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«Do this in remembrance of me...»

*The sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist in the systematic
theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg and Joseph Ratzinger*

Master's Thesis in Christian Studies (40 ECTS)

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FOREWORD

Working with any subject is not something done in isolation, and here I would like to first thank God, who must always be our first priority. I would also like to thank my supervisor, Svein Rise, for words of encouragement and for valuable insights, due in part to his expertise in one of my figurants, Gunnar Innerdal for valuable feedback on my paper on method (attachement 1), and those I have not only studied with, but been good friends with over the last four to five years. A special thanks goes to Ole Christian Martinsen, who has been active in the same ecclesial milieu as me, and who has worked with similar themes as I have, and Karen Marie Hovland, who has herself worked with Pannenberg, and has helped me in my attempt at grasping his theology. A great thanks goes to my fellow 'inmates' at my student home Collegium Sta Sunniva, and to my parish in Sandviken.

Allow me to finish with some words from Scripture:

Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent which is set up not by man but by the Lord. For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. (Hebrews 8:1-3, RSV)

My little children, I am writing this to you so that you may not sin; but if any one does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. (1John 2:1-2, RSV)

Kjetil Kringlebotten,

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General abbreviations

For abbreviated works, see bibliography (section 6).

Dnk: The Church of Norway (<http://www.kyrkja.no/>).

LCMS: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (<http://www.lcms.org/>).

TTK: *Tidsskrift for teologi og kirke*.

USCCB: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (<http://www.usccb.org/>).

ZKTh: *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie*.

1 Introduction

1.1 Problem and research questions

In an article on the Eucharistic Sacrifice, Cyril C. Richardson writes:

There is no aspect of the Christian liturgy which is more fundamental than that of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Nor is there any point at which Christians are more sharply divided than in their formulation of this doctrine.¹

This sentence articulates my own thoughts on the matter, and the importance, for good or bad, of this doctrine is one of the main reasons I have chosen to write about this particular theme. Historically, the question of the Eucharist has been one of the major differences between Catholic and Protestant theology, and also one of the major differences within the theology of the Reformers.²

I find the field of dogmatics and fundamental thinking in theology interesting, and that I find the sacrificial character of the Eucharist a fascinating theme, both because my own spiritual life has always been more 'sacramental' (and has become more so in the last nine years or so), and because when I have read Church history, I have always found a 'scent' not just of sacramentality, but also of sacrificiality.³ The Eucharist is central both to Lutherans and Catholics,⁴ and it is one of the points in which we most clearly see the differences. My hope is that this thesis can make it easier to understand what unites and what separates.

In this master's thesis, I will examine this question by analyzing and discussing the contributions of Wolfhart Pannenberg and Joseph Ratzinger. I will focus on how Pannenberg and Ratzinger views the Eucharist, and especially its sacrificial character. The problem is formulated as follows:

A systematic critical-comparative analysis and discussion of the Eucharistic theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg and Joseph Ratzinger with emphasis on the sacrificial character of the Eucharistic celebration.

When analyzing Eucharistic theology, some questions presents themselves as more important than others, and when you narrow the field of study by emphasizing the sacrificial character

¹ Richardson 1950:53

² Alister McGrath, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to the History of Christian Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell 1998), pp.195-200. See also *CA/Apol./CP* X.XXII.XXIV.

³ See Dix 1945:238-255. See also Kelly 1978:193-199,211-216,440-455

⁴ *CA/Apol.* X; CCC 610-611,1322-1419

of the celebration, some questions are more natural to ask than others. In order to ‘arrive’ at a coherent and systematic view of the Eucharist, and specifically its sacrificial character, we need to consider as much data as possible. In this thesis, therefore, I have chosen three research questions which I maintain will be a good help in arriving at such a coherent and systematic view. These questions are:

1. What is the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist?
2. What is the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration?
3. What is the role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration?

The answers provided for these question determines the way in which you see the sacrificial character of the Eucharist. From these, I can analyze and discuss my figurants. By analyzing Pannenberg and Ratzinger, and by discussing them comparatively, in light of research not only on dogmatics, systematic theology, liturgy, history of theology and exegesis, but also research on liturgy and linguistics (specifically speech act theory), I try to answer this question: Is the Eucharist a sacrifice, and if so, in what sense?

1.2 Method

In a paper written in connection with this thesis, I have already reflected on my method of choice. That paper can be found at the back of this thesis, as attachement 1 (A1). In A1 I utilize the coherentist method of Nicholas Rescher. Rescher is a representative of a pragmatic approach to philosophy, yet also systematic, unlike many analytic philosophers. He emphasises coherence, much because he seeks a holistic and systematic theory of truth, and because he finds the classic ‘correspondence theories’ to be lacking. I will also emphasize coherence in my thesis.⁵

In my thesis, I will build upon my reflection (A1), but there are a few important differences. First, let me briefly lay out my practical approach. In this thesis I will: (1) gather relevant data from relevant works on the Eucharist (and especially its sacrificial character) and from my figurants; (2) systematize my findings (focusing on the works of my figurants), reading them in relation to their whole corpus; and (3) evaluate their contribution, focusing on their coherence — not just within their individual corpus, but with each other and their field(s).⁶ My analysis

⁵ See Michele Marsonet, «Nicholas Rescher (1928—).» *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* 2009, esp. part 5. Available online: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/rescher/> [retrieved Nov. 30, 2012].

⁶ A1:7, cf. Puntel 2008:41-52.

will focus on my research questions, and will try to find out how Pannenberg and Ratzinger would answer these.

Here we need to recapture some points from my reflection. First, Rescher's notion of coherence is not merely 'internal.' To be coherent, any given theory needs to be (logically) consistent with itself, but to say that a theory is consistent with itself, isn't necessarily to say that it's coherent. If a theory is merely 'internally coherent' it only appears to be coherent. A theory which doesn't cohere with *any* true datum is by definition incoherent.⁷ According to Rescher, there are three parts to coherence: *consistency*, *cohesiveness* (connectedness) and *comprehensiveness*.⁸ This coherentist method is primarily about interpreting texts. In A1, I also note that Rescher presents us with four 'laws' of textual interpretation:⁹

a. Contextual coherence. Context is crucial. It is important to point out what is meant by 'context.' Rescher identifies three levels of context:¹⁰ *immediate*, *nearby or proximate* and *distant or peripheral*. Context is then more than the work at hand and the corpus of the author. Without context, a text can be used for anything and everything. As civil rights activist and Baptist minister Jesse Jackson put it: «Text, without context, is pretext.»¹¹ But we need also to point out that *context* doesn't merely refer to terms or ideas, it also refer to the way in which these are used, rhetorically and syntactically. In this endeavour Rescher insists on the importance of making careful distinctions.¹² When writing on the Eucharist, and especially its sacrificial character, in Lutheran and Catholic theology, as do, this would have to include clarifications on what it entails that Christ died 'once for all' (Gk. *ἐφ' ἅπασι*), what is meant by Christ's real (sacramental) presence in the consecrated elements, what the word 'priest' means, etc. By making careful distinctions in these areas, the picture becomes clearer, and the real similarities and differences become more apparent.

b. Comprehensiveness. Rescher points out that this helps us decide between plausible interpretations. The more data we have, the narrower the range of plausible, coherent interpretations becomes.¹³

⁷ Puntel 2008:24-25.32-33.42-44

⁸ Rescher 1973:31-38.168-175; Gravem 2004:352; Søvik 2011:83-85.

