistit in* in order to determine a) whether it constitutes a change in official Church doctrine, and b) whether it can be reconciled to St. Augustine's ecclesiology.

CHAPTER 2 THE INTERPRETATION OF *SUBSISTIT IN* AND AUGUSTINIAN ECUMENISM

Introduction

In the December 14, 2005 edition of the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, there appeared an article by Karl Becker, S.J., on the meaning of the expression “*subsistit in*” in *Lumen Gentium* 8.¹ In that article, Becker presented evidence taken from the *Acta Synodalia* and other records of the theological sub-commission’s meetings to show that the already much debated phrase *subsistit in* was used to identify the Church of Christ with the Catholic Church exclusively, without denying the presence of “certain elements of sanctification” in communities that are not in communion with the Catholic Church. Becker’s fellow Jesuit, Francis A. Sullivan, regarded that article as a threat to ecumenical dialogue, and so he argued against it in the June 2006 issue of *Theological Studies*. That *Lumen Gentium* refers to what would be traditionally termed heretics and schismatics as “Churches and ecclesial communities” is, according to Sullivan, a novelty because it implies that the Church of Christ is a reality that exceeds the limits of the Catholic Church, and can also be said to subsist in the other Churches and ecclesial communities to some degree. The present chapter is concerned first of all to establish the proper interpretation of *Lumen Gentium*, and then to consider the Augustinian features of its ecclesiology in order to establish whether that ecclesiology stands in continuity with Augustine’s thought on the subject. This study will be divided into three sections: the first will treat Sullivan’s response to Becker’s analysis of the text and history of *Lumen Gentium* 8;

1. “This Church...subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the successor of Peter and the bishops in his communion, although outside her framework many elements of sanctification and truth are found which, as gifts proper to the Church of Christ, impel to catholic unity.”

the second will examine the Second Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism and subsequent magisterial interpretation of *Lumen Gentium* 8; the third will bring Augustinian ecclesiology to bear on the argument.

Part I

Sullivan identifies three major conclusions in Becker's article concerning the history of the phrase *subsistit in*. First, that in the 1963 session of the council, before the change from *est* to *subsistit in* which occurred in the 3rd and final draft of *Lumen Gentium*, there was no prompting from the bishops to change the wording of the sentence in question. Second, that when the change from *est* to *subsistit in* was suggested by Fr. Sebastian Tromp, S.J. during the November 26, 1963 meeting of the Theological Commission, there could be no mistake about its intended meaning; "We can say then: it subsists in the Catholic Church, and this is exclusive insofar as it is said: elsewhere there are only elements. It is explained in the text."² The fact that Tromp suggested the change is in itself significant, since he "was placed second only to Cardinal Ottaviani (Prefect of the Holy Office) as a champion of conservatism."³ Third, that on the hypothesis that the change from *est* to *subsistit in* was made so that the ecclesial elements outside the Church would not be overlooked, the modification cannot be considered a doctrinal change, but merely a terminological clarification.⁴

In response to the first conclusion, Sullivan argues that

it would not have been without a basis in the conciliar discussion if someone in the sub-commission appointed to revise the 1963 draft had raised the question whether, since the

2. Karl Becker, "An Examination of *Subsistit In*: A Profound Theological Perspective," *L'Osservatore Romano* 50 (14 December 2005): 12.

3. Ralph Wiltgen, *The Rhine Flows Into the Tiber* (New York: Hawthorne Books, Inc., 1967), 46.

4. These three conclusions are identified in Francis A. Sullivan, "Quaestio Disputata: A Response to Karl Becker, S.J., on the Meaning of *Subsistit In*," *Theological Studies* 67 (2006): 397, 399 & 401, respectively.

council recognizes those elements as “proper to the Church,” it also ought to recognize the ecclesial nature of the communities in which they are found, and in that case, whether it should continue to identify the Church of Christ with the Catholic Church.⁵

In support of this argument, he notes the concern of Abbot Christopher Butler, the Superior General of the English Benedictines, and other bishops at the council, that the council treat of the character of separated Christian communities. Butler suggested this change so that “this truth can serve for the refining of the notion of the Church, since the Church extends beyond its limits not only in the souls of individuals but also socially in Christian communities.”⁶ Also, as Sullivan notes, Cardinal Silva Henriquez of Chile,

proposed omitting the whole sentence that includes “Ecclesia Christi est Ecclesia Catholica,” saying: “The identification of the pilgrim Church with the Roman Catholic Church, described only in a sociological way, does not seem correct. At least it should be said that all this is closely connected with the problem regarding members, which is still disputed.”⁷

Sullivan’s response is further strengthened by the puzzling comment of Monsignor Gerard Philips to the Theological Commission on November 26, 1963 referring to the proposed change of the verb from *est* to *adest in*:

Then also it says with a few words and citations having been brought in: In this world the Church constituted and ordered as a society ‘adest in’ the Catholic Church, where it used to have ‘est’ the Catholic Church. But why is this change proposed? Because it was proposed in the council meeting and also because ... it can be said better afterwards that ‘elements’ exist (*adsunt*) elsewhere.⁸

Becker, however, sees this comment by Philips as unjustified and puzzling since the particular verb *adest* was not in fact proposed by any of the bishops in the council.⁹ It is possible that Butler’s suggestion prompted this proposed modification, but Sullivan omits to mention that

5. Sullivan, “A Response,” 399.

6. *Ibid.*, 398.

7. *Ibid.*

8. Becker, “An Examination,” 12 (Becker gives the Latin, which I have translated): *Deinde paucis etiam verbis et citationibus adductis dicitur: In hoc mundo societas constituta et ordinata Ecclesia ‘adest in’ Ecclesia catholica, ubi ponebatur ‘est’ Ecclesia Catholica. Curnam autem proponitur haec mutatio? Quia in Aula proposita est et etiam, quia... melius potest dici postea quod adsunt alibi elementa.*

9. Sullivan mentions that the bishops of the Netherlands proposed that the phrase be changed to “invenitur in.” cf. Sullivan, “A Response,” 398.

Butler's concern was answered more directly by the treatment of the relationship of other Christians to the Catholic Church in the chapter on the People of God in the third draft. Gerard Philips, commenting on the second draft of *Lumen Gentium*, puts Abbot Butler's suggestion in context:

After these general statements, Chapter I spoke of the necessity of the Church for salvation and then described the various categories of men who belong to the Church or are in union with it in various ways. The text avoided the term "member", which is difficult to apply in practice and is the subject of controversy. Cardinal Bea took great pains to recommend that the concepts used should be highly flexible. This was the proper occasion for laying the theological basis of ecumenism. Several speakers wished for a statement on the relationship of the Church not just to individual non-Catholic Christians, but also to their communities (Bishop Baudoux, Abbot Butler), in view above all of the undeniable validity of baptism.¹⁰

Although the above citations support the assertion that there was some basis in the conciliar discussions for questioning the statement "the Church of Christ is the Catholic Church," though they do not support the specific change that actually occurred, the question is whether they support Sullivan's interpretation of *subsistit in*. Butler's suggestion certainly provides a basis for it, but the others less clearly so. Perhaps Henriquez simply thought it an unnecessary phrase, the context making it obvious that the Catholic Church was what was being referred to. After all, the draft spoke of the Church of Christ which was governed by the successor of Peter and the bishops in communion with him, which everyone understands as a mark of the Catholic Church. Also, the identification of the Church of Christ with the Catholic Church "described only in a sociological way" was identified by Pope Pius XII as a product of "popular naturalism" that would undermine belief in the Church's supernatural character.¹¹ If guarding against such a

10. Herbert Vorgrimler, editor, *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 1 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), 112

11. Pius XII, "Mystici Corporis," *The Holy See*, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi_en.html, 9. "For while there still survives a false *rationalism*, which ridicules anything that transcends and defies the power of human genius, and which is accompanied by a cognate error, the so-called *popular naturalism*, which sees and wills to see in the Church nothing but a juridical and social union, there is on the other hand a false *mysticism* creeping in, which, in its attempt to eliminate the immovable frontier that separates creatures from their Creator, falsifies the Sacred Scriptures."

popular naturalism was what motivated Henriquez in offering this proposal, this would rather reinforce Becker's position. If, on the other hand, Henriquez wanted to define the Church solely in spiritual terms, leaving out any kind of statement of what constitutes the social reality of the Church, such a position would contradict the constant teaching of the Church that the Church of Christ is constituted in this world as a social hierarchy, which is expressed explicitly in *Lumen Gentium* 8.

However, to show that there was some basis in the conciliar discussion for questioning the terminology is not the same as showing that the council fathers did not consider the unique Church of Christ to be identified with the Catholic Church. Besides, Becker's point is that there was no basis in the conciliar discussions for the specific change from "*est*" to "*adest in*," and that the decision to propose this change occurred in the meeting of the sub-commission. Consequently, Sullivan is correct to say that there was some basis in the conciliar discussion to question the claim that the Church of Christ is the Catholic Church, but that does not invalidate Becker's findings on this point—for there was no explicit discussion of this point.

To Becker's second conclusion, concerning Tromp's intended meaning of the phrase *subsistit in* ("this is exclusive"), Sullivan replies that the Theological Commission did not in fact agree with Tromp's intended usage, saying:

If one considers the fact that the draft in which *est* had been changed to *subsistit in* was the first one that spoke of "Churches" and "ecclesiastical communities" that are found outside the Catholic Church, one can hardly escape the conclusion that the doctrinal commission did not agree with Tromp, who had forcefully insisted that *subsistit in* must be understood to be *exclusivum*, with the consequence that outside the Catholic Church there could be nothing but elements.¹²

Even if we leave aside the scandalous duplicity implicitly attributed here to the members of the Theological Commission (as though they recognized an ambiguity that Tromp missed and exploited it for their own purposes), this assertion does not take into account that Tromp suggested *subsistit in* after a member of the commission asked that the term *est* be restored.¹³

12. Sullivan, "A Response," 400.

13. Becker, "An Examination," fn. 32.

Becker's point is that the decision to change *adest in* to *subsistit in* was made because *adest in* was considered less precise. Tromp gave a specific definition to which those who wished to allow a broader understanding would likely have objected. Even if *subsistit in* could be interpreted either way, those who took the position that what should be meant was inclusive, as Sullivan argues, would presumably have sought clearer language to express it.

Sullivan points out that Becker's use of Mons. Philips's gloss on this phrase in his other commentary on *Lumen Gentium* is not decisive: "But to say that it is in the Catholic Church that the Church of Christ is found in all its fullness and strength does not imply that the Church of Christ is found exclusively in the Catholic Church, or that outside there are only elements."¹⁴ But Philips, having written that this phrase, "was going to make floods of ink flow" presumably desired to give commentary that would help clarify its meaning. It is then that Philips writes "*c'est là que nous trouvons l'Église du Christ dans toute sa plénitude et toute sa force.*"¹⁵ So in seeking to give clarity to the text, Philips simply identifies the Church of Christ with the Catholic Church, saying nothing of her presence elsewhere. Consequently, one could argue the opposite position from the same text. The burden of proof was on Sullivan to show that Philips actually thought that the Church of Christ is present in other Christian communities, but the text does not support that view.

Sullivan's crucial argument against Becker's third conclusion is the notion that calling non-Catholic Christian communities "Churches and Ecclesial Communities," somehow undermines the identification of the Catholic Church with the Church of Christ. Becker argues that the change presupposed the recognition of non-Catholic "Churches and Ecclesial Communities":

It is possible that some saw in the term *est* the possibility of denying or of not giving sufficient attention to ecclesial elements in other Christian communities. But if this

14. Sullivan, "A Response," 401.

15. Gerard Philips, *L'Église et Son Mystère au IIe Concile Du Vatican: Histoire, Text, et Commentaire de la Constitution "Lumen Gentium"*, vol. 1 (Paris: Desclee, 1967), 119, quoted in Sullivan, "A Response," 401

hypothesis is granted, then the justification for the change would be terminological and not doctrinal.¹⁶

Sullivan, on the other hand, argues that *subsistit in* was introduced to justify the terms “Churches and ecclesiastical communities”: “I conclude that the doctrinal commission that approved this change must have understood it to mean no longer claiming an exclusive identity between the Church of Christ and the Catholic Church.”¹⁷

Although Sullivan has not proven that the Theological Commission that approved the change understood it in that way, his point about the terms “Churches and ecclesiastical communities,” warrants close attention. Sullivan, in claiming support for his position, cites an interchange between a certain bishop who objected to calling separated communities “Churches and ecclesiastical communities,” and the Secretary of the council who responded:

The use of the twofold expression, ‘Churches and ecclesial (or separated) communities’ has been approved by the Council and is altogether legitimate. Certainly there is one universal Church, but there are many local or particular Churches. In the catholic Tradition it is customary to call the separated Eastern Communities Churches—local or particular, to be sure—and in the proper sense. It is not the business of the Council to determine which among the other communities should be called Churches in the theological sense.¹⁸

But the Secretariat’s appeal to the “catholic Tradition” as justifying the use of the term “Church” rather supports Becker’s contention that the change to *subsistit in* presupposed the use of the terms “Churches and ecclesial communities”.