⁹ A1:6-7; Rescher 2001:71-76

¹⁰ Rescher 2001:69-70

¹¹ Quoted in Sheldon R. Gawiser & G. Evans Witt, *A Journalist's Guide to Public Opinion Polls* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers 1994), p.111

¹² Rescher 2001:116-131

¹³ Rescher 2001:73; Rescher 1998:126

c. Sophistication. «The more substantial an interpretation – the more extensively attuned to a larger manifold of contexts – the more elaborate and internally ramified it becomes.»¹⁴ In systematic theology, one ought to focus on truth, which might not be ‘easy’ or ‘clean cut.’

d. Imperfectability. The task I am about to embark on calls for humility, and we need to acknowledge that we do not have all knowledge. In «Truth as Ideal Coherence» Rescher points out that we cannot hope to achieve perfect knowledge of truth,¹⁵ but that we ought to strive for it. He points out that this is not a rejection of any kind of objectivity or ontological viewpoint, but a realization that we can only hope to achieve a piece of the truth.

These four ‘laws’ are important, but they are more principles than ‘laws,’ and (as the fourth ‘law’ suggests) they are not meant to be followed blindly.

1.2.1 The justification of my coherentist method

But some questions need to be asked: Am I imposing systematicity on my figurants? Does my figurants agree that they can be analyzed systematically? Pannenberg points out that truth must be our focus in theology.¹⁶ He points out that something isn’t true *because it’s in the Bible*, but that something true in the Bible is true *because it expresses something factual*. Pannenberg points to *the coherence theory of truth*, citing Lorenz Puntel.¹⁷ As I point out above, *coherence*, is a concept with three important characteristics: (*logical*) *consistency*; *connectedness/cohesiveness*; and *comprehensiveness*.¹⁸ Pannenberg says that dogmatics or systematic theology is just that: a *systematic* representation of Christian teaching.¹⁹

Ratzinger is not systematic in the same way as Pannenberg, or at least not as explicit on this point. Scott Hahn points out that Ratzinger²⁰ «is less a systematic thinker than he is a symphonic thinker.»²¹ Hahn points out that he has more in common with the (presumably less systematic) Church Fathers than with systematic thinkers like Aquinas. Hahn writes:

In the Fathers, we find the notion that truth consists of a unity of diverse elements, much as

¹⁴ Rescher 2001:74

¹⁵ Rescher 1985:795.800-906

¹⁶ *SysT* I:18-22.159-167.189-194; Søvik 2011:101-108

¹⁷ *SysT* I:21-24. For Puntel’s philosophical program, see <http://bit.ly/U6i0Ew> [retrieved from philosophie.uni-muenchen.de, Nov. 21, 2012].

¹⁸ Rescher 2001:31-38.168-175; Gravem 2004:352; Søvik 2011:83-85

¹⁹ *SysT* I:18; Søvik 2011:101-108

²⁰ As he is writing about the whole of his life, he uses his papal name, *Benedict*.

²¹ Hahn 2009:16

a symphony brings into a single, harmonious whole the music played on a variety of instruments. This is how it is with the biblical theology of Benedict. Even his occasional writings, which make up the bulk of his oeuvre are usually composed like a polyphonic melody from many differentiated strains—scriptural, historical, literary, liturgical, and patristic.²²

In some senses of systematicity, this could perhaps mean that Ratzinger isn't systematic, but Ratzinger is indeed 'systematic thinker' if we define systematicity as Pannenberg (or Rescher). Indeed, the notion of coherent systematicity maintained by Rescher is one where systematicity could be labelled 'symphonic,' even if they do not use that term themselves.

1.2.2 Coherence and systematic theology

Before going on it's important to reflect more closely on the fact that my thesis belongs within systematic *theology*. To understand what systematic theology is, we need to ask a few very pertinent questions: What is theology? What is systematicity? I will primarily make use of the contributions of Torleiv Austad.²³ Austad points out that systematic theology has five distinct tasks:²⁴ (1) The *synthetic* task, to summarize or synthesize the different elements of Christianity in a holistic and comprehensive system, against the background contemporary thought and life. (2) The *critical* task, to analyze and discuss different traditions and beliefs. (3) The *apologetic* task, to defend Christianity either by refuting arguments against it or by arguing in favour of it. (4) The *creative* task, to reformulate the faith in terms familiar to contemporary ears. (5) The *normative* task, to help people seek the truth.

The first, *synthetic*, task doesn't merely involve a presentation of what Scripture teaches or what the Church believes, but how this teaching and these beliefs stand in relation to knowledge in general.²⁵ This task, then, is to present a *synthesis* of Christianity and knowledge in general, with focus on coherence.²⁶ Austad points out²⁷ that the *synthetic* task is a process which requires a great overview and great discernment. I have no intention of doing this in my thesis. My discussion, which concerns the Eucharist, and especially its sacrificial character, will primarily focus on the second, *critical*, task, but this process will allow for further, and more comprehensive, studies of the Eucharist. It is also my intention that this thesis will have a normative function,

²² Hahn 2009:16

²³ Austad 2008

²⁴ Austad 2008:49-54

²⁵ Austad 2008:50

²⁶ Cf. Rescher 2001; Puntel 2008; Søvik 2011:17-19.81-94.

²⁷ Austad 2008:50

that it will help people seek the truth on this matter.²⁸

1.2.3 Summary

In sum, my approach will be divided into three, based on the research questions:

1. Gathering of data from relevant works on the Eucharist.
2. Analysis of my figurants based on the data gathered from their relevant works.
3. Comparative discussion of their views, examining how they hold up to a larger (inter-subjective) context, with emphasis on developments in exegesis, modern theological developments, and considerations about the teachings of the early Church.

It is my intention that the analytic part should be as descriptive as possible, but that my discussion of their views might be more normative in nature.

1.3 Disposition

This thesis will be divided into three main sections. In sections 2-3 I will first analyze Pannenberg's and Ratzinger's views on the place of the Eucharist within theology, and furthermore analyze Pannenberg's and Ratzinger's views on the Eucharist, and especially its sacrificial character, based on my research questions.

In section 4, I will discuss the views of Pannenberg and Ratzinger and try to develop a coherent view of the Eucharist, and especially its sacrificial character. This is based on my reading of my figurants, and on other relevant works, and it's divided in two, with focus on my research questions. It is my intention that this part is to be more normative in nature.

In section 5, I will briefly summarize my analysis and discussion, and draw some conclusions from this.

²⁸ For a discussion on systematic theology, with emphasis on coherence, see the discussion between Niels Henrik Gregersen (2008:290-310; 2011:167-172) and Asle Eikrem (2011:152-166).

2 Analysis of Pannenberg's view

As pointed out above, I have identified some important research questions. In the following, I will analyze Pannenberg's views on the Eucharist, and especially its sacrificial character, with these in mind. There is a great deal of overlap between these, and they do not exist independent of each other. There is, however, distinctions between the different parts. Borrowing and paraphrasing the incarnational terminology of the Council of Chalcedon, we could say that the different part and roles in the Eucharist, and in the Eucharistic celebration, are united «inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably.»²⁹

2.1 Introductory remarks on Pannenberg

In this section I will briefly present Pannenberg's view on sacraments in general, which is found in chapter 13 of *Systematic Theology* vol. III.³⁰ This will present us with the background against which we must understand his view on the Eucharist.³¹

For Pannenberg, the sacraments, which he treats in chapter 13 of *Systematic Theology* vol. III,³² properly belongs within ecclesiology.³³ «The church,» Pannenberg writes, «mediates the fellowship of individual believers with Jesus Christ.»³⁴ As members of the Church, the individual believers «share in “the body of Christ” and hence in Jesus Christ himself.»³⁵ As is standard in Lutheran theology,³⁶ Pannenberg places the Eucharist (and the sacraments) within, or at least in close proximity to, the doctrine of *justification*. For Pannenberg, the fellowship with Christ, mediated through the Church, *dogmatically* «forms a theme in the doctrine of the regeneration and justification of believers and their adoption into the filial relation of Jesus to

²⁹ See Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical notes*, vol. II. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House 1919, pp.62-65. Available online: <http://bit.ly/PzLKQn> [retrieved from ccel.org, Nov. 21, 2012].

³⁰ *SysT* III:97-434 ('The Messianic Community and Individuals'). For his basic theological conception, see *SysT* I:1-62. See also Søvik 2011:97-108

³¹ For biographical information, see Svein Rise's biography/monography from the book *Moderne teologi* (ed., Ståle Johannes Kristiansen & Svein Rise. Kristiansand: Høyskoleforlaget 2008), pp.186-200 and Christoph Schwöbel's biography/monography from the book *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology since 1918* (ed., David F. Ford & Rachel Muers. Third Edition. Oxford: Blackwell 2005), pp.129-146.

³² *SysT* III:97-434 ('The Messianic Community and Individuals').

³³ Schwöbel 2005:140-143; Grenz 2005:201-252

³⁴ *SysT* III:237, cf. 97-135

³⁵ *SysT* III:237

³⁶ *CA/Apol.* IV-V

the Father.»³⁷ For Pannenberg baptism is the primary place of regeneration, ‘performed’ in the Church, by the Church.³⁸ The *faith* is mediated through «the church’s proclamation of the gospel.»³⁹ Through baptism, Pannenberg maintains, we are made partakers of Christ, and thus members of his Church, through which we can partake of the Eucharist.⁴⁰ He writes:

The Lord’s Supper depicts both the common fellowship of all communicants in the one Lord Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the church on this basis. This feature of descriptive action characterizes the administration of the Supper at Christian worship, which as a whole we may call a provisional representation of the eschatological people of God in its offering of praise to God.⁴¹

Addressing the question of sacraments as such, Pannenberg ‘re-interprets’ the term ‘sacrament’ in Protestant thought. Reflecting on the traditional use of ‘sacrament,’ he points out that this term is a later, descriptive term that doesn’t ‘constitute’ the sacraments.⁴² With a reference to Roman Catholic sacramental theology,⁴³ and to the content and structure of *CA/Apol.* IX-XIII, Pannenberg points out that «we are not to look first to the terms or concepts but to keep the things themselves in view no matter what we call them.»⁴⁴ He maintains that some of the differences are mostly linguistic, and points out that «the confessional positions on the matter are not too far apart, especially as the Protestant churches also adopted the ritual actions Trent called sacraments with the partial exception of extreme unction.»⁴⁵ For Pannenberg the sacraments are «significatory acts,» «signs of the nearness of God.»⁴⁶ As *signs*, they «effect what they signify,»⁴⁷ but they are also only a ‘foretaste’ of what is to come, of «the future consummation of the church’s fellowship with its Lord at his return for judgement and for the consummation of creation.»⁴⁸ But Pannenberg urges for caution. He points out that the understanding of the significatory character of the sacraments «pushed into the background the thought of the sacramentality of Jesus Christ himself and his passion as the divine mystery of salvation.»⁴⁹ The link between «the

³⁷ *SysT* III:237, cf. 211-236.

³⁸ *SysT* III:237

³⁹ *SysT* III:237, cf. Rom 10:14-17.

⁴⁰ *SysT* III:237-238

⁴¹ *SysT* III:238

⁴² *SysT* III:336-340, esp.336-337

⁴³ R. Schulte, *Mysterium Salutis*, IV/2 (1973), p.95.

⁴⁴ *SysT* III:337

⁴⁵ *SysT* III:339

⁴⁶ *SysT* III:238

⁴⁷ *SysT* III:238

⁴⁸ *SysT* III:238

⁴⁹ *SysT* III:348

sacraments» and «the one divine mystery of salvation» was ‘loosened,’ and the sacraments became rather abstract. Pannenberg cites Augustine as the ‘pioneer’ of this view, «with his sharp distinction between sign and thing signified,»⁵⁰ and his observation that «the word is added to the element, and this becomes a sacrament.»⁵¹ If a sign is defined thus, Pannenberg maintains, it does point towards the thing signified, «but also separates us from it and keeps us distant from it.»⁵² Pannenberg notes that to see the sacraments as *signs* has merit to it, but that it — for the reason given — stands in danger of being applied too one-sidedly.⁵³ It needs to be understood multifacetedly, in light of the eschatological nature of the sacraments.⁵⁴

In the Eucharist, Pannenberg maintains, Christ himself is present, and with him (though in an anticipatory fashion) the future salvation. The sacraments do indeed «effect what they signify,» as Aquinas put it.⁵⁵ Pannenberg maintains that there *is* a distinction between ‘sign’ and ‘thing signified,’ but that it’s not absolute. Christ is really present, though concealed.⁵⁶ Pannenberg points out that the sacraments aren’t ‘effective’ in themselves, but that their effectiveness is due to presence of Christ, and to the fact that he «gives himself in the sacrament.»⁵⁷ This, Pannenberg maintains, became blurred in the Scholastic tradition, which borrowed Augustine’s sharp distinction between ‘sign’ and ‘thing signified.’ The real danger was a view of the sacraments (as signs) being effective in themselves, and not due to the presence of what they signified: *Christ himself*.⁵⁸

Let us now turn to one of Pannenberg’s main points; the personal presence of Christ in the Eucharist.⁵⁹ To explain this, he points to modern developments in Catholic sacramental theology, especially Karl Rahner’s concept of transignification.⁶⁰ He writes:

There is agreement that the theological core of the Roman dogma of transubstantiation, independent of the Aristotelian terminology of substance and accidents, affirms the real presence of Christ in the elements of bread and wine, which was also decisively affirmed and defended by the Lutheran Reformation. According to Karl Rahner, transubstantiation

⁵⁰ *SysT* III:349

⁵¹ *SysT* III:349 (Augustine, *In Ioann. tr.* 80.3: *Accedit verbum ad elementum, et fit sacramentum*).

⁵² *SysT* III:350

⁵³ *SysT* III:350-351

⁵⁴ *SysT* III:351

⁵⁵ *SysT* III:352-353

⁵⁶ *SysT* III:353

⁵⁷ *SysT* III:354

⁵⁸ *SysT* III:354

⁵⁹ *SysT* III:295-304

⁶⁰ *SysT* III:298, cf. n.635-637. See Rahner, *Theological Investigations* IV (New York, NY: Crossroad), pp.301.303.306-307

means nothing more than that the priest, when distributing communion, does not say “this is the bread,” but “the body of Christ.”⁶¹

Pannenberg here emphasises a relational ontology, partly borrowed from Lorenz Puntel, but also from Kant and Hegel.⁶² Pannenberg critiques the old Aristotelian-Thomistic view of substance as something completely independent, as «that which remains the same beneath all change,»⁶³ and points towards modern developments in metaphysics, specifically the idea that *relations* are not merely something that exists in (or between) two (or more) substances. The concept of relation is not, Pannenberg maintains, «the accident of a substance, ordered to the substance,» but «above that of substance, since we can speak meaningfully of substances only in relation to accidents.»⁶⁴ Since, in Pannenberg’s view, the ‘identity’ or ‘essence’ of a thing «depends on the relations in which it stands, then its identity alters with the alteration of its system of reference or context by which its meaning is defined.»⁶⁵ Thus, through a ‘relational’ ontology,⁶⁶ Pannenberg can view transubstantiation and transignification as two sided of the same coin — not as a ‘changing’ of the substance of bread and wine (according to Aristotelian or Thomistic ontology), but as a change of the bread’s ‘relations.’ It is, however, important to note that Pannenberg sees this objectively.