Nevertheless, the question of why the catholic Tradition uses the term Churches to refer to the Eastern Orthodox communities remains. In *Lumen Gentium* 23 we see that the Eucharistic community, gathered around its bishop, who is its “principle and foundation of unity,” constitutes a particular Church, whereas a group of Churches that “enjoy their own discipline, their own liturgical usage, and their own theological and spiritual heritage” are referred to as a local Church. It is easy to see how the Churches that have retained the sacrament of Holy Orders and a continuous Episcopacy can be described in these terms even though they do not share

16. Becker, “An Examination,” 13.

17. Sullivan, “A Response,” 402.

18. *Acta synodalia sacrosancti concilii Vaticani secundi*, (Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1970-78) 3, part 7, 35, quoted in Sullivan, “A Response,” 405.

communion with the Bishop of Rome. Although referring to other “Churches and ecclesial communities” does not seem like a doctrinal innovation from the above consideration, the terminology still poses an important question about how the Church of Christ can be said to be present in them. In order to understand this presence of the Church of Christ outside the *Catholica*, we shall next examine the Decree on Ecumenism and the post-conciliar magisterial teaching.

Part II

As was mentioned earlier, we shall take as our starting point Sullivan’s arguments against Becker’s interpretation of *Unitatis Redintegratio* and against some of the post-conciliar magisterial commentary on *Lumen Gentium* 8. First, Becker asserts that his own interpretation of *Lumen Gentium* 8 is vindicated by the language used in *Unitatis Redintegratio*. Sullivan counters this by contrasting the unequivocal statements of the identity of the Catholic Church with the Church of Christ in *Unitatis Redintegratio* with the positive statements about the other churches and ecclesial communities. What is meant by the term “ecclesial” is important in this connection. Second, Sullivan’s claim that the term “Church of God” in *Unitatis Redintegratio* 15 refers to the church as it existed prior to the great schism requires examination. Third, Sullivan’s objections to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s interpretations of the phrase *subsistit in* shall be discussed.

First, although the Catholic Church considers herself the “one true Church,” she also asserts that salvation can be found outside her borders, seemingly giving the lie to the statement that “the Church of Christ is found exclusively in the Catholic Church”:

But...the decree also says: “Our separated brothers and sisters also celebrate many sacred actions of the Christian religion. These most certainly can truly engender a life of grace in ways that vary according to the condition of each church or community, and must be held capable of giving access to that communion in which is salvation.” Since the Catholic Church is not the only church in which salvation can be found, it follows that to recognize the Catholic Church as the “one true Church” is not the same as to claim that the Church of Christ is found exclusively in the Catholic Church.¹⁹

19. Sullivan, “A Response,” 403.

It should be pointed out that this passage of *Unitatis Redintegratio* 3 asserts that the celebration of the “sacred actions” gives members of the Churches and ecclesial communities access to the community of salvation by the fact that those sacred actions belong by right to the Catholic Church. That is, the sacraments, wherever they are found, owe their efficacy to the unity of the Catholic Church. Sacraments given in the other Churches and ecclesial communities can sanctify those who receive them only because they were entrusted to the Catholic Church by Christ, are ministered outside the Catholic Church by Christ himself, and derive their efficacy from the unity of charity. The implication is that those who are sanctified in the other Churches and ecclesial communities are sanctified in virtue of incorporation into the Body of Christ, i.e. the Catholic Church, and actual, albeit invisible, adherence to that Body. So what *Unitatis Redintegratio* 3 says is not that the Churches and ecclesiastical communities are particular incarnations of the Church of Christ, but rather that they have value in that they retain certain elements of sanctification that properly belong to the Catholic Church. In this connection, it is important to note that the ecclesiality of the separated communities derives from their possession of valid sacraments, without which they would lose their ecclesial character. That is, the Church of Christ is present in them by means of an operation of grace in virtue of what they have retained from the Catholic Church. Their structure becomes the framework for the continuation of the traditions retained and so is analogous to the Church itself. It would be correct to say that the Church of Christ acts somehow in the non-Catholic Churches and ecclesial communities through their sacramental worship which has been preserved in their ecclesial structures and which establishes a connection, an approach to unity with the Church, which unity is the *sine qua non* of salvation. Consequently, the notion that salvation can be found outside the visible borders of the Catholic Church presupposes its exclusive identity with the Church of Christ.

Second, footnote 42 in Becker’s article concerns the use made of the term “Church of God” in *Unitatis Redintegratio* 15. Becker says that some have erroneously seen in the use of this term some justification for positing a Church that is greater than both the Church of Christ and the Catholic Church. Sullivan argues that it simply refers to the Church as it existed before

the great schism of 1054 and concludes therefore that the Church of God/Church of Christ was understood by the Council Fathers to extend beyond the borders of the *Catholica*, and that the identification of the Church of God with the Catholic Church in *Unitatis Redintegratio* 3 cannot be considered exclusive. Although it is correct to equate Church of God and Church of Christ, to speak of them as being fully present in the *Catholica* before the Eastern Schism and greater than the *Catholica* after the same does not do justice to the schisms and dissensions in the Church prior to 1054. The emphasis in the first sentence in *Unitatis Redintegratio* 3 is on the fact that such dissensions have been present right from the beginning of the Church's existence, but that fact does not diminish the unity of the Church as stated in *Unitatis Redintegratio* 4: "...they are gathered into the unity of the one and only Church which Christ granted to the Church from the beginning, and which we believe to subsist in the catholic Church as something that cannot be lost and we hope that it will grow daily until the consummation of the age."

Third, and most importantly, Sullivan avers that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has given contradictory interpretations of the phrase *subsistit in*. The three clearest statements of the CDF are the notice to Leonardo Boff concerning the erroneous ecclesiology contained in his book *Church: Charism and Power*(1985), the Declaration *Dominus Iesus*(2000), and the 2007 *Responses to Some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine on the Church* (Hereafter *Responsa*). This last point hinges on the proper meaning of the Latin verb *subsistit*: do we interpret it as meaning "to subsist" in the ontological sense of the scholastics, or simply as "to remain, be perpetuated in," in the sense of Classical Latin? Becker's position is clear, and Sullivan is in full agreement with him:

There are three possible interpretations of the phrase *subsistit in*: (1) "to be realized in"; (2) "to subsist" in the ontological sense of the scholastics; (3) "to remain, to be perpetuated in". "To be realized in": nobody sees the Church of Christ as a purely idealistic or spiritual reality. But if it is conceived as a complex reality, both spiritual and visible, entrusted to the leadership of the apostles under Peter and his Successors, then the question arises as to what difference there is between *est* and *subsistit in*. "To subsist" in a Scholastic sense: The scholastics knew *subsistere*, but not *subsistere in*. And *subsistere* meant for them *existere in se, non in alio*. Does it mean to say that the Church of Christ exists in itself in the Catholic Church? "To remain, to be perpetuated in": S. Tromp, as an excellent Latinist, knew well that in classical Latin and even more in Medieval Latin this was the real meaning of the word. And this sense corresponds well to the doctrine of

the Council, according to which all the means of salvation instituted by Christ are found for ever in the Catholic Church.²⁰

Where the two thinkers diverge is in their respective readings of the CDF's clarifications on this issue. Whereas Becker sees no problem with those clarifications, Sullivan considers them to offer contradictory interpretations. The first relevant clarification is from the notice to Leonardo Boff:

But the council had chosen the word *subsistit*—subsists—exactly in order to make clear that **one sole "subsistence" of the true church exists**, whereas outside her visible structure only *elementa ecclesiae*—elements of church—exist; these—being elements of the same church—tend and conduct toward the Catholic Church (*Lumen Gentium*, 8). The decree on ecumenism expresses the same doctrine (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, 3-4), and it was restated precisely in the declaration *Mysterium Ecclesiae* (No. 1, AAS LXV (1973), pp. 396-398).²¹

Sullivan contends that the interpretation given in *Dominus Iesus* contradicts that statement when it says:

With the expression *subsistit in*, the Second Vatican Council sought to harmonize two doctrinal statements: on the one hand, that the Church of Christ, despite the divisions which exist among Christians, continues **to exist fully** only in the Catholic Church, and on the other hand, that “outside of her structure, many elements can be found of sanctification and truth”, that is, in those Churches and ecclesial communities which are not yet in full communion with the Catholic Church...The Churches which, while not existing in perfect communion with the Catholic Church, remain united to her by means of the closest bonds, that is, by apostolic succession and a valid Eucharist, are true particular Churches. Therefore, the Church of Christ is **present and operative** also in these Churches, even though they lack full communion with the Catholic Church, since they do not accept the Catholic doctrine of the Primacy, which, according to the will of God, the Bishop of Rome objectively has and exercises over the entire Church.²²

In the notice to Boff, the crucial proposition is that “one sole subsistence of the Church exists,” whereas in *Dominus Iesus*, “the Church of Christ...continues to exist fully only in the Catholic Church,” is the definitive formula. The former seems to embrace the scholastic meaning of the verb *subsistit*, while the latter makes use of the classical meaning. In *Responsa*

20. Becker, “An Examination,” 13; *Ibid.*, 396.

21. Joseph Ratzinger, “Notification on the Book ‘Church: Charism and Power. Essay on Militant Ecclesiology’ by Father Leonardo Boff, O.F.M.,” AAS 77 (1985): 758–59. English text from <http://www.ewtn.com/library/curia/cdfboff.htm>. (Emphasis mine)

22. Joseph Ratzinger, “*Dominus Iesus*,” *The Holy See*, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000806_dominus-iesus_en.html, paragraphs 16–17. (Emphasis mine)

the CDF makes use of both meanings in the same sentence: “In number 8 of the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium* ‘subsistence’ means this perduring, historical continuity and the permanence of all the elements instituted by Christ in the Catholic Church, in which the Church of Christ is concretely found on this earth.” Sullivan sees this as a contradiction,²³ but could we not consider that since the scholastic meaning presupposes the classical meaning, the former could also be implicit in the latter? For something to endure throughout time and retain its identity in the process, it would need to exist *in se*. Further, to render the phrase, “This Church of Christ...subsists *as* the Catholic Church,” would not be an absurd translation and could preserve both the classical and scholastic meanings of the phrase while drawing out the exclusive meaning intended by Tromp.

The proposition in *Dominus Iesus*, and found also in *Ut Unum Sint* 11, that “the Church of Christ is present and operative also in these Churches,” is also crucially important, as it forms the basis for a powerful objection:

...this papal statement affirming the effective presence of the Church of Christ in other Christian communities is obviously hard to reconcile with his (Becker’s) thesis that the Church of Christ is totally identified with the Catholic Church....It does not seem possible to recognize the Orthodox and other separated Eastern Churches as ‘true particular churches,’ in which ‘the Church of Christ is present and operative,’ and still insist that outside the visible structure of the Catholic Church ‘only *elementa ecclesiae* exist.’²⁴

We have already seen that referring to the Eastern Orthodox as true particular Churches on the basis of their possession of a valid Eucharist and apostolic succession is traditional and so cannot be considered a doctrinal novelty. More important is the implicit equation of the phrase *subsistit in* with “present and operative in.” But the difference between these two modes of the Church’s presence is made clear by the context of *Lumen Gentium* 8 which clearly states that the Church of Christ is a visible entity united to Christ by drawing upon an analogy to the Incarnation. When the Council refers to the Church of Christ, it is not isolating the Church

23. Francis A. Sullivan, “Quaestio Disputata: The Meaning of Subsistit in as Explained by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith,” *Theological Studies* 69 (2008): 121 “By conflating the two previous explanations that were based on two different translations of *subsistit*, the CDF’s recent document seems not to have clarified the issue.”