His emphasis, however, is not on the substantial presence of the body and blood of Christ in the ‘elements’ (as in medieval theology). Instead he embraces a ‘personal’ and ‘concomitarian’ view, that Christ is equally present under both species (bread and wine).⁶⁷ He agrees with the *doctrine*, favouring the ‘personal’ presence of «the whole and undivided Christ.»⁶⁸ The Christ who is present in the Eucharist is not dead but living, undivided and glorified. But he rejects the *practice which derives from the doctrine*; that the chalice be withheld from the congregation.⁶⁹ Pannenberg cites the Lutheran Reformation’s critique of this practice, which they held was that the Supper ought to be administered properly, in light of the institution of Christ. «On this ground the Augsburg Confession called the restriction of distribution to the species of bread as

⁶¹ Pannenberg 2006:171

⁶² *SysT* I:365-370 (cf. 353-359); *SysT* III:300-304, cf. Puntel 2001:229-240; Puntel 2008:48.127-130.136-138.268.395; Søvik 2011:88-89.112-116

⁶³ *SysT* I:365

⁶⁴ *SysT* I:366.

⁶⁵ *SysT* III:301

⁶⁶ *SysT* III:300-301, cf. *SysT* I:353-359.365-370

⁶⁷ *SysT* III:293-296

⁶⁸ *SysT* III:295

⁶⁹ *SysT* III:293-296. See esp. p.294, n.620.

a custom brought in contrary to the commandment of God.»⁷⁰ He writes:

But we do not have here an adequate description of what the bread saying of Jesus, “This is my body,” is stating. For the demonstrative pronoun “this” refers to the bread. It thus *relates* the bread to the reality of the body of Jesus that he is offering according to his saying, a relation, then to his person, since the Aramaic *guph*⁷¹ indicates the whole person.⁷²

What we see in Pannenberg is that the presence of Christ is a presence that is brought about by the anamnesis, and it is not an anamnesis of the body and blood alone, but of the whole person, since in the Bible ‘body’⁷³ can denote the whole person.⁷⁴ Pannenberg’s main point is that the presence of Christ is not a descent of Christ into the ‘elements,’ but a «recollection of the earthly story of Jesus and his passion,» and the belief that he is personally present «in the signs of bread and wine.»⁷⁵ And this, Pannenberg maintains, is deeply connected to the work of the Spirit.⁷⁶ Pannenberg points out that the *epiclesis* is an important reminder that anamnesis is to be done in the Spirit.⁷⁷ Citing the 1982 Lima report, Pannenberg points out that «at the eucharistic meal the Holy Spirit makes the crucified and risen Christ truly present for us by fulfilling the promise of the words of institution.»⁷⁸ «Rediscovery of the epiclesis and its importance for eucharistic celebration,» writes Pannenberg, «can enrich Western eucharistic theology in many ways.»⁷⁹ It is a good ‘medicine’ against a kind of ‘christmonism’ which «would run up against the trinitarian faith of the church.»⁸⁰ For Pannenberg there is no ‘competition’ between focus on (the work of) the Spirit and focus on the words of institution, because the Spirit is the one «who in anamnesis calls Christ and his words to mind.»⁸¹ Pannenberg points out that he doesn’t say that the Spirit «does not just spring into action at the epiclesis,» but that he «is already at work in the whole process of liturgical thanksgiving and anamnesis.»⁸² The Spirit, Pannenberg maintains, is the one through whom the Church prays and celebrates the Eucharist. The presence and work of the Spirit relates not only to the elements of the Eucharist — the bread and wine — but also to

⁷⁰ *SysT* III:294-295, cf. *CA* XXII:9. In *CP* 22, the Catholic Church criticised this.

⁷¹ ‘Flesh,’ ‘body.’

⁷² *SysT* III:299

⁷³ Gk. *σῶμα*; Aram. *guph*.

⁷⁴ *SysT* III:313

⁷⁵ *SysT* III:315

⁷⁶ *SysT* III:320-324

⁷⁷ For an introduction to the *epiclesis*, see Fortescue 1909.

⁷⁸ *SysT* III:321-322, cf. *BEM* 2:14.

⁷⁹ *SysT* III:322

⁸⁰ *SysT* III:322

⁸¹ *SysT* III:322, cf. n.711

⁸² *SysT* III:323

the transformation of the faithful participants.⁸³

To sum up Pannenberg's view on the real presence, we see that Pannenberg holds to an objective variant of consubstantiation, with nods in the direction of both transubstantiation and transignification, understood through his 'relational' ontology, but with emphasis not on the substantial presence of the body and blood of Christ in the 'elements' (as in medieval theology), but on the 'personal' presence of «the whole and undivided Christ.»⁸⁴

2.2 Pannenberg on the sacrificial character of the Eucharist

2.2.1 Pannenberg on the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist

My first research question is formulated as follows:

1. *What is the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist?*

In this section I am going to analyze Pannenberg's view on the high-priestly ministry of Christ in the Eucharist. I cannot here discuss the whole of Pannenberg's Christology, but will focus on the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist, and his role as sacrifice.⁸⁵ As we see above, Pannenberg holds that Christ is really present in the Eucharist. He is concerned more with *whom*, and less with *what*, is present in the Eucharist, and focuses on the 'personal' presence of «the whole and undivided Christ.»⁸⁶ We will now shift focus to the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist.

In *Systematic Theology* vol. III, Pannenberg points out that if the crucifixion has an expiatory character, «there can be no cogent [Lutheran] objection to the idea that believing celebration and reception of the Supper give a share not only in the "fruit" of Christ's offering but also in its enactment.»⁸⁷ He then goes on to ask: «Are we really to understand the Last Supper, the origin of the church's Lord's Supper, as an act of self-offering on Jesus's part? And if so, in what sense?»⁸⁸ Pannenberg then points to Luther's observation that «what is done at the Supper does

⁸³ *SysT* III:324

⁸⁴ *SysT* III:295

⁸⁵ For Pannenberg's Christology, both his current and early views, see *SysT* I:300-319; *SysT* II:277-464; Pannenberg, *Jesus: God and Man* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press 1977); Rise 1997:127-187; G.G. O'Collins, «The Christology of Wolfhart Pannenberg» (*Religious Studies* 3, 1967), pp.369-376.

⁸⁶ *SysT* III:295

⁸⁷ *SysT* III:316

⁸⁸ *SysT* III:317

not have at all the form of an offering to God; it has the form of a meal.»⁸⁹ He maintains that the Eucharist grants «a share in the future saved community in God's kingdom.»⁹⁰ For Pannenberg, the focus of Christology lies in Christ's mission. He maintains that the sacrifice of Christ weren't (primarily) a case of Christ giving himself *directly* to the Father, as a sacrifice proper, but a case of obedience to the mission, an obedience to death:

If, then, we call the Lord's Supper a sacrifice, what Jesus himself did at the Last Supper must be viewed as a sign-act of sacrifice. What we have in the sacrifice of Jesus is not a direct offering to God but Jesus' obedience to his mission to the world as witness to the presence of the salvation of the rule of God. His death was the consequence of this obedience.⁹¹

For Pannenberg, then, Christ's sacrifice isn't reducible to the event on the Cross, but must be seen as a complete whole, encompassing the whole of Christ: his incarnation, life, ministry, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, heavenly ministry and second coming.⁹² In connection to this, Pannenberg points out that the eucharistic elements are covenantal signs, signs of Christ's obedience and sacrifice, that they provide us with «the meaning of the approaching death of Jesus on the cross.»⁹³ Pannenberg connects this to the fact that the Eucharist are to be seen in light of the sacrificial meals of the OT: «Meal and sacrifice go together at the Lord's Supper just as the covenant sacrifice and covenant mean did in Israel.»⁹⁴ (That last point will be analyzed further in the next section.) To understand this, we need to analyze Pannenberg's view on Christ as saviour. This is primarily found in chapter 11 of *Systematic Theology* vol. II,⁹⁵ but it cannot be separated from his trinitarian conception, especially his view of the deity of Christ.⁹⁶ I cannot here discuss his entire soteriology, but I have made some choices as to what is essential for my thesis.⁹⁷ In Pannenberg's views on Christ's high-priestly work, there are three crucial terms: *reconciliation*, *representation* and *expiation*.

Addressing the issue of *reconciliation*, Pannenberg points out that Paul linked this to Christ's death (Rom. 5:10), which «shows us why Christian theology has understood the death of Jesus

⁸⁹ SysT III:317

⁹⁰ SysT III:318

⁹¹ SysT III:318-319

⁹² Cf. SysT II:385-386; 389-416; 435-449

⁹³ SysT III:319

⁹⁴ SysT III:319

⁹⁵ SysT II:397-464 ('The Reconciliation of the World').

⁹⁶ SysT I:259-336; SysT II:325-396. See esp. SysT II:389-396 ('The Incarnation of the Son as God's Self-Actualization in the World').

⁹⁷ For an overview, see Grenz 2005:147-200. See also Rise 1997:187-224.

in terms of reconciliation.»⁹⁸ For Paul, Pannenberg maintains, «God was the subject of the event of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19),»⁹⁹ but eventually the non-Pauline idea arose that «God, having been offended by the sin of Adam, had to be reconciled to humanity by the obedience of the Son, or by the sacrificing of his life on the cross.»¹⁰⁰ Pannenberg, rejects this,¹⁰¹ and points out that there is a difference between the Pauline usage of the term ‘reconciliation,’ and later usages of the term. «*God* did not have to be reconciled; the *world* is reconciled by God in Christ (2 Cor. 5:19).»¹⁰² Reconciliation, then, is primarily humanity being reconciled to God through Christ’s mission.¹⁰³ Addressing the issues of *representation* and *expiation*, Pannenberg references the debate on the translation of the greek word *ἱλαστήριον* (in Rom. 3:25).¹⁰⁴ He points out that in Paul, Christ is an expiation: «Expiation removes the offense, the guilt, and the consequences. In this sense Paul could call Christ’s death an expiation (Rom. 3:25).»¹⁰⁵ He also makes the point that Paul added ‘faith,’ since «only by faith can we share in the expiatory effect of this event.»¹⁰⁶ Pannenberg avoids using the term *propitiation*, or any of its derivatives — *propitiate*, *propitiatory*, etc.¹⁰⁷ While there are a number of etymological similarities between *propitiation* and *expiation*,¹⁰⁸ the former is commonly used to denote atonement in the sense of appeasing God, because he has been offended, while the latter is commonly used to denote atonement in the sense of healing, making whole and reconciling, with emphasis on man (who needs to be healed and reconciled). In *propitiation*, then, the primary object is God, while in *expiation* the primary object is man.¹⁰⁹

But although Pannenberg holds that the death of Christ is *expiatory*, he points out that in the early Christian traditions, not all of whom «[viewed] the death of Jesus as a salvation event,»¹¹⁰ a

⁹⁸ SysT II:403

⁹⁹ SysT II:403

¹⁰⁰ SysT II:403, cf. 403-404.405-406 for a brief historical survey.

¹⁰¹ SysT II:403-416

¹⁰² SysT II:407

¹⁰³ Cf. SysT II:403-416

¹⁰⁴ SysT II:411, n.46, cf. Heb. 9:5.

¹⁰⁵ SysT II:411

¹⁰⁶ SysT II:411, n.46

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Grenz 2005:225-226

¹⁰⁸ See <http://bit.ly/WzEOkc> and <http://bit.ly/TGV78M> [both retrieved from etymonline.com, Nov. 21, 2010].

¹⁰⁹ See Derek Kidner, «Sacrifice – Metaphors and meaning.» (*Tyndale Bulletin* 33, 1982), pp.119-13. See also J.E. Frame, «Paul’s Idea of Deliverance» (*Journal of Biblical Literature* 49:1, 1930), pp.8-9 (1-12); Joseph A. Fitzmyer, «The Aramaic Language and the Study of the New Testament» (*Journal of Biblical Literature* 99:1, 1980), pp.16-18 (5-21).

¹¹⁰ SysT II:416

special attention was given to the idea «that the death of Jesus was expiatory, though not primarily as an expiatory sacrifice.»¹¹¹ Pannenberg thus makes a distinction between something having an expiatory *character* and something being an expiatory *sacrifice*. He maintains that we cannot, on the basis of Christ dying ‘for’ us, assume that Christ saw himself as an expiatory sacrifice.¹¹² This could be a dedication to his mission coupled with knowledge of the fact that actions have consequences, and that his actions would get him killed, and he point out that when we read in Mark’s version of the institution narrative that the cup is given «for many,» this «is linked more to the idea of a covenant sacrifice than to that of an expiatory offering.»¹¹³ He points out, however, that this idea of Christ dying ‘for us’ «could easily come to be linked with the motif of expiation.»¹¹⁴ He goes on: «If Christ died for our sins, as in the traditional formula in Paul (1 Cor. 15:3), then that undoubtedly means that he made expiation for our sins.»¹¹⁵

The main point I want to emphasize, however, is Pannenberg’s view on the relationship between the Father and the Son in relation to the sacrifice, and the continuing priestly office of Christ. Pannenberg writes:

The whole sending of the Son by the Father aims ... at the vicarious expiatory death on the cross. We may say this on the basis of modern historical and exegetical research into the tradition relating to Jesus insofar as the death of Jesus follows from his proclamation of the imminence of the rule of God and its drawing in his own work. Greater difficulties arise, however, when we speak of the Son instead of the Father as the subject of this loving giving up to death (Gal. 2:20). Ephesians enlarges this thesis into one of self-sacrifice: “Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (5:2, cf. v. 25).¹¹⁶

Pannenberg notes a tension here, between the action of the Father and the Son, and asks: «Who is the subject of the giving up?»¹¹⁷ He maintains that if we are to avoid contradiction, «we must suppose that they are saying the same thing in different ways.»¹¹⁸ He continues:

But this is possible only if the action of the Father in giving up the Son does not make the Son a mere object but implies his active cooperation, and again if the action of the Son does not rule out the fact that the initiative in the event lies with the Father.¹¹⁹

¹¹¹ *SysT* II:416, cf. n.66.

¹¹² *SysT* II:417, cf. Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24

¹¹³ *SysT* II:417, cf. n.70.

¹¹⁴ *SysT* II:418

¹¹⁵ *SysT* II:418, cf. 418-437

¹¹⁶ *SysT* II:438. Emphasis added

¹¹⁷ *SysT* II:439

¹¹⁸ *SysT* II:439

¹¹⁹ *SysT* II:439

Pannenberg emphasizes the obedience of Christ, and point out that this «corresponds to the giving up by the Father.»¹²⁰ He points out that Christ offered himself to God in obedience to the mission, for the salvation of the world.¹²¹ As we see above,¹²² the main point for Pannenberg is *not* that Christ gave himself to the Father as a sacrifice, but that he offered himself to us, to reconcile us with God, to bring us back to God. And this bringing back was in the form of a sacrifice. To explain this further, Pannenberg turns to the reconciling office of Christ,¹²³ where he emphasizes the dialectic between the Father's sending of the Son, his being active «in Christ's death for the reconciliation of the world (2 Cor. 5:18),» and the Son's obedience in «[offering] himself up in this event (Gal. 2:20).»¹²⁴ Pannenberg here references the point from Hebrews, that «Christ "offered up himself" as the high priest who makes atonement for the people's sins (Heb. 7:27; cf. 9:26ff).»¹²⁵ This, Pannenberg points out, goes beyond the death of Christ and extends into eternity, into heaven:

Hebrews ... stresses not merely the once-for-allness and definitiveness of the sacrificial death of Jesus (9:26) but also the ongoing intercession of the risen Lord before God (v. 24). It thus gives us occasion to develop a view of his saving work or reconciling office that extends beyond the once-for-all event of the crucifixion.¹²⁶

But Pannenberg also maintains that there is a difficulty in reconciling this 'theological' view of Christ's priestly work, and the testimony of the Gospels:

If we measure the statements of the theological tradition regarding the saving work or mediatorial office of the incarnate Son of God directly by the measure of the history of Jesus, we reach the overwhelmingly negative result that in all probability the earthly Jesus suffered crucifixion as his fate without himself bringing it about as an act of self-offering. In his earthly existence he was not a priest, nor was he a king.¹²⁷

Pannenberg therefore points out that the so-called 'threefold office of Christ' (priest, king, prophet) is problematic,¹²⁸ and maintains that it can only be held typologically.¹²⁹ He points out we cannot justify this view, of the 'threefold office of Christ,' merely by pointing out that Christ died

¹²⁰ *SysT* II:439, cf. n.118.