24. Sullivan, “A Response,” 406, 408.

considered as a spiritual reality from the Church considered as a social hierarchy. In other words, as both Sullivan and Becker explicitly acknowledge, it would be wrong to associate the term “Church of Christ” exclusively with the spiritual community and the term “Catholic Church” exclusively with the social institution. The term Church of Christ refers both to the spiritual community and the social institution as a complex reality. This spiritual/institutional reality is then professed to be “one, holy, catholic and apostolic,” and is said to have been entrusted to Peter and the apostles by Christ. This Church of Christ, which, as described, is a concrete, historical reality, is then said to subsist in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successors of Peter and the bishops in communion with him. Both “Church of Christ” and “Catholic Church” are defined as concrete societies in a relationship of historical continuity, making the terms co-extensive. The chiasmic structure of the paragraph itself suggests the identity of the terms. That the terms “Church of Christ” and “Catholic Church” are co-extensive notions is also suggested by the use of the compounded form of both terms in *Unitatis Redintegratio* 3: “For it is through *the Catholic Church of Christ* alone...that the fullness of the means of salvation are to be found”.

Since the notion of the Church of Christ and that of the Catholic Church are co-extensive notions, that which remains of Catholic belief and practice in other Christian communities is an operation of that same Church of Christ. The sense in which it can be said that the Church of Christ is present and operative in them is proposed by Becker in the conclusion to his article:

A third response would be to justify the term "ecclesial" on account of a presence and an action of the Church of Christ. Now, in a proper sense this is not acceptable because the Church of Christ, that is, the Catholic Church, in its integrity is not present and operative in the Christian communities... However, this could be possible in an analogous sense... one could say that the Church of Christ is operative in the Christian communities because of Christ, in so far as he is the Head (not the body) of the Church, through his Spirit, its soul (and not its body), is operative in these communities. Christ and the Spirit work in them, reinforcing the elements that impel towards the unity of Christians in the one Church.²⁵

25. Becker, “An Examination,” 14.

While both Becker and Sullivan agree on how *subsistit in* should be translated, Sullivan suggests that by not explicitly condemning the notion that the Church of Christ subsists in the other Churches and ecclesial Communities, *Lumen Gentium* makes that a possible interpretation. Such a suggestion in effect contradicts his agreement with Becker over the proper translation of *subsistit in* once it is understood that the Church of Christ “is and remains for ever”²⁶ the Catholic Church as an incarnational reality, and consequently that the identification of the Church of Christ with the Catholic Church excludes the possibility of a similar identification with any other institution.

In sum then, the Church of Christ, as described in *Lumen Gentium* 8, is a particular subsistent reality, which is perpetuated in the Catholic Church. The term “Catholic Church” is defined by the term “Church of Christ”; nowhere in the document do we find the term Catholic Church in isolation from the Church of Christ, and all non-Catholic Churches and ecclesial communities are defined by what they lack of Catholic unity, practice and/or doctrine.

Part III

Although the previous sections show that the phrase *subsistit in* did not introduce a doctrinal development, one significant argument for considering it to have done so remains to be examined. That Vatican II expounded the relationship of the other “Churches and ecclesial communities” to the Catholic Church on the basis of tradition, and not on the basis of the zeitgeist, needs to be firmly established in order to complete the argument. St. Augustine’s prominence in the footnotes of *Lumen Gentium* suggests a fruitful starting point for this discussion. *De baptismo contra Donatistas* will be our privileged text since it features in *Lumen Gentium*’s explanation of what is required to belong to the Church.

De baptismo, written c. 400 AD, outlines the errors of the ecclesiology and sacramental theology employed by the Donatists in defence of their schism. It focuses on the Donatists’ use of the writings of St. Cyprian of Carthage who urged his brother bishops to follow a policy of

26. Ibid.

rebaptism for those coming to the Catholic Church from heresy or schism. St. Cyprian had insisted that only within the unity of the unique Church of Christ could the sacraments be validly administered. The Donatists claimed to be the one true Church of Christ, the Catholic Church having been contaminated by communion with *traditores* (those who handed over the books of scripture to be burned during the Decian persecution), and therefore insisted that all sacraments administered outside of their community were invalid. Augustine's polemic has two goals: to show the Donatists that Cyprian's refusal to separate himself from communion with evil bishops proves that they are indeed in schism and are in no wise the true Church, and that in spite of Cyprian's great holiness and wisdom, he was wrong on the question of rebaptism. In the course of this argument, Augustine propounds an ecclesiology with particular emphasis on the importance of Catholic unity. He argues that St. Cyprian exemplified this necessary unity since, although he taught something contrary to custom and to what was later defined as doctrine, he maintained communion with the Catholic Church spread throughout the world and forbade no one from holding an opinion that differed from his. The Donatists failed to imitate Cyprian on both counts, showing their appeal to his teaching to have been a vain attempt to rationalize their schism.

The Donatists based their schism on the notion that the Church ceased to exist among those who were in communion with *traditores*.²⁷ Since the validity of the sacraments depended on the minister's ecclesial affiliation,²⁸ only that Church that had never communicated with *traditores* could administer the sacraments. Maureen Tilley, the most recently published researcher of the Donatist controversy, accuses Augustine of misrepresenting the Donatist position as saying that the validity of the sacrament depended upon the worthiness of the minister in order to "inflame old antipathies".²⁹ The sin of *traditio*, according to the Donatists, put the *traditor* and those in communion with him outside the Church, and only by rebaptism

27. For a brief account of the origin and progress of the schism, see appendix 2.

28. Maureen Tilley, *The Bible in Christian North Africa: The Donatist World* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 102.

29. *Ibid.*, 101.

could they be restored to the unity of the Church. That *traditio* is a grave sin is not contested by Augustine, but it is not, on the testimony of scripture, worse than schism or even idolatry.³⁰ If *traditio* invalidates the sacraments, *a fortiori* schism or apostasy does so as well. Furthermore, since the Donatists did not think it necessary to re-baptize the schismatic Maximianists who returned to their communion, they in fact recognized sacraments administered while in schism. Augustine's main point is that though their emphasis on ecclesial affiliation is right, their notion of that affiliation is, despite their denials, based on the purported holiness of the minister, based in turn solely on innocence of *traditio*. He labours the point in the hope that they would recognize the inherent contradiction of their position and not, as Tilley says, to inflame old antipathies. And although Augustine agrees with the Donatists that ecclesial affiliation is crucial for salvation, he disagrees with their position that outside the proper ecclesial affiliation the sacraments are invalid. Those who remain in the Church by dissimulation, that is, fake Christians, are not rebaptized or re-ordained when they repent. If those who have left the Church in their hearts do not thereby lose the sacrament of baptism nor the power to give it, why would someone who has left the Church in point of fact?³¹ Augustine's defense of the holiness of the sacraments wherever they may be found and from whomever they be received serves as the basis for Vatican II's approach to ecumenism.

The second chapter of *Lumen Gentium* propounds the concept of the Church as the People of God. The influence of St. Augustine's teaching on the two cities is evident from the very first line of the chapter: "Indeed, in every time and in every race everyone who fears Him and works justice has been received by God. Nevertheless it has pleased God to sanctify and save men not one by one, as though mutually shut off from a close association, but to constitute them in a people who might know Him in truth and holily render Him service."³² The historical

30. *de baptismo contra Donatistas*, 2.6.9.

31. *bapt.*, 1.1.2

32. *Lumen Gentium*, 9. "In omni quidem tempore et in omni gente Deo acceptus est quicumque timet Eum et operatur iustitiam (cf. Act 10,35). Placuit tamen Deo homines non singulatim, quavis mutua connexione seclusa, sanctificare et salvare, sed eos in populum constituere, qui in

progress of this People of God is outlined and shown to find its fulfillment in Christ, who “indeed had purchased it with his own blood, filled it with his Spirit and built it up with means suitable to its visible and social union.”³³ The Church’s social union is described in terms of her sacramental and hierarchic structure and the Holy Spirit is identified as the principle of her unity. The catholicity of the Church is expressed by her ubiquitous presence throughout the world and the unity shown in the diversity of the gifts of her members. “Therefore all men are called to this catholic unity which prefigures and promotes universal peace, and they, whether faithful catholics, or others who believe in Christ, or finally all men universally called by God’s grace to salvation, belong, or are ordered to it in various ways.”³⁴

In attending to the Catholic faithful, the document stresses the necessity of the Church for salvation, the need to adhere to her visible structure, the gratuity of their “exalted position” and the need to persevere in charity in order to attain salvation. Catechumens also belong to this category by their explicit intention to be incorporated into the Church.³⁵ This section of *Lumen Gentium* refers explicitly to *de baptismo* in its elucidation of the restrictive and exclusive sense of membership in the Church. “Nevertheless, he is not saved who, not persevering in charity although incorporated in the Church, remains in the bosom of the Church ‘in body’ but not ‘in heart’.”³⁶ It could be argued that the absence of any reference to Augustine in those sections that deal with the possibility of salvation for those ostensibly outside the Church shows that the Council wished to distance itself from Augustine’s restrictive understanding of membership in the Body of Christ. However, all statements concerning the salvation of those outside the

veritate Ipsum agnosceret Ipsique sancte serviret.”

33. Ibid., 9. “*quippe quam Ipse sanguine suo acquisivit (cf. Act 20,28), suo Spiritu replevit, aptisque mediis unionis visibilis et socialis instruxit.*”

34. Ibid., 13. “*Ad hanc igitur catholicam Populi Dei unitatem, quae pacem universalem praesignat et promovet, omnes vocantur homines, ad eamque variis modis pertinent vel ordinantur sive fideles catholici, sive alii credentes in Christo, sive denique omnes universaliter homines, gratia Dei ad salutem vocati.*”

35. Ibid., 14.

36. Ibid., 14. “*Non salvatur tamen, licet Ecclesiae incorporetur, qui in caritate non perseverans, in Ecclesiae sinu "corpore" quidem, sed non "corde" remanet.*” Cf., *bapt.*, 5.28.39

Church must be evaluated in light of the clear and constant teaching on the necessity of the Church for salvation as Henri de Lubac said:

We should try to understand the traditional axiom formulated by Origen—“No one is saved outside the Church”—both in its magnificent breadth and in all its exacting rigorousness, as far as we are concerned. We must grasp the breadth because, as St. Augustine explained, “in the ineffable prescience of God, many who appear to be outside are within”; they are of the Church at least “by wish or desire”, while “many who seem to be within are without” and “the Lord knows His own” everywhere. But we must also grasp the rigorousness, for he who “cuts himself off from the Catholic communion” and “goes out the House” of salvation “makes himself responsible for his own death”.³⁷

Returning to the passage of *De baptismo* cited in *Lumen Gentium* 14, Augustine describes the Church in terms of Noah’s ark, outside of which there could be no salvation from the deluge, while noting that some who seem to be safe within its walls are, in the prescience of God, known to have been without. However, in the same passage of book five, Augustine argues that in that same prescience of God some who seemed to be outside the ark are more truly within: “It is certainly obvious that insofar as being inside and outside the Church is discussed, it ought to be considered in terms of the heart and not the body since all who are inside in heart are made safe in the unity of the ark by the same water by which all who are outside in heart, whether they be outside in body or not, nevertheless die as enemies of unity.”³⁸

With this passage from *De baptismo* in the background, *Lumen Gentium* formulates the relationship of the “Churches and ecclesial communities” with the Church of Christ. About these communities it says that “there is a certain true union [with us] in the Holy Spirit who, by means of his gifts and graces, certainly works even in them with his sanctifying power and has strengthened some of them to the shedding of their blood.”³⁹ But does this passage assert what

37. Henri de Lubac, *The Splendor of the Church*, 2nd ed., trans. Michael Mason (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 213.