¹²¹ *SysT* II:440

¹²² Cf. *SysT* III:318-319

¹²³ *SysT* II:441-449

¹²⁴ *SysT* II:443

¹²⁵ *SysT* II:443

¹²⁶ *SysT* II:443

¹²⁷ *SysT* II:445

¹²⁸ *SysT* II:445-447

¹²⁹ *SysT* II:446

‘for us.’ This, he maintains is rooted in expiation, but not necessarily in sacrifice as such. Christ was our expiation, but not necessarily our priest, where ‘priest’ is understood in a propitiatory way.¹³⁰ To understand the direct relation from this to the work of Christ in the Eucharist, it is important to point to Pannenberg’s ‘concomitarian’ view of Christ’s presence in the sacrament. Since he focuses on the high priestly work of Christ in heaven, and since he emphasizes the personal presence of Christ in the Eucharist,¹³¹ the assumption can be made that on Pannenberg’s view, the heavenly liturgy is made present in the Eucharistic liturgy.

To sum up, we can say that for Pannenberg Christ gives himself to the Church as an expiation, in obedience to the Father, as a way of cleansing, of atoninig for sin, and he gives himself to the Father in love, taking the Church with him.

2.2.2 Pannenberg on the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration

My second research question is formulated as follows:

2. What is the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration?

To understand Pannenberg’s view on the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration, we first need to make some general ecclesiological remarks, since he deals with the sacraments within ecclesiology.¹³² As we see above, Ratzinger sees the Church as she who «mediates the fellowship of individual believers with Jesus Christ.»¹³³ Pannenberg’s ecclesiology, and his Eucharistic theology, is then ultimately a *participation in Christ*.

After adressing the question of the real presence, Pannenberg starts analyzing the meaning behind the concept of ‘anamnesis’ and the offering of Christ: «The significance of the celebrating of the Supper as anamnesis for an understanding of Christ’s Presence in the bread and wine has been a theme of intensive discussion from the time of O. Casel’s work on the Christian mystery cult.»¹³⁴ Pannenberg starts with the Scriptural witness and with Christ’s command to «do this in remembrance of me.»¹³⁵ Pannenberg leaves aside «the question whether what the apostle has in view relates to recitation of the words of institution at the celebration, or finally to an added act of proclamation, i.e., the preaching of the gospel message that became a constituent part of

¹³⁰ Cf. Rise 1997:187-193; Grenz 2005:225-226

¹³¹ *SysT* III:293-304

¹³² *SysT* III:97-434, cf. Schwöbel 2005:140-143; Grenz 2005:201-252.

¹³³ *SysT* III:237

¹³⁴ *SysT* III:305-306 (cf. 305-311). See *SysT* III:306, n.657.

¹³⁵ Luke 22:19; 1Cor 11:24 (τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν).

the Christian worship.»¹³⁶ He rather connects this («the recollection linked to the Supper») to «Christ's atoning death.»¹³⁷ He then goes on to analyze what is meant by 'anamnesis' or 'remembering' (Gk. ἀνάμνησις). Anamnesis, Pannenberg maintains, is not merely a «recollection of a past event, which, being past, is remote from those present who are now alive.»¹³⁸ He points out that «the power of cultic recollection to re-present was deeply rooted already in Jewish tradition, particularly in connection with remembrance of the Passover.»¹³⁹ Pannenberg then connects this to the view of Christian worship and the Church Fathers, that we have «a presentation and re-presentation of the paschal mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus.»¹⁴⁰

But this, Pannenberg maintains, is not «merely an act of human remembering of which we are still the subjects but the self-representing of Jesus Christ by his Spirit.»¹⁴¹ Pannenberg cites Gottlieb Söhngen, who developed further the view of Casel, emphasizing that Christ is actually present through a remembrance of the Passion of Christ (*memoria passionis*), mediated by the Spirit.¹⁴² «Thanksgiving,» Pannenberg writes, «leads on to recollection of the institution of the Lord's Supper, at which bread and wine become the medium of Christ's presence.»¹⁴³ The words of institution are an integral part of this, but «within the framework of anamnesis and as its climax.»¹⁴⁴ But the whole celebration «has the character of anamnesis,» and 'recollection' is a «cultic re-presentation in the form of celebration.»¹⁴⁵ But it is important to note that while partly agreeing with the Catholic Church on re-presentation, Pannenberg rejects it if understood in its entirety.

It is important to note that Pannenberg follows Luther in emphasizing faith as *participation in Christ*.¹⁴⁶ Discussing the Offering and Presence of Christ, Pannenberg maintains that those who participate in the eucharistic liturgy «share in Jesus' path to martyrdom and all that involves.»¹⁴⁷

¹³⁶ SysT III:306

¹³⁷ SysT III:306

¹³⁸ SysT III:306

¹³⁹ SysT III:306

¹⁴⁰ SysT III:306

¹⁴¹ SysT III:306, cf. 320-324

¹⁴² SysT III:306-307, cf. Söhngen, *Christi Gegenwart in Glaube und Sakrament* (1967); Ulrich Kühn, *TRE* I:168.

¹⁴³ SysT III:308

¹⁴⁴ SysT III:308

¹⁴⁵ SysT III:308

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Luther's comments on Gal. 2:19-20 (*LW* 26:155-179). For a recent take on the early Lutheran views on justification and participation, see Olli-Pekka Vainio, *Justification and Participation in Christ: The Development of the Lutheran Doctrine of Justification from Luther to the Formula of Concord, (1580)*. Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions (Leiden: Brill 2008).