38. *bapt.*, 5.28.39. “*Certe manifestum est, id quod dicitur, in Ecclesia intus et foris, in corde, non in corpore cogitandum; quandoquidem omnes qui corde sunt intus, in arcae unitate per eandem aquam salvi fiunt, per quam omnes qui corde sunt foris, sive etiam corpore foris sint, sive non sint, tamquam unitatis adversarii moriuntur.*”

39. *LG*, 15. “*imo vera quaedam in Spiritu Sancto coniunctio, quippe qui donis et gratiis etiam in illis sua virtute sanctificante operatur, et quosdam illorum usque ad sanguinis effusionem roboravit.*”

Augustine expressly denies elsewhere in *De baptismo*, that a heretic or a schismatic lacks charity by the very fact of his separation from the Church, and therefore his martyrdom is worthless: “This is most true: one killed outside the Church is exposed as not having had the charity about which the Apostle says, ‘And if I hand over my body that I may burn but have not charity, it profits me nothing.’”⁴⁰ However, the context of this passage shows that it does not assert an unqualified condemnation of those suffering martyrdom outside the Church. What has led up to this discussion of the worthlessness of martyrdom for those outside the Church is a comparison of the relative merits of a) a sinner inside the Church vs. a sinner outside the Church, b) an unwitting heretic vs. a witting heretic and c) a witting heretic in open schism vs. a witting heretic remaining in the Church by dissimulation. After demonstrating that even in the worst of these groups one can discover good things given by God (e.g. the Sacraments), he asserts that their lack of charity renders their martyrdom worthless. He then equates the spiritual state of those Christians outside the Church who lack the charity of unity with the state of those inside the Church who lack charity by malice or envy. His explicit point here is that the efficacy of martyrdom is dependent on charity, which is the basis of ecclesial communion. Augustine stresses that charity can exist outside the visible bonds of the *Catholica* when he says in book one:

But the spiritual, or those proceeding to this state with loving zeal, do not go outside, because even when they either by some perversity or compulsion of men seem to be cast out they prove there to what extent they remain inside, since they in no wise rise up against the Church but are rooted in the solid rock of unity by the most steadfast vigour of charity.⁴¹

40. *bapt.*, 4.17.25. “*Hoc verissimum est: extra Ecclesiam quippe occisus, caritatem non habuisse convincitur, de qua Apostolus dicit: Et si tradidero corpus meum ut ardeam, caritatem autem non habeam, nihil mihi prodest.*”

41. *Ibid.*, 1.17.26. “*Spiritales autem sive ad hoc ipsum pio studio proficientes, non eunt foras: quia et cum aliqua vel perversitate vel necessitate hominum videntur expelli, ibi magis probant, quam intus permaneant, cum adversus Ecclesiam nullatenus eriguntur, sed in solida unitatis petra fortissimo caritatis robore radicantur.*”

On the other hand, another passage from the first book of *De baptismo* seems to suggest that Augustine envisioned an unqualified condemnation of those who belong to the communities of the schismatics. He writes:

But those who are baptized there [i.e. among the Donatists] in ignorance, thinking it to be the Church of Christ, sin less in comparison to those [who are baptized there knowing it to be a sect]. Nevertheless, they are wounded by the sacrilege of schism and it is not the case that they are not wounded gravely just because others are wounded more gravely. For when he [Jesus] said to some: “It will be more tolerable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you,” it was not therefore asserted that the Sodomites will not be tormented, but that others will be more gravely tormented.⁴²

Although even unintentional sins undoubtedly wound the person who commits them, it hardly seems fair to say that a person of good will who thinks he is joining the Church of Christ should be so infelicitously compared to the wicked men of Sodom. However, what Augustine says earlier in the same book can help us to understand this judgment. He writes there that,

if perchance an extreme necessity may have brought force to bear on somebody whereby he could not find a catholic from whom to receive baptism and having kept catholic peace in his spirit received what he was intending to receive in the unity of the Catholic Church from someone placed outside catholic unity, we consider him nothing other than a catholic even if he has suddenly departed this life.⁴³

Since a person can intentionally seek baptism in a schismatic community with the intent to be joined to the Catholic Church and still be considered a Catholic in good standing, Augustine must have considered the ignorance of the person in his other example insufficient to render his act inculpable. We have to conclude that Augustine considered the person in that situation to have failed to find out what he could have and should have known. Because Augustine seems to presuppose, as Tarsicius Van Bavel said, “that since Pentecost everyone is able to know and to recognize the true church,”⁴⁴ a condemnation that appears as a tragic

42. Ibid., 1.5.6. “*Illi vero qui per ignorantiam ibi baptizantur, arbitantes ipsam esse Ecclesiam Christi, in istorum quidem comparatione minus peccant: sacrilegio tamen schismatis vulnerantur: non ideo non graviter, quod alii gravius.*”

43. Ibid., 1.2.3. “*Nam si quem forte coegerit extrema necessitas, ubi catholicum per quem accipiat non invenerit, et in animo pace catholica custodita per aliquem extra unitatem catholicam positum acceperit, quod erat in ipsa catholicae unitate accepturus; si statim etiam de hac vita migraverit, non eum nisi catholicum deputamus.*”

44. T. Johannes Van Bavel, “What Kind of Church Do You Want? The Breadth of Augustine’s Ecclesiology,” *Louvain Studies* 7, no. 7 (1979): 154.

misfortune is in fact a just punishment due to culpable neglect. This does not suggest that Augustine's ecclesiology was more restrictive than that presented in *Lumen Gentium* which says in agreement with Augustine that, "those men could not be saved who, not unaware that the Catholic Church was founded by God through Jesus Christ as necessary, have been unwilling either to enter into her or to persevere within her."⁴⁵ Rather, it shows that Augustine differed from the Fathers of Vatican II in prudential judgment about the possibility of inculpable ignorance with respect to recognizing the true Church of Christ.

Unitatis Redintegratio 3, mindful of the above statement of *Lumen Gentium*, elucidates the manner in which the separated communities participate in the life of the unique Church of Christ. The incorporation into Christ of all the baptized is acknowledged, and the presence of "some of the elements or goods, by the taking up of which the Church itself is built up and given life," although they "pertain by right to the unique Church of Christ," can be found among non-Catholic Christians who have access to the community of salvation by the life of grace produced by their liturgical worship. However, they lack the unity willed by Christ, which belongs to the Catholic Church alone. As pointed out earlier, *Unitatis Redintegratio* makes it clear that the separated communities only exist as a means of salvation in virtue of what they have retained of the essence of the Church. The agreement with Augustine is clear on this point; the Donatists have baptism, but it belongs rightly to Christ and the Church, and the effectiveness of that sacrament depends on the love of unity: "Therefore she (the Church) whose Sacraments are preserved begets in all that from which some such reality can be everywhere begotten, although not all whom she begets pertain to her unity, which will save those persevering to the end."⁴⁶ This is why it is absolutely wrong to rebaptize; that would be to claim for one's own what

45. LG, 14. "...illi homines salvati non possent, qui Ecclesiam Catholicam a Deo per Iesum Christum ut necessariam esse conditam non ignorantes, tamen vel in eam intrare, vel in eadem perseverare noluerint."

46. *bapt.*, 1.10.14. "Haec itaque in omnibus generat, cuius Sacramenta retinentur, unde possit tale aliquid ubicumque generari: quamvis non omnes quos generat ad eius pertineant unitatem, quae usque in finem perseverantes salvabit."

belongs exclusively to God.⁴⁷ And if it is objected that Augustine would never admit that the sacraments could engender a life of grace outside the Church, it must be remembered that, “according to what each man is at present, we seek whether they ought to be today considered among the members of that Church which is called the one dove, and the bride of Christ without stain and wrinkle,”⁴⁸ while recognizing that “nevertheless, sometimes a certain number even of those outside surpass in conversion certain of those inside.”⁴⁹

Again, according to *Unitatis Redintegratio* 3, “they who are now born and are initially instructed in such Communities are unable to be charged with the sin of separation,” and they have been incorporated into the body of Christ by baptism. Consequently, “they are constituted in a certain, though not a perfect, communion with the catholic Church.” Since “the Spirit of Christ has not refused to use them as means of salvation whose power is derived from that plenitude of grace and truth which has been entrusted to the catholic Church,” these communities “although we believe them to suffer a defect, have by no means been stripped of meaning and importance in the mystery of salvation,” and so John Paul II declared that “the unique Church of Christ has an effective presence in them.”⁵⁰ Augustine’s agreement with *Unitatis Redintegratio*’s exposition is at least suggested by what he says of the Donatists: “In that they agree with us they are indeed with us; in that they disagree with us they have gone out from us.”⁵¹ Moreover, Augustine attests to the “effective presence” of the Church among them when

47. Ibid., 3.11.16.

48. Ibid., 4.3.4. “...*nos autem secundum id quod in praesenti est quisque hominum, quaerimus utrum in illius Ecclesiae membris, quae unica columba dicta est...*”

49. Ibid., 4.10.14. “...*aliquando tamen et de numero exteriorum quidam quosdam interiores conversione praeveniunt.*”

50. John Paul II, “Ut Unum Sint,” *The Holy See*, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25051995_ut-unum-sint_lt.html, 11: “*unica Christi Ecclesia praesentiam habet in eis efficientem.*”

51. *bapt.*, 1.1.2. “*In quo enim nobiscum sentiunt, in eo etiam nobiscum sunt: in eo autem a nobis recesserunt, in quo a nobis dissentiunt.*”

he says, “Indeed the Church gives birth to all through Baptism, whether in her own house, that is, from her own womb, or outside herself from the seed of her husband.”⁵²

Augustine formulated his position by keeping in mind the teachings of Christ that “he that does not gather scatters” and “he that is not against you is for you”. While the first of these passages indicates the exclusivity of the Church, the second is an indication of God’s generosity in bringing as many as possible under the purview of his plan of salvation. In his polemic against the Donatists, he saw the need to expound both the necessity of belonging to the one Church of Christ while doing justice to the fact that God’s action is not limited to the institutional confines of the Church. A partial unity with the Church is possible in this life by means of incipient faith and the possession of valid sacraments. The former, he argues, does not incorporate one into the Body of Christ while the latter does, although the person so incorporated suffers from an impediment since he does not participate in the unity of charity, objectively speaking. This is a result of the fact that when a person receives baptism, and by extension the other sacraments of the Church, he is regenerated through an operation of Christ and the Church: “Therefore there is one Church which alone is called Catholic; and whatever she has of her own in communities of diverse sorts separated from her unity on account of the fact that she has what is hers in them, she in any case, not they, does the begetting.”⁵³ He compares the separated bodies to the handmaids of the patriarchs, specifically Hagar and the two concubines of Israel. Ishmael is the example of one who is generated outside of the Church and remains in separation, while the sons of Israel by the handmaids of Leah and Rachel are a sign of those who are generated in separate bodies but who are considered true sons. Rebecca, with her sons Jacob and Esau, stand as a sign of the Church as it is, generating the one as a vessel of election, the other as a reprobate son. In each case, it is the father as a type of Christ who gives life, although the

52. Ibid., 1.15.23. “*Ecclesia quippe omnes per Baptismum parit, sive apud se, id est, ex utero suo; sive extra se de semine viri sui.*”

53. Ibid., 1.10.14. “*Itaque est una Ecclesia, quae sola Catholica nominatur; et quidquid suum habet in communionibus diversorum a sua unitate separatis, per hoc quod suum in eis habet, ipsa utique generat, non illae.*”

womb that bears the offspring may be legitimate (Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, Rachel) or be acting in subordination to the legitimate wife.⁵⁴

That all the baptized are incorporated into the body of Christ is clear from his statement that: “indeed the Church bears all through Baptism, whether in her own house, that is, from her own womb, or outside herself from the seed of her husband.”⁵⁵ In light of this it emerges that Becker’s characterization of the Church’s effective presence among the separated is substantially correct: “one could say that the Church of Christ is operative in the Christian communities because of Christ, in so far as he is the Head (not the body) of the Church, through his Spirit, its soul (and not its body), is operative in these communities.”⁵⁶ What separates a person from the Church is not the fact that he receives baptism outside the Church, but that he does not maintain the unity of charity in the one Church of Christ: “Whence also the fact that his mother was a handmaiden did not harm Ismael so that he was separated from the people of God, but fraternal discord harmed him; and the power of the wife, whose son he rather was since by her conjugal vow he was both inseminated in the handmaid and received from her, did not benefit him.”⁵⁷ In this connection, it seems that Becker overstates the case to some degree when he says, “in a proper sense this (that the Church of Christ is present and active in the separated communities) is not acceptable because the Church of Christ, that is, the Catholic Church, in its integrity is not present and operative in the Christian communities,”⁵⁸ especially since the sacraments are an operation of both Christ and the Church, whether celebrated in the unity of charity or in unlawful separation. That is why Augustine says to the Donatists: “We do not accept your Baptism because that Baptism is of the heretics and schismatics, but because it is of God and the Church

54. Ibid., 1.15.23, 25.

55. Ibid., 1.15.23. “*Ecclesia quippe omnes per Baptismum parit, sive apud se, id est, ex utero suo; sive extra se de semine viri sui.*”

56. Becker, “An Examination,” 14.

57. *bapt.*, 1.15.23. “*Unde et Ismaeli, ut separaretur a populo Dei, non obfuit mater ancilla, sed obfuit fraterna discordia: et non profuit potestas uxoris, cuius magis filius erat, quia per ipsius iura coniugalia et in ancilla seminatus erat, et ex ancilla susceptus.*”

58. Becker, “An Examination,” 14.

wherever it has been found and whithersoever transferred.”⁵⁹ Consequently, it seems that only while the sacraments are being administered the Church is present, with Christ, as the acting subject. Augustine, in illustrating this very point, discusses whether baptism administered or received outside the *Catholica* remits sin. He answers in the affirmative; at the moment of baptism, the grace of the sacrament is conferred; Christ is present to the recipient; the recipient is incorporated into the Body of Christ. However, the conscious choice to remain in schism or to be unmoved by the love of God and neighbor, impedes the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and pours the sinner’s guilt back upon his head:

And so the grace of Baptism is not impeded from remitting all sins, even if fraternal hatred perseveres in the soul of the one to whom they are remitted. For yesterday is loosed and whatever came before is loosed, and even in that very hour and moment before Baptism and during Baptism. But immediately after he begins to be guilty, not only of the actions that follow, but even of bygone days, hours and moments with all those sins that had been remitted returning to him: and that kind of thing happens often in the Church.⁶⁰

In the administration of the sacraments, Christ and the Church are present and active, but when those sacraments are possessed in a willfully illicit manner, the one possessing them thus loses the Church. Hence, we are not confronted with a “partial subsistence in being,” which “is a contradiction in terms, because it would be simultaneously both a complete and a partial existence,”⁶¹ as Becker alleges in insisting that it is only Christ who is present and active in the separated communities. It bears repeating at this point that to subsist is not the same as to have an effective presence. From the Augustinian standpoint, the Church exists only where the unity of charity prevails, and, due to the undeniable validity of the sacraments received outside the

59. *bapt.*, 1.14.22. “*Non Baptismum vestrum acceptamus; quia non est Baptismus ille schismaticorum vel haeticorum, sed Dei et Ecclesiae, ubicumque fuerit inventum et quocumque translatum.*”

60. *Ibid.*, 1.12.20. “*Sic non impeditur Baptismi gratia, quominus omnia peccata dimittat, etiamsi odium fraternum in eius cui dimittuntur animo perseverat. Solvitur enim hesternus dies, et quidquid supra est solvitur, etiam ipsa hora momentumque ante Baptismum et in Baptismo. Deinceps autem reus esse continuo incipit, non solum consequentium, sed etiam praeteritorum dierum, horarum, momentorum, redeuntibus omnibus quae dimissa sunt: et saepe ista contingunt in Ecclesia.*”

61. Becker, “An Examination,” 14.

Church, in the transmission of sacraments that unity is presupposed, even if it is to be immediately broken. In the language of Vatican II, then, the Church of Christ only subsists where there is unity, which can only be found in the Catholic Church. That also explains how we can call the separated brethren “churches and ecclesial communities” while holding that they only have “elements of truth and sanctification”; without that bond of unity which is the essence of the Catholic Church of Christ, communities in separation from her can only have elements of the Church in varying degrees. The Church truly acts in those communities through these elements, but these elements belong by right only to the Catholic Church. I would suggest that this approach best explains how the Church can have an effective presence in the separated communities, and justifies the use of the terms “churches and ecclesial communities”.

From these considerations, the continuity of thought between Augustine and Vatican II on the relationship of non-Catholic Christians to the Church is made evident. If the verb *subsistit* was introduced in order to signify a theological change, the documents of Vatican II would evidence some shift in its understanding of the presence of Christ and the Church in non-Catholic communities, especially focused on the fundamental unity that must be the property of the one Church of Christ. Since the Council was in substantial agreement with the thought of Augustine in its formulation of the relationship between the Church and the communities existing in separation from her, we can confidently deny that *subsistit in* introduces a doctrinal development, but rather upholds the traditional self-understanding of the Church, and so I am confident that we can hold on both theological and historical grounds the statement of the CDF in its commentary on the *Responsa*: “the Second Vatican Council did not intend to change - and therefore has not changed - the previously held doctrine on the Church.”

CONCLUSION

In the three years that Pope Benedict XVI has been at the helm of the Catholic Church, there have been notable changes in doctrinal clarity, liturgical practise, and disciplinary legislation. In terms of doctrinal clarity, the CDF's documents on the proper interpretation of *subsistit in* and the document on the necessity of the Church's missionary activity come to mind. The *motu proprio* *Summorum Pontificum* legislated that there are now two "uses" of the one Roman Rite of the liturgy, declaring that the older forms of liturgy were never abrogated and that every priest of the Roman Rite has the right to use the liturgical books that predate the reforms initiated at Vatican II. The "venerable practice" of kneeling to receive communion on the tongue has been reimplemented at recent papal liturgies, and Pope Benedict uses the candle and crucifix altar arrangement that he proposed in his book *The Spirit of the Liturgy* as a transitional step to restore *ad orientem* worship in the Roman Mass.¹ The recent addition to the Code of Canon Law declaring *latae sententiae* excommunications for women attempting to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders,² and the 2005 document restricting seminary formation to heterosexual men have met with widespread criticism from both within and without the Church, and one does not have to look further than their local Catholic periodical to read lamentations that the Church has forgotten Vatican II. On the contrary, these palpable changes that seem to be "turning back the clock," in fact constitute the authentic reception of Vatican II if viewed in light of Pope Bededict's hermeneutic of continuity. But is such a hermeneutic plausible or even possible?

In the first chapter, we arrived at the conclusion that the Council's appeal to Augustine's ecclesiology in teaching that the Church is both spiritual and instututional was indeed well-founded. In the second chapter, we determined that even in the ecumenical outlook of Vatican

1. Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), Chapter 3.

2. Congregatio Pro Doctrina Fidei, "Decretum Generale de Delicto Attentae Sacrae Ordinationis Mulieris," *L'Osservatore Romano*, May 2008, 1, Italian edition.

II, the Catholic Church did not stray from the essentially Augustinian ecclesiology that has formed the Western Church's self-understanding for the past fourteen centuries. These conclusions prove that the "hermeneutic of continuity," is possible, and indicate strongly that it is plausible. The ecclesiology of Vatican II has been our primary focus, since it was the primary goal of Vatican II to expound Catholic ecclesiology in modern language, and since I am convinced that every area of controversy within the Church, whether it be liturgy, ethics, discipline or speculative theology, hinges upon the proper understanding of that ecclesiology. This last claim warrants its own special study, but the present work has sought to lay the necessary groundwork for such a project. Of necessity, this thesis has been restricted to the examination of part of a single paragraph of *Lumen Gentium*, but there are many controversial issues connected to the Second Vatican Council that warrant serious attention.

APPENDIX A
AUGUSTINIAN PREDESTINATION AND ECCLESIOLOGY: AN INTRACTABLE
PROBLEM?

As noted in Chapter 1, there are not a few scholars who view Augustine's ecclesiology to be incompatible with his thoughts on predestination. The basis of that thesis is that Augustine pays too little attention to intermediate causality in his anti-Pelagian writings. The importance of intermediate causality in Augustine's theory of predestination is fundamental because of two problems: first, the emphasis on God as the efficient cause of salvation from the first impulse to embrace the true faith to the unmerited gift of final perseverance seems to reduce man's freedom to the point of irrelevance; second, this same emphasis seems to relativise the need for both the incarnation of the Son of God and his institution of the Church as the necessary means of salvation. But how might one arrive at these conclusions? First of all, in his *Enchiridion ad Laurentium de fide, spe et charitate*, Augustine limits the "all men" of 1 Timothy 2:4, (God desires all men to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth) as "all kinds of men." Further, since Christ the man is the model of predestination, and his predestination was determined from all eternity without consideration of merits, so our predestination is determined from all eternity without consideration of merits. Now those who are predestined are incorporated into Christ, who is the source of salvation, but the fact that the number of the elect is fixed in the mind of God from all eternity causes Donato Ogliari to wonder, "just what is the precise weight of Christ's redeeming role? Would not his mediation simply mean that it is "piloted" by God's predestination *ab aeternitate*?"³ Augustine's emphasis on predestination not

3. Donato Ogliari, "The Role of Christ and the Church in Light of Augustine's Theory of Predestination," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 79, no. 4 (2003): 354.

simply as foreknowledge but as foreordaining leads Ogliari to conclude that Christ's mediation is superfluous and ultimately unnecessary, and so the notion of predestination undermines both Augustine's Christology and ecclesiology.

Ogliari offers us three ways to overcome this difficulty but rejects each in turn: first, distinguishing between the antecedent and consequent will of God offers, he says, no satisfactory solution because "it would further reinforce the already insoluble tension between God's absolute freedom of choice and his universal will of salvation by placing this tension at the very heart of the unity of God's will and action,"⁴ second, viewing predestination in light of God's "eternal present" is rejected as a solution on the grounds that Augustine did not set the discussion of predestination "in the framework of divine foreknowledge";⁵ third, viewing the work of predestination as an activity of the three persons of the Trinity working together, thus making God the Son both the example and efficient cause of predestination leaves "the problem of the meaning and role of the mediation of Christ the man in relation to predestination...unanswered".⁶ In his rejection of these three possibilities, Ogliari implies that Augustine did not recognize any secondary causality in the working out of God's plan of predestination.

In responding to the first objection, we must first consider Augustine's view of God's universal salvific will. The section of *Enchiridion* starting at chapter 94 in which Augustine seeks to explain the judgments of God from the perspective of the final judgment is the context in which Augustine interprets 1Tim. 2:4. In that connection, Augustine takes up the problem of evil and sin. Augustine is ever careful to preserve both the goodness of the divine will and its omnipotence: "It is not to be doubted that God does well even in allowing whatever actions that are done badly to be done... for unless this was good, namely that evils should also exist, they would by no means be allowed by the omnipotent good, to whom without doubt it is as easily

4. Ibid., 356.

5. Ibid., 355.

6. Ibid., 356.

done to not allow what he does not want as it is to do what he wants.”⁷ It is in this immediate context that 1 Tim. 2:4 appears as an argument against divine omnipotence; for if God wills that all men be saved and come to knowledge of the truth and it happens that even one is lost or remains clouded by error, then God’s omnipotence is destroyed, his will defeated: “For since not all are saved, but by far more are not, it certainly seems that that which God wills to be done is not done, with human will clearly impeding the will of God.”⁸

In the chapters that follow, the predestined appear as a powerful illustration of God’s ability to infallibly direct men to an unmerited salvation, thus displaying the greatness of God’s mercy, whereas the reprobates, condemned in accordance with their bad merits, display God’s justice. In either case the goodness and omnipotence of the divine will is preserved:

But however great the wills either of angels or of men are, either good or bad, either willing that which God wills or willing something other than God wills, the will of the almighty is always unconquered; it can never be anything evil, because even when it inflicts evils it is just, and indeed that which is just is not evil. Therefore almighty God either by mercy has mercy on whom he wills or by judgment hardens whom he wills, neither does he do anything wickedly nor does he do anything unless willing, and he does whatever he wills.⁹

The “hard fact” that many lose salvation, then, requires that the literal meaning of 1 Tim 2:4 is that all who are in fact saved are saved by God’s willing it:

And therefore when we hear and read in the sacred Scriptures that he (God) wills that all men be saved, although it is certain to us that not all men are saved, we ought not therefore to subtract something from the omnipotent will of God, but understand what has been written, “Who wills that all men be saved,” as though it said that no man is saved unless he (God) has willed him to be saved; not that there is no man except him whom

7. *Enchiridion ad Laurentium de Fide, Spe et Charitate Liber Unus*, 24.96. “*Nec dubitandum est Deum facere bene etiam sinendo fieri quaecumque fiunt male... Nam nisi esset hoc bonum, ut essent et mala, nullo modo esse sinerentur ab omnipotente bono, cui procul dubio quam facile est quod vult facere, tam facile est quod non vult esse non sinere.*”

8. *Ibid.*, 24.97. “*Cum enim non omnes, sed multo plures non fiunt salvi, videtur utique non fieri quod Deus vult fieri, humana scilicet voluntate impediende voluntatem Dei.*”

9. *Ibid.*, 26.102. “*Sed quantaelibet sint voluntates vel angelorum vel hominum, vel bonorum vel malorum, vel illud quod Deus vel aliud volentes quam Deus, omnipotentis voluntas semper invicta est; quae mala esse numquam potest, quia etiam cum mala irrogat iusta est, et profecto quae iusta est mala non est. Deus igitur omnipotens, sive per misericordiam cuius vult miseretur, sive per iudicium quem vult obdurat, nec inique aliquid facit nec nisi volens quidquam facit, et omnia quaecumque vult facit.*”