¹⁴⁷ SysT III:315

Because this involves the death of Christ, which «has the character of an expiatory offering, the community shares in this as it recalls it at celebrations of the supper.»¹⁴⁸ He maintains that this does not violate «Melanchthon’s distinction between the offering of thanksgiving and praise on the one hand and the sin offering on the other,»¹⁴⁹ because Melanchthon, unlike Luther, didn’t address the question of our participation in Christ. Pannenberg points out that this participation permeates Luther’s definition of faith, and his view of the Eucharist.¹⁵⁰ He even goes as far as pointing out that if the crucifixion is expiatory, «there can be no cogent [Lutheran] objection to the idea that believing celebration and reception of the Supper give a share not only in the “fruit” of Christ’s offering but also in its enactment,» interpreted in a participatory fashion.¹⁵¹ As is the Lutheran norm,¹⁵² Pannenberg relates the means of salvation to the issue of Justification,¹⁵³ and for him Justification is a *declaration* by God as righteous the persons who believe in Christ, which in reality means those who participate in Christ.¹⁵⁴

But it is important to note that Pannenberg maintains that the Eucharist isn’t an actual offering, but a participation in Christ: «Faith’s offering of praise and thanksgiving is then a letting oneself be taken up into the actual sacrifice of Jesus Christ, not an additional offering to God.»¹⁵⁵ Pannenberg points out that «the notion of such an additional offering» was one of the objects of critique in the Reformation.¹⁵⁶ This, he maintains, was not merely the point of a proper distinction between thank offering and sin offering, but a recognition that if the congregation’s sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving «is viewed as an independent subject of sacrifice alongside Jesus Christ,» this becomes «an additional work.»¹⁵⁷ The Church’s thank offering, Pannenberg maintains, is a participation in Christ, and the Church (and the Christian’s) thank offering «finds acceptance with the Father only as faith’s offering of praise, i.e. as participation in the praise Jesus Christ offered to God.»¹⁵⁸ He writes:

The celebration of the Lord’s Supper cannot be the church’s sacrifice in the sense of the offering to God on the altar, by the hands of the human priest, of a holy gift different from

¹⁴⁸ *SysT* III:315

¹⁴⁹ *SysT* III:315

¹⁵⁰ *SysT* III:315-316

¹⁵¹ *SysT* III:316

¹⁵² Cf. *CA* IV-V

¹⁵³ *SysT* III:237, cf. 211-236.

¹⁵⁴ *SysT* III:211-236

¹⁵⁵ *SysT* III:316

¹⁵⁶ *SysT* III:316

¹⁵⁷ *SysT* III:316, cf. n.694.

¹⁵⁸ *SysT* III:316

ourselves. It can be only the entry of the church into the self-giving of Christ, i.e., the offering of ourselves, by, with and in Jesus Christ, as a loving sacrifice in the signs of bread and wine. For nothing effects participation in the body and blood of Christ but entering into that which we receive.¹⁵⁹

Here Pannenberg points to Luther's understanding (derived from Paul's letter to the Romans) that we cannot offer ourselves but through Christ, and that

...we do not offer Christ but (...) he offers us, and in this manner it is acceptable and even useful that we should call the mass a sacrifice, not for its own sake, but because we offer ourselves with Christ, that is, we entrust ourselves to Christ with firm faith in his testament, and only thus, through him and his means, come before God with our prayers and praise and offerings not doubting that he will be our pastor or priest before the face of God in heaven.¹⁶⁰

It is not another work, but the believer's participation in Christ's offering, as he stands before God. Pannenberg's view of the presence of Christ in relation to sacrifice is deeply connected to his views of Justification and his focus on the *participation in Christ*. As we see above, Pannenberg points out that the Eucharist are to be seen in light of the sacrificial meals of the OT: «Meal and sacrifice go together at the Lord's Supper just as the covenant sacrifice and covenant meal did in Israel.»¹⁶¹ Through participating in the covenantal meal, Pannenberg maintains, you participate in Christ, in God's salvation and in God himself. And then «the participants also receive forgiveness of sins.»¹⁶² Pannenberg connects this to the various table fellowships of Christ, but points out that Christ gave it a «deeper meaning» through linking this to his death.¹⁶³ Pannenberg points to the fact that the eucharistic elements are given 'for you' (us), and that this act of giving has a expiatory character. We are granted fellowship with and salvation through Christ and this grants us forgiveness of sins, which he defines as a «removal of the barrier that separates sinners from that salvation.»¹⁶⁴ But this, he points out, is not the core. The core is the participation:

The motif of forgiveness is implied by [the fellowship with Jesus] and has its basis here. But this motif does not exhaust the meaning of fellowship with Jesus and with the salvation of God's reign. Forgiveness of sins means removal of the barrier that separates sinners from that salvation. But beyond that those to whom Jesus' mission was directed are drawn into

¹⁵⁹ *SysT* III:316, cf. n.696-697

¹⁶⁰ *SysT* III:317, cf. *WA* 6, 379, 3ff, cf. Rom 12:1-2

¹⁶¹ *SysT* III:319

¹⁶² *SysT* III:319

¹⁶³ *SysT* III:319

¹⁶⁴ *SysT* III:319

his sacrifice by participation in the Supper, namely, into his serving of others as witness to the divine lordship, and in this way they are together linked to the “body of Christ.” The divine lordship, then, is itself a living reality among them.¹⁶⁵

Pannenberg maintains a middle ground between Trent and the early Lutherans. He points out that Trent «rightly opposed restricting the eucharistic gift to forgiveness of sins (DS, 1655).»¹⁶⁶ He points out that Luther and the Lutheran reformation «was inclined one-sidedly to focus the gift and power of the Lord’s Supper on forgiveness of sins.»¹⁶⁷ But he points out that Luther also spoke, in the *Large Catechism*, of «the nourishing and strengthening of the new man as the power and usefulness of this sacrament.»¹⁶⁸

In a open discussion of my thesis, my supervisor pointed out that Pannenberg has a different emphasis than Luther had in the *Small Catechism*.¹⁶⁹ In his commentary on the Eucharist, specifically on Christ’s words about the eucharistic elements, that they are «[given], and shed for you, for the remission of sins,» Luther points out that «forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. *For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.*» (VI, emphasis added) But Pannenberg makes a different case, and can be said to turn this on its head, saying not that «where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation» but, rather, «where there is life and salvation, there is also forgiveness of sins.»

Pannenberg’s question — «Are we really to understand the Last Supper, the origin of the church’s Lord’s Supper, as an act of self-offering on Jesus’s part? And if so, in what sense?»¹⁷⁰ — is answered in a way that is in line with classical Lutheran theology in some regards but not all. His view of the sacrifice of Christ is essential here. In conformity to classical Lutheran theology Pannenberg notes that Christ is (by virtue of his body and blood) personally, sacrificially and sacramentally present in the Eucharist, as both offering and gift, «given for us.» But his notion of sacrifice focuses primarily on Christ’s giving of himself to us, and secondarily and derivately on the offering to God. The sacrifice to God, Pannenberg points out, was not something given directly to God, but his obedience to the mission, his doing the will of the Father.

Above we see that Pannenberg cites Gottlieb Söhngen, who emphasized that Christ is actually present through a remembrance of the Passion of Christ (*memoria passionis*), mediated by the

¹⁶⁵ *SysT* III:319-320

¹⁶⁶ *SysT* III:319, n.702 (*CofT* 13, can.5)

¹⁶⁷ *SysT* III:319, n.702, cf. *WA* 6, 513, 34-35; 6, 517, 34-35.

¹⁶⁸ *SysT* III:319, n.702

¹⁶⁹ This is found in the *Triglott Concordia*, which is available online: <http://bookofconcord.org/>.

¹⁷⁰ *SysT* III:317

Spirit.¹⁷¹ For Pannenberg, the work of the Spirit constitutes a major importance in his view of the Eucharist.¹⁷² Through the Spirit, the Church can give thanks to God. As we see above (section 3.2.1, on the real presence), Pannenberg puts much focus on the work of the Spirit and on the *epiclesis*.¹⁷³ And this is very important in his view of the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration. Pannenberg maintains that it is through the Spirit that the Church is able to pray and celebrate the Eucharist.¹⁷⁴ He writes:

As they [Christians] thank God that the Son gave up his life in faithfulness to the mission he had received from the Father, and as they themselves are drawn into this his sacrifice, believers offer God thanks for their own lives and for the gifts of his creation. For Jesus' giving of himself for fellowship with himself, with his filial relation to the Father, was related in the blessing of the bread and wine to the thanksgiving that by Jewish custom always went along with the breaking of bread and the blessing of the cup. Thanks for the gifts of creation and for personal life involve dedication to the calling received from God in glorification of the deity of God. Hence there can be sharing in the offering of Christ only in the form of thanksgiving related to the salvation received from God and to the gifts of his creation. Believers are hereby enabled to dedicate their own bodily lives as living and holy sacrifices that are pleasing to God in the service of God and of the future of his kingdom (Rom. 12:1).¹⁷⁵

And this, Pannenberg maintains, the believers do in the Spirit and are thus transformed by him.¹⁷⁶ We see here a strong connection between the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Church, where she offers praise and thanksgiving, and the sacrifice of Christ. As we see above, the sacrifice of Christ, while complete, is everlasting, perpetual, and it's presented in heaven by Christ.¹⁷⁷ Since Christ is personally present, and his sacrifice is *Christ personally*, this heavenly liturgy of Christ is made present in the Eucharistic celebration. To sum up Pannenberg's view on the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration, the Church is taken up in the self-offering of Christ, in his heavenly liturgy, and through him the Church offers up her Eucharistic sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving in the Spirit.