God wills to save, but that he saves no man unless he wills it, and therefore he ought to be asked that he may will it, because it is necessarily done if he has willed it.¹⁰

Further, as Augustine is quick to add, an interpretation of this sort should not cause us to despair of the salvation of any man, but placed within the broader context of 1 Tim. 2, it reinforces the fact that God has chosen to use the prayers of men as secondary causes of salvation: “Indeed, God has deemed this to be good, namely that by the prayers of the humble he might deign to fulfill the salvation of the exalted, which we see has already in fact been fulfilled.”¹¹ Ultimately, Augustine is not so attached to his interpretation that he would forbid another, but insists that any interpretation must defend God’s omnipotence: “And in whatever other way it can be understood, provided, however, that we are not forced to believe that the almighty has willed something to be done and that it has not been done.”¹²

Consequently, it is clear that Augustine’s limitation of the universal salvific will serves the function of defending God’s omnipotence, an approach that was also taken up and developed by later theologians. For example, St. Thomas Aquinas follows Augustine in his own defence of God’s omnipotence in the first part of *Summa Theologiae*; 1 Tim 2:4 appears as the first objection to article 6 of question 19 “whether the divine will is always fulfilled”. Aquinas replies that there are three ways we can understand the passage in question: first, we can understand it in the sense described above, i.e., that all who are saved are saved by God’s will; second, that by “all men” is meant “all kinds of men,” which is another solution offered by Augustine in the same passage of *Enchiridion*; and third, leaving the Augustinian interpretations behind, he draws on a distinction made by St. John Damascene, saying that we can understand

10. Ibid., 27.103. “*Ac per hoc cum audimus et in sacris Litteris legimus quod velit omnes homines salvos fieri, quamvis certum sit nobis non omnes homines salvos fieri, non tamen ideo debemus omnipotentis Dei voluntati aliquid derogare, sed ita intellegere quod scriptum est: Qui omnes homines vult salvos fieri, tamquam diceretur nullum hominem fieri salvum nisi quem fieri ipse voluerit; non quod nullus sit hominum nisi quem salvum fieri velit, sed quod nullus fiat nisi quem velit, et ideo sit rogandus ut velit, quia necesse est fieri si voluerit.*”

11. Ibid. “*Hoc quippe Deus bonum iudicavit, ut orationibus humilium dignaretur salutem praestare sublimium, quod utique iam videmus impletum.*”

12. Ibid. “*Et quocumque alio modo intellegi potest, dum tamen credere non cogamur aliquid omnipotentem voluisse fieri, factumque non esse.*”

the passage in terms of God's antecedent will.¹³ The distinction between God's antecedent and consequent will does not introduce a tension into the divine will itself, but, as Aquinas says, is to be understood in terms of the things willed: "Which distinction is not admitted on the part of the divine will itself, in which nothing is prior or posterior, but on the part of the things willed...Whence it (the antecedent will) can be rather called a willingness rather than an absolute will. And thus it is clear that whatever God simply wills happens, even if that which he antecedently wills does not happen."¹⁴ Coherent though this argument is, the question remains whether the basis for this distinction is present in the thought of St. Augustine. It is evidenced from what has already been shown that Augustine is primarily concerned with God's consequent will, and seems to leave no room for a consideration of God's antecedent will. Further, certain harsh statements in writings of the anti-Pelagian period even suggest that Augustine would reject the notion of an antecedent will of God altogether, such as when he says in *Enchiridion*:

These works of the Lord are great, excellent in all their purposes and so wisely excellent that when angelic and human creation sinned, that is, when it did not do what he willed, but what it willed, even through the same will of his creation by which that was done which the Creator did not will, he fulfilled what he willed, the highest good using well, so to speak, even evils unto the damnation of those whom he justly predestined to punishment, and unto the salvation of those whom he kindly predestined to grace.¹⁵

Passages of this sort, taken in isolation, could lead one to the conclusion that Augustine considered reprobation as well as salvation to be predestined. However, that Augustine viewed 1Tim. 2:4 as encouraging hope for the salvation of those presently outside the Church and as

13. St. Thomas Aquinas, *ST*, Ia, q. 19, a. 6, ad. 1.

14. Ibid. "*Quae quidem distinctio non accipitur ex parte ipsius voluntatis divinae, in qua nihil est prius vel posterius; sed ex parte volitorum...Unde magis potest dici velleitas, quam absoluta voluntas. Et sic patet quod quidquid Deus simpliciter vult, fit; licet illud quod antecedenter vult, non fiat.*"

15. *enchir.*, 26.100. "*Haec sunt magna opera Domini, exquisita in omnes voluntates eius, et tam sapienter exquisita ut cum angelica et humana creatura peccasset, id est, non quod ille sed quod voluit ipsa fecisset, etiam per eandem creaturae voluntatem qua factum est quod Creator noluit, impleret ipse quod voluit, bene utens et malis tamquam summe bonus, ad eorum damnationem quos iuste praedestinavit ad poenam, et ad eorum salutem quos benigne praedestinavit ad gratiam.*"

urging us to pray for the same at clearly implies that the grace of Christ's redemption is antecedently intended for all, even if it does not actually extend to every person.

In considering predestination from the standpoint of eternity and the objection that Augustine does not set it in the framework of divine foreknowledge, careful attention must be paid to Augustine's distinction between God's foreknowledge and the act of predestination. In *de praedestinatione sanctorum* Augustine emphasises that predestination depends on foreknowledge but that foreknowledge can exist without predestination. Because of this, God can foreknow things of which he is not the direct cause, e.g. sin.¹⁶ In *de dono perseverantiae*, which was written as a second book to *de praedestinatione sanctorum*, Augustine gives the classic definition of predestination: "This, and nothing else, is the predestination of the saints: namely the foreknowledge and preparation of God's benefits, by which all who are set free are most certainly set free."¹⁷ From this it turns out that foreknowledge depends on predestination: "These gifts of God, I say, are not foreknown by God if predestination which we are defending does not exist; but they are foreknown, therefore the predestination we are defending exists."¹⁸ However, it is the foreknowledge of benefits to be conferred, but not the rejection of the damned, that is conditioned by predestination. In the case of the elect, foreknowledge and predestination are convertible, whereas in the case of the reprobates, foreknowledge and reprobation are really distinct. This distinction, however, does not lessen the mystery of God's choice of one rather than another, especially since both the predestined and the reprobate are on the same initial footing:

Therefore his mercy is unfathomable, by which he shows mercy to whomever he wills, with no preceding merits on the part of the one to whom he shows mercy; and unfathomable is his truth, by which he hardens whomever he wills yet in accordance with the merits of the one he hardens, but merits that are usually held in common with the one to whom he shows mercy...that is, [we do not think] either that anyone is given grace

16. *de praedestinatione sanctorum*, 10.19.

17. *de dono perseverantiae*, 14.35. "*Haec est praedestinatio sanctorum, nihil aliud: praescientia scilicet, et praeparatio beneficiorum Dei, quibus certissime liberantur, quicumque liberantur.*"

18. *Ibid.*, 17.47. "*...haec, inquam, Dei dona, si nulla est praedestinatio quam defendimus, non praesciuntur a Deo; praesciuntur autem: haec est igitur praedestinatio quam defendimus.*"

according to his merits or that anyone is punished except by his merits, whether they who are freed or punished have equal or unequal evil causes, so that he who seems to stand may watch lest he fall, and that he who glories may glory not in himself but in the Lord.¹⁹

The seeming arbitrariness of God's judgment should cause neither despair nor presumption, but should impel us to hope all the more and submit ourselves in all humility to the mercy of God.

In fact, the teaching itself is the antidote to despair because it exhorts us to place our trust in God:

I do not wish to exaggerate with my words, but rather I leave them a consideration, so that they may see what sort of thing they have persuaded themselves of: "more desparation than exhortation is conveyed to the hearers in the preaching of predestination." For this is to say that a man despairs of his salvation just when he learns to place his hope not in himself but in God, whereas the Prophet declares: Cursed be everyone who has hope in a man.²⁰

Thus the unfathomable mystery of God's terrible judgment paradoxically serves the essential function in the salvation of the elect by shoring up hope. The spiritual danger attendant upon this doctrine is not despair, but presumption. However, even the presumptuous man's fate is uncertain, as Augustine points out in recounting the sorry lapse of one of his monastics:

There was a certain man in our monastery, who when the brethren rebuked him with respect to why he was doing certain things that ought not be done and not doing certain things that ought to be done, he responded: Whatever kind of man I am now, I will be such as God has foreknown me to be. Surely he both spoke the truth and yet this truth did not effect a good result; but it effected a bad result even to the point that it happened that having deserted the society of the monastery, he turned back to his vomit; and still it is uncertain what kind of man he will yet be.²¹

19. Ibid., 11.25. "*Investigabilis ergo est misericordia, qua cuius vult miseretur, nullis eius praecedentibus meritis; et investigabilis veritas, qua quem vult obdurat⁶⁸, eius quidem praecedentibus meritis, sed cum eo cuius miseretur plerumque communibus...id est, non putantes, vel secundum sua merita gratiam cuiquam dari, vel nisi suis meritis quemquam puniri, sive pares qui liberantur atque puniuntur, sive dispares habeant causas malas; ut qui videtur stare, videat ne cadat⁷⁰; et qui gloriatur, non in se ipso, sed in Domino gloriatur.*"

20. Ibid., 17.45. "*Ego autem nolo exaggerare meis verbis, sed illis cogitandum potius relinquo, ut videant quale sit quod sibi persuaserunt "praedicatione praedestinationis audientibus plus desperationis quam exhortationis afferi". Hoc est enim dicere, tunc de sua salute hominem desperare, quando spem suam non in se ipso, sed in Deo didicerit ponere: cum Propheta clamet: Maledictus omnis qui spem habet in homine.*"

21. Ibid., 15.38. "*Fuit quidam in nostro monasterio, qui corripientibus fratribus cur quaedam non facienda faceret, et facienda non faceret, respondebat: Qualiscumque nunc sim, talis ero qualem me Deus futurum esse praescivit. Qui profecto et verum dicebat, et hoc vero non proficiebat in bonum; sed usque adeo profecit in malum, ut deserta monasterii societate fieret canis reversus ad suum vomitum; et tamen adhuc qualis sit futurus, incertum est.*"

God's predestination of the saints is ultimately mysterious, and Augustine emphasizes the unknown not only to emphasize the need for hope and humility, but to encourage prayer, by which alone certain gifts can be attained:

For there are some who either do not pray or pray frigidly, because they have learned from the preaching Lord that God knows what is necessary for us before we ask it from him. Will it be supposed that the truth of this teaching ought to be deserted or deleted from the Gospel on account of such? By no means, since it is certain that God has prepared some things to be given even to those not praying, such as the beginning of faith, and some things to be given only to those praying, such as perseverance unto the end; for indeed he who thinks himself to have this from himself does not pray that he may have it.²²

Although this secondary cause (prayer) is foreknown by God, given as a gift and brought to completion by him, it is a *sine qua non* of final perseverance, and yet still constitutes an act of free will by the predestined soul, for God neither gives the first grace to believe, nor the further graces needed to persevere without man's cooperation: "Therefore each of the two (to believe and to love) is ours on account of the will's choice, and each is nevertheless given by the Spirit of faith and charity...and each of them belongs to him because he prepares the will; and each of them is ours, because he does not do it except to us who are willing."²³

From these considerations we can conclude that Augustine does indeed set predestination within the framework of divine foreknowledge, and his identification of foreknowledge and predestination in the case of the elect puts particular emphasis on the "eternal now." Consequently an individual's actions under the influence of grace play an essential role in his salvation, but that grace is uniquely mediated by Christ and his Church. However, this brings us to our final point under consideration, namely, the "meaning and role of the mediation of Christ

22. Ibid., 16.39. "*Sunt etiam qui propterea vel non orant, vel frigide orant, quoniam Domino dicente didicerunt, scire Deum quid nobis necessarium sit, priusquam petamus ab eo. Num propter tales huius sententiae veritas deserenda, aut ex Evangelio delenda putabitur? Immo cum constet alia Deum, danda etiam non orantibus, sicut initium fidei, alia non nisi orantibus praeparasse, sicut usque in finem perseverantiam, profecto qui ex se ipso hanc se habere putat, non orat ut habeat.*"

23. *praed. sanc.*, 3.7. "*Utrumque ergo nostrum est propter arbitrium voluntatis, et utrumque tamen datum est per Spiritum fidei et caritatis...et utrumque ipsius est, quia ipse praeparat voluntatem; et utrumque nostrum, quia non fit nisi volentibus nobis.*"

the man in relation to predestination.” The answer seems to be already hinted at in the preceding consideration; if God had foreordained from all eternity that only by means of the prayers and sacraments he instituted could human persons attain the grace of salvation, the Incarnation becomes an important link in the causal chain of predestination. But even so, *cur Deus homo?* Augustine acknowledged that the Incarnation of the Son of God was not strictly necessary for man’s salvation. However, in becoming man, Christ mysteriously made His strength the medicinal remedy of the weaknesses of human nature:

But there are foolish ones who say: “Why couldn’t the Wisdom of God have saved men in some other way rather than taking up a man and being born of a woman and suffering all those things from sinners?” To whom we respond: He could have done it entirely differently, but if he had, it would likewise be displeasing to your stupidity. For if he did not appear to the eyes of sinners, his eternal light, which is seen by interior eyes, certainly would not be able to be seen by stained minds...This medicinal treatment of men is so great that it cannot be adequately pondered. For what pride can be cleansed if it is not cleansed by the humility of the Son of God? What greed can be cleansed if it is not cleansed by the poverty of the Son of God? What anger can be cleansed if it is not cleansed by the patience of the Son of God? What impiety can be cleansed if it is not cleansed by the charity of the Son of God? Finally, what cowardice can be cleansed if it is not cleansed by the resurrection of the body of Christ the Lord?²⁴

But how does this medicinal remedy “transfer” from Christ to men? Following some of the thoughts presented in Peter Burnell’s book *The Augustinian Person*, it could be said that by baptismal regeneration, the very weaknesses of sinful men become infused with transformative power. Having died with Christ in baptism, the human person still suffers the consequences of his past sins, but because of his conformation to Christ, he suffers these consequences as an innocent and so is capable of heroic virtue and real interior transformation.²⁵ And so by

24. *De Agone Christiano*, 11.12. “*Sunt autem stulti qui dicunt: Quare non poterat aliter Sapientia Dei homines liberare, nisi susciperet hominem, et nasceretur de femina, et a peccatoribus omnia illa pateretur? Quibus dicimus: Poterat omnino, sed si aliter faceret, similiter vestrae stultitiae displiceret. Si enim non appareret oculis peccatorum, lumen eius aeternum utique, quod per interiores oculos videtur, inquinatis mentibus videri non posset...Haec medicina hominum tanta est, quanta non potest cogitari. Nam quae superbia sanari potest, si humilitate Filii Dei non sanatur? Quae avaritia sanari potest, si paupertate Filii Dei non sanatur? Quae iracundia sanari potest, si patientia Filii Dei non sanatur? Quae impietas sanari potest, quae caritate Filii Dei non sanatur? Postremo quae timiditas sanari potest, si resurrectione corporis Christi Domini non sanatur?*”

25. Peter Burnell, *The Augustinian Person* (Washington: The Catholic University of America

becoming man and enabling men to share in his suffering by taking on theirs, Christ does not offer merely salvation, but deification:

...in Christ's Mystical Body His initiative suffering with His members transfiguratively joins their suffering to His; in this sense they participate in Him. Since this participation is through Christ's experience of their suffering (this being of the essence of His compassion), and since His compassion is God, their sufferings are, in that personal sense, inherent in the divine original. Moreover, since those persons are transfigured through a divine Person's experience of their sufferings, and such transfiguration is, according to Augustine, the imparting of a charity proper to that divine Person, the individuals are deified in this sense, too: by Christ's participation in the sufferings of each of them.²⁶

The fundamental insight that Burnell presents us with is that for Augustine, the Incarnation is in some sense internal to the life of the Trinity, and so, extrapolating from there, the humanity of Christ had an essential role in the creation and redemption of humanity from all eternity.

Press, 2005), 180.

26. Ibid., 192.

APPENDIX B THE DONATIST CONTROVERSY: BACKGROUND AND SOURCES

The Donatist controversy had its origins towards the end of the Diocletian persecutions of 303 – 312. In the course of the persecution, many Catholics handed over the scriptures to be burned, gaining for themselves the label of *traditores*. There was some debate as to whether or not these “traitors” required rebaptism in order to be reconciled to the Church, but this debate was mostly confined to the Roman provinces of North Africa, where there was a tradition, albeit a not very long one, of rebaptism for lapsed Catholics or for heretics who were baptised in a heretical Church. The Donatist schism came about in the year 312, when the people of Carthage elected Caecilian to be their bishop. A significant number of Carthaginians led by the priests Botrus and Celestius opposed Caecilian’s election and consecration as bishop of Carthage and gathered with at least seventy bishops from Numidia to try to overturn the decision. They were aided in their purpose by some of the senior members of the community who had been forced to return some gold that had been entrusted to them upon Caecilian’s election, and by a “powerful and factious” woman named Lucilla, who had been humiliated by Caecilian with a penance on account of her superstitious practice of kissing the bone of a martyr before receiving the Eucharist. Caecilian challenged them to find him guilty of any wrongdoing and offered to be re-consecrated by the gathering of Numidan bishops if they could prove the charges, but his congregation prevented him from meeting with them on account of the violent reputation of the bishop of Limata, Purpurius. Optatus of Milevus relates the incident thus:

Then Purpurius, relying on his wonted malice,²⁷ as though Caecilian too were the son of his sister, spoke as follows: “Let him come forth hither,” as though he would lay hands on him to make him bishop and shake his head in repentance. When this was known, the whole Church held Caecilian back from handing himself over to the brigands.²⁸

The “brigands” then elected and consecrated a Carthaginian lector named Majorinus as bishop of Carthage, under the charge that Caecilian had been consecrated by a *traditor*. This act set “*altare contra altare*” and marked the official beginning of the schism. The Numidian bishops, having implicated themselves in this schismatic action, sent letters throughout Africa, seeking to denounce Caecilian and support Majorinus.²⁹

Constantine’s Edict of Toleration (also known as the Edict of Milan) of 313 put an end to the Diocletian persecutions and sought to recompense the Christian Church by returning properties seized during the persecution. The presence of two bishops in one see presented the difficulty of determining which one was the true bishop, and which congregation would benefit from the return of confiscated properties. The bishops who supported the consecration of Majorinus, already calling themselves the party of Donatus,³⁰ appealed to Constantine to be recognized as the true Church. On October 2nd, 313, Caecilian and Donatus of Casae Nigrae met at the Lateran with nineteen bishops from Italy and Gaul. Caecilian was found innocent of any wrongdoing and was proclaimed the rightful bishop of Carthage, but Donatus confessed to having rebaptized lapsed bishops, was found guilty of fomenting schism and was excommunicated. On August 1st, 314, the Council of Arles settled the question of rebaptism by declaring any baptism “in (the name of) Father and Son and Holy Ghost,” whether administered

27. Purpurius had confessed to ordering the execution of his two nephews, and was candid about his violence toward his opponents.

28. *Optatus: Against the Donatists*, trans. Mark Edwards (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997), 1.19.

29. *Ibid.*, 1.13.

30. *Optatus: Against the Donatists*, 1.22–24 Majorinus is not mentioned again, and the case to be judged was between Caecilian and Donatus of Casae Nigrae, whom Optatus identified as Donatus the Great. The Donatists sought to distinguish between Donatus of Casae Nigrae and Donatus the Great at the Council of Carthage in 411, and the Catholics granted the distinction. However, such a distinction today seems unwarranted and unable to be proven. See W. H. C. Frend. *The Donatist Church: A Movement of Social Protest in Roman North Africa*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), 14-21

by a heretic or a Catholic valid.³¹ This council also upheld the decision of the Roman synod that vindicated Caecilian and condemned the party of Donatus. The Donatists resorted to accusing Felix of Abthungi, the bishop who consecrated Caecilian, of *traditio*, and Constantine commissioned an inquiry into the charges. Felix was found innocent of all charges and the Donatists were commanded to conform to the decision of the Council of Arles.

After returning to Carthage early in 316 against Constantine's wishes, Donatus obstinately maintained his position. Constantine, by this time quite fed up with the affair, reviewed the case and once again decided in favour of Caecilian. Either in late 316 or early 317, the judgment was passed that the properties of the Donatists should be confiscated and their leaders exiled.³² This first repression of the Donatists lasted until 321, and it was in this period that the Catholic bishop Caecilian was complicit with the worst massacre of Donatist schismatics within the city of Carthage. This violent beginning served to harden the resolve of many Donatists, and the schismatic Church took firm ground in North Africa, buttressed by their pride in the martyrs of their movement. The persecution of their movement was a proof to the Donatists that they were the true followers of Christ, since they were suffering for the sake of kingdom of God (cf. Matt 5:10). Although many of their bishops were violent and corrupt men, the Donatists considered them martyrs even for suffering exile on account of their own wickedness.³³ In the year 321, Constantine granted the Donatists toleration "since our policy was not able to tame that power of ingrained wickedness, deep-seated though it be only in a few minds,"³⁴ and he turned his attention to his battle with Licinius for control of the empire.

The party of Donatus increased in size and influence in North Africa and by the 330's, he had the support of nearly 300 bishops. The period from 321 until the death of Constantine saw a steady increase in the development of the Donatist Church and a solidifying of their positions on

31. William Jurgens, *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, vol. 1 (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1970), 273.

32. Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 158–156.

33. *Ibid.*, 161–62.

34. *Optatus: Against the Donatists*, 196.

the validity of baptism outside their communion, their relationship to the authority of the state, and their policy of separation from what they saw as corrupting influences within the Church and the world. The policy of separation led the Donatists to develop an attitude of violent rejection of the social order as represented by the Roman state and its ally, the Catholic Church. The Circumcellions appeared around the year 340, and acted as the military arm of the Donatist Church. These wandering “monks” scoured the countryside, seeking a martyr’s death by violently attacking Catholic communities, Roman authorities, and in the absence of either, by means of suicide.³⁵ These fanatics were often used by Donatist bishops who wanted to attack rival communities, but because of their independent nature as vagrant ascetics, were able to be distanced from the official Church when necessary. There were even occasions when the Donatist bishops appealed to the state for help against the Circumcellions when they became too difficult to control.

Another period of persecution began for the Donatists in the year 347 when Donatus, now the most influential bishop in North Africa and senior bishop of Carthage, appealed to emperor Constans to be recognized as the rightful bishop of the see. Constans sent Paul and Macarius, imperial notaries, to conduct an investigation. When Donatus realized that Paul and Macarius favoured the Catholic bishop of Carthage, Gratus, he regretted the appeal and once more retreated into the separatist stance. Resistance against the imperial legates was stirred up in the countryside, and this resulted in a massacre of the Donatist community in Bagai. The evident violence of the Donatists convinced Macarius to suppress the movement and he targeted leading members of the Church in Numidia. By the end of 347, Donatus had been exiled along with a number of the leading bishops of his party.

The “Macarian Persecution” saw the victory of the Catholic Church in the western part of North Africa, but the stubborn nature of the Donatists ensured their further survival. They were aided in their survival by corruption among the Catholic clergy and lack of strong leaders among

35. Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 172–76.

the Catholic bishops, as well as sour feelings over the evils done them by Paul and Macarius. The accession of Julian to the imperial throne in 361 saw a reversal in fortunes for the Donatists, and they soon found themselves in a position of dominance in North Africa once again. After appealing to Julian, the exiled leaders of the Donatist Church were allowed to return to Africa, and they brought with them the fanaticism and zeal that marked the sect. Donatist communities that had been living peaceably once more erupted into violence, and Catholic churches were sacked, “purified” and whitewashed.

After the death of Julian in 363, the Donatists found themselves once again out of favour with the ruling party, but had a strong enough position that they were able to maintain dominance. Parmenian, the Donatist bishop of Carthage, was an effective apologist for the Donatist cause, and he developed arguments in favour of the schismatic Church on theological grounds. The letters of Parmenian produced such a good argument that St. Augustine would reply to them ten years after Parmenian’s death. Parmenian’s Catholic opponent, St. Optatus of Milevus, maintained a historical approach to the schism, and it is from his pen that we have the most complete record of the history of the Donatists. This work, *De Schismate Donatistarum*, became the main source of the history of the schism for both Catholic and Donatist writers in the time of St. Augustine.

Written between 364 and 367, the work was a response to Parmenian’s five books against the Catholic Church. It dealt consecutively with the Donatist doctrine on baptism, the unity of the Church, the status of *traditores*, an attack on the edict of unity of 347, and a commentary on biblical denunciations of sinners.³⁶ Optatus approaches his own work in such a way as to spell out the history of the schism and to refute the theological claims of the Donatists. The first book of *De Schismate* deals with the history of the schism as outlined above. In the second book, Optatus battles with Donatist ecclesiology by pointing to the unity of the Church founded on communion with the see of Peter. He here accuses the Donatists of schism on account of having

36. *Optat de Mileve: Traite Contre les Donatistes*, trans. Mireille Labrousse (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1995), 1:18–19.

set up an anti-pope, and shows that the Catholic Church possesses the gifts (*dotēs*): the *cathedra*, the angel, the Spirit, the font and the priesthood. This book also makes a defence against claims of violence suffered by Donatists at the hands of Catholics, and turns the tables on them by pointing out the violence used by Donatists. The third book continues this theme, discussing the intervention of the Roman army in the controversy, and defending the edict of unity and the role of Paul and Macarius in its implementation. In this book, the Donatists are presented as seducers and slanderers. The biblical passage: “Let not the oil of sinners anoint my head,” and its correct interpretation is the topic of the fourth book, and the fifth is a discussion of baptism. The fifth book is oft quoted by Augustine in *De Baptismo Contra Donatistas* and focuses on the distinction between valid baptism and illicit baptism. The sixth book comprises a recounting of the many sacrileges committed by Donatists and defends the purity and holiness of Catholic shrines and sacred instruments. The seventh book, which is missing from the oldest manuscripts but is included in critical editions,³⁷ shows that *traditores* ought to be pardoned, and that their descendents are in no way implicated in their sin. The appendices, found in Edwards’ English translation, seem to have been compiled and added onto the work by someone other than Optatus. These are mostly letters written by Constantine or one of his officials, but they also contain the proceedings of the Council of Arles.

Unfortunately, Optatus’ work seemed to have little success at convincing Donatists that they were in the wrong,³⁸ and the influence of Parmenian ensured that the Church would flourish for years to come. Under Valentinian, Romanus was sent to Africa to act as *comes*, and he renewed the old policy of persecution in order to restore the supremacy of the Catholic Church (367). The violence with which the Circumcellions reacted to this persecution caused an internal schism between peace loving Donatists, and Rogatus of Cartenna and nine other Donatist bishops separated themselves from the rest of the Donatist Church. This “Rogatist” schism was suppressed in 372 by the rebel Firmus, a pretender to the imperial throne, at the behest of the

37. Ibid., 32–56.

38. Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 196–97.

mainstream Donatist party. Firmus' power gave the Donatists a period of respite from imperial persecution, but with Firmus' capture in 375, they were again subject to government pressure. But in 377, when Flavian was appointed to the position of *comes Africae*, all laws against the Donatists were ignored. As a devoted Donatist, Flavian was slow to punish rebellious factions within the Church, and when he attempted to do so, he was refused communion. The Catholics continued to lose influence due to flirtations with Arianism, and suffered from a lack of dynamic leadership. However, the relative peace of the time led the Catholics and Donatists into a more or less peaceful coexistence.

Besides Parmenian, the greatest Donatist thinker of this period was a Carthaginian layman named Tyconius, who wrote circa 370-385. However, his views got him in trouble with Parmenian, and he was excommunicated in 385. St. Augustine says that the reason for his condemnation was Tyconius' teaching that the Church was diffused throughout the whole world (one of St. Augustine's favourite themes), and for his opinion that being in communion with sinners could not contaminate the Church.³⁹ Tyconius' *Liber Regularum* is his only surviving work, and seems to have been a favourite of St. Augustine.⁴⁰ The rejection of Tyconius'

39. *Epistulae*, 93.10.44. "Tyconius is that man whom Parmenian restrained in his reply and discourages him from writing such things: nevertheless he did not refute those very things which he wrote; but persecuted him in this one thing, as I said above, that when he said such things concerning the Church diffused throughout the world and that the sins of others did not stain anyone in its unity, he nevertheless removed himself from the Africans as if from the contagion of *traditores* and was in the party of Donatus. *Ille est Tyconius, quem Parmenianus rescribendo compescit, et eum deterret ne talia scribat: non tamen refellit ea ipsa quae scribit; sed uno, sicut supra dixi, eum premit, quod cum talia diceret de Ecclesia toto orbe diffusa, et quod neminem in eius unitate macularent aliena peccata, ab Afrorum se tamen quasi traditorum contagione removebat, et erat in parte Donati.*" See Also: *Contra Epistolam Parmeniani*, 1.1.1: "And indeed Parmenian at first thought that he ought to be corrected by letter, but afterwards in their council they held him condemned. Therefore, in this work we have determined to respond to the letter of Parmenian which he wrote to Tyconius, reprehending him because he had been preaching that the Church was spread through the whole world, and warning him lest he dare to do it. *Et Parmenianus quidem primo eum per epistolam velut corrigendum putavit; postea vero etiam concilio eorum perhibent esse damnatum. Epistulae itaque Parmeniani quam scripsit ad Tyconium reprehendens eum, quod Ecclesiam praedicaret toto orbe diffusam, et ammonens ne facere auderet, hoc opere statuimus respondere.*"

40. For example, see *ep.*, 41.2. "For I also do not neglect what I have commanded, and just as I

teaching meant doctrinal stagnation for the Donatists, and more internal schisms undermined the reliability of their claims.

After Claudian, the Donatist bishop of Rome, was forced to return to Africa in 378, his difficulty in being subordinated to Parmenian caused him to form his own schismatic Church. The Claudianist schism occurred in 392 around the time of Parmenian's death. Parmenian was succeeded by Primian, whose violence and intellectual myopia alienated some of the members of the Donatist Church in Carthage. A party of support for the deacon Maximian formed and broke with Primian in 393. "The dispute began to take on a regional character, the more conservative and tolerant Donatists of the Romano-Punic cities of the coast and the Tunisian coastal plain protesting against the violence and brutality of the Numidian nominee in Carthage."⁴¹ Primian's party managed to get the Proconsul Herodes on its side, and was able to take properties in the possession of Maximianist clergy. The Primianists supported the rebel Gildo, the younger brother of Firmus, and the Maximianists and Catholics alike began to suffer from the depredations of Circumcellions and clergy-led gangs. Many Maximianists reconciled to the Primianist camp after 397 by the threat of an army led by Optatus, the bishop of Thamagudi. The ease with which they were brought back into the fold laid the foundation for a powerful attack on the Donatist practise of rebaptism in St. Augustine's campaign against the Donatists. None of the Maximianists were rebaptized upon their return to the Church, so St. Augustine could use this incident to undermine their insistence on having a pure Church. Modern scholars have noted that this tactic may not have been terribly appropriate, since the Maximianist schism was an internal affair and not a matter of *traditio*,⁴² but there is a certain logic to St. Augustine's use of this event in his arguments which has been discussed already in chapter two.

have often written about the seven rules or keys of Tychonius, I await to know what you think of it. *Nam et ego quod iussisti non negligo, et de Tychonii septem regulis vel clavibus, sicut saepe iam scripsi, cognoscere quid tibi videatur exspecto.*"

41. Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 215.

42. *Ibid.*, 224; Tilley, *The Bible in Christian North Africa*, 101–02.

St. Augustine's ordination to the priesthood in 391 was a turning point for the Catholic Church's dealings with the Donatists in more than one way. Weakened by internal division, the Donatists would now have to deal with arguably the most brilliant Catholic theologian who ever lived. St. Augustine's first work against the Donatists was the *Psalmus Contra Partem Donati* written in 393. This work was written in verse so that it could be easily memorized by the members of his Catholic congregation, and treats of the beginnings of the schism, the Macarian persecution and sounds a call for unity and peace. The desire for peace was St. Augustine's main concern throughout his dealings with the Donatists. Ultimately, thought the great saint, if there could be a peaceful dialogue, the Donatists would recognize their error and be reconciled to the Catholic Church. A major obstacle to this peace was the violence of the Circumcellions that held many in fear of conversion. Gerald Bonner describes the atmosphere of life within the Donatist communities of this period rather eloquently:

No breadth of vision or considerations of the elementary requirements of conduct were to be allowed to affect the unity of the Church and both prophet and reformer were alike to be savagely repressed. By such action, it became clear that the essence of Donatism was a despotism, enunciated by the bishops, applauded by the mob and enforced, in the last resort, by the violence of the Circumcellions.⁴³

St. Augustine eventually resorted to appealing for state intervention in the matter because he was convinced that only by checking the violence of the movement could any progress be made.⁴⁴

From the period of St. Augustine's priesthood (391-395), there is also a lost work *Contra Epistulam Donati Haeretici* and several letters, homilies and commentaries on the Psalms that deal in some way with the Donatist schism. In the first five years of St. Augustine's episcopacy (395-400), when he was auxiliary bishop of Hippo Regius, he wrote more lengthy works directed to the controversy, and it was in this period that he wrote his longest and most important treatise against the Donatists, *De Baptismo Contra Donatistas*. These years of the late fourth century saw a gradual shift in St. Augustine's attitude toward state intervention in the affairs of the North

43. Gerald Bonner, *St. Augustine of Hippo: Life and Controversies*, third (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2002), 249.

44. *Ibid.*, 301-06.

African Church, but it wasn't until after 405 that he began to fully support his brother bishops in their appeal to the emperor for sanctions against the Donatists.

In the early years of the fifth century, St. Augustine wrote a number of important works dealing with the Donatist controversy. His debate with Petilian, bishop of Constantine, lasted more than ten years, during which time he produced the bulk of his anti-Donatist writings. Among these writings are included many sermons and letters, as well as a longer treatise directed against a Donatist layman named Cresconius. Most of the works in this period seem to be born of his debate with Petilian. A good summary and overview of all the anti-Donatist works, their contents and dates of composition can be found in *St. Augustine and the Donatist Controversy* by Geoffrey Grimshaw Willis.⁴⁵

The defeat of Gildo in 398 put the Donatists in defensive mode once again, since they no longer had a sympathetic ruler, and the appointed governors restored a policy of persecution.⁴⁶ Since Donatism was most dominant in the countryside, many of its adherents were Berber peasants, and “these vented their wrath on the Catholics in proportion as the repression of their faith was intensified. The violences of the Circumcellions grew every year; the activities of ‘terrorist bands’ covered ‘nearly all Africa’, according to Possidius.”⁴⁷ The laws against heresy outlined in the Theodosian Code began to be used against the Donatists even though they had not been classified as heretics. Some of the wealthier Donatists began to convert in order to protect their holdings. However, the Donatist Church still held just as much power among the people as their Catholic opponents. Petilian, bishop of Constantine, became famous for his letters attacking the Catholic Sacraments to which Augustine responded in three books *Contra Litteras Petiliani*, written 400-405. These deal with the question of the validity of baptism performed outside the Church, the seriousness of the sin of *traditio*, and on the locus of the true Church.

45. Willis, 36–70.

46. Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 249.

47. *Ibid.*, 248.

In 401, the Catholic bishops of North Africa held a council and decided that Donatist clergy who became Catholic could retain their ministry as need required, and that a greater effort should be made to propagate Catholic teaching by sending missionaries to predominantly Donatist areas. These missionaries were greeted by the violence of the Circumcellions, and over the next few years violent conflict between Catholics and Donatists would be the norm. The Catholics, ever on the defensive, called upon the empire to intervene after another Council in 403, and as a result, the Donatists were to appear before the magistrates and hold a public discourse with the Catholics. These summons were refused and met with more violence against the Catholics. In 404, due to the mounting violence of the Circumcellions in Donatist clergy, the Catholic bishops decided that open persecution of the Donatist church, stopping short of physical force, was in order. At the same time, the Imperial government had arrived at the same decision. The Emperor Honorius issued a decree of unity in March 405 and designated the Donatists heretics. “The decree was severe, putting all those who did not accept the official Catholic viewpoint outside the protection of the law.”⁴⁸ Donatist properties were to be seized and clergy exiled.

This policy continued up until and beyond the Council of Carthage in 411 that decided on the status of the Donatist church in a final way. This Council was important because it was the first and last time that the Donatist bishops would meet with and discuss the schism with the Catholic bishops. The Council was presided over by Marcellinus, a high official of the Imperial Chancery, and a personal friend of St. Augustine, who decided in favor of the Catholics and prescribed a ban on the Donatists. Tensions between the two churches seem to have died down by about 420. The Donatist church never died out completely in North Africa, but is rarely mentioned in historical records after 420. Donatists and Catholics alike suffered the same fate

48. Ibid., 264.

under the Muslim conquest of North Africa in the seventh century, disappearing from the area altogether.

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