¹⁷¹ SysT III:306-307, cf. Söhngen, *Christi Gegenwart in Glaube und Sakrament* (1967); Ulrich Kühn, *TRE* I:168.

¹⁷² SysT III:306-208, cf. 320-324

¹⁷³ SysT III:320-324

¹⁷⁴ SysT III:324

¹⁷⁵ SysT III:324

¹⁷⁶ SysT III:324

¹⁷⁷ SysT II:443

2.2.3 Pannenberg on the role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration

My third research question is formulated as follows:

3. *What is the role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration?*

In this section I am going to analyze Pannenberg's view on the role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration. Before I go on, I must remark that Pannenberg mostly avoids the term 'priest,' preferring to use 'pastor' or 'minister.'¹⁷⁸ I use 'priest' because that is normal usage in my Norwegian context, and because 'priest' is (ultimately) derived from *πρεσβύτερος*, as Pannenberg also acknowledges.¹⁷⁹ It's interesting to note that 'priest' was eventually found to be an appropriate translation of *כֹּהֵן* and *ιερέυς*. This suggests that at the time of this choice, the Church believed that the new covenant elders (*οἱ πρεσβύτεροι*) had a significant sacrificial character.

According to Pannenberg, the priest has a double representative role in the Eucharistic celebration. He maintains that «the minister who with the whole congregation makes anamnesis of Christ's crucifixion for us, inasmuch as he repeats the words of institution that Jesus spoke, acts in the persona of Christ.»¹⁸⁰ Pannenberg maintains that the priest acts on behalf of Christ by doing what Christ did, by repeating the words of institution. His view of the priest as representative of Christ is connected to the preaching of the Gospel. Reflecting on the acclamations around the Scripture readings at Mass and other utterances of worship, Pannenberg notes that «the constitutive significance of the words of institution for the sacraments» answers to these acclamations, and that «God himself is the subject of, respectively, the speech and the effect, while the servant of the Word stands, speaks and acts in the place of Christ.»¹⁸¹ We see from this that Pannenberg claims that to utter the words of institution is to act *in persona Christi*. Pannenberg also notes that the priest is acting *in persona Christi* as a representative of the Church, who acts on behalf of Christ (primarily in relation to humans). Therefore, by acting *in persona Christi*, the priest acts *in persona Ecclesiae*, since the Church (whom he represents) acts *in persona Christi*. But as Pannenberg presents this, this is a representation before the Church, not before God. When the priests administer the gifts and sacraments to the faithful — when he preaches the Word of God, when he baptizes, when he distributes the Eucharist¹⁸² — he is acting *in persona Christi*, before

¹⁷⁸ *SysT* III:126-128, esp. n.90

¹⁷⁹ *SysT* III:128, n.90

¹⁸⁰ *SysT* III:106

¹⁸¹ Pannenberg 2002:25. Translated from Norwegian.

¹⁸² This is not to be taken exhaustively. Pannenberg has a wider definition of the sacraments, which includes matrimony (Cf. *SysT* III:336-369).

the Church.

Pannenberg maintain that while he (and the reformers) rejects the Roman Catholic view of Christological re-presentation in the Eucharist,¹⁸³ it is not because this represents a ‘re-sacrificing’ of Christ. Discussing the issue of *anamnesis*, Pannenberg points towards the Catholic counter-reformatory idea of re-presentation. «Trent interpreted [the Eucharistic sacrifice] as a re-presentation of the offering that Christ made once and for all on the cross (DS, 1740)¹⁸⁴ and linked this view to the making of anamnesis in the eucharistic liturgy.»¹⁸⁵ This, Pannenberg maintains, was in contrast to the medieval approach:

When Trent stressed the once-for-allness of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross (DS, 1740),¹⁸⁶ it set aside even the appearance of a symbolical repetition on the plane of sacramental offering by treating anamnesis as an *appropriating* rather than a repeating of the sacrifice on the cross. This was all the plainer the more strongly the thought of sacramental “re-presentation” was related to the Supper itself as a celebration of the institution and subordinated to an approach in terms of anamnesis.¹⁸⁷

Pannenberg points out that Luther (citing John Chrysostom¹⁸⁸) emphasized that the Eucharist had a clear sacrificial aspect, but as a recollection of Christ’s sacrifice once for all.¹⁸⁹ Luther criticized his Catholic opponents because they maintained, in the words of Pannenberg, «that sacrifice was added to recollection as an offering of Christ, who is really present after consecration.»¹⁹⁰ More ‘diplomatic’ replies were given by Kaspar Schatzgeyer and Cardinal Cajetan, who connected the sacrifice more closely to the concept of ‘eucharistic recollection.’ Pannenberg writes:¹⁹¹

The priest [according to Schatzgeyer and Cajetan] does not act in his own name but in the *persona Christi* when he speaks Christ’s words, and the offering itself is not different from Christ’s unique offering but simply makes this one offering present in the repeated celebration of the Eucharist.¹⁹² Trent described the matter similarly. At the mass we have a presentation and application of the one sacrifice of Christ and its efficacy.¹⁹³

¹⁸³ *SysT* III:308-311

¹⁸⁴ *CofT* 22, chap.1

¹⁸⁵ *SysT* III:308

¹⁸⁶ *CofT* 22, chap.1

¹⁸⁷ *SysT* III:308. See 308-311 for a discussions of the debates of the early Reformation period.

¹⁸⁸ *WA* 57, 218, 1; Chrysostom, *Hebr. comm.* 17.3 (Heb. 9:25), PG, 63, 131.

¹⁸⁹ *SysT* III:309

¹⁹⁰ *SysT* III:309

¹⁹¹ *SysT* III:309-310

¹⁹² Cf. Erwin Iserloh, *TRE* I:125-126; *ST* 3a, 83.1, ad 1.

¹⁹³ Cf. DS, 1740 (*CofT* 22, chap.1)

Pannenberg identifies some problems with this approach, pointing out that since «the offering of the sacrifice in its sacramental form (*ratio offerendi*) still differs here from the sacrifice made once and for all on the cross,» the sacramental offering seems to be «something additional to the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ.»¹⁹⁴ The reformators, Pannenberg points out, saw the liturgy (and the Christian life as a whole) «as a thank offering to God along the lines of Rom. 12:1 but could not accept it as a sin offering. Modern ecumenical discussion has confirmed that here was the real point at issue.»¹⁹⁵

Pannenberg maintains that the whole of anamnesis is important, but he still puts emphasis on the words of institution. They ‘effect’ the presence, in relation to the anamnesis: «In this regard the words of institution are still decisive. These words, however, have their place within anamnesis, indeed, at its center.»¹⁹⁶ This, however, does not constitute a ‘magical’ view of the Eucharist, with emphasis on the «priestly power to effect change. Only in relation to believing recollection in which congregation and celebrant are one is Jesus Christ present to his people in the bread and wine according to his promise.»¹⁹⁷

We see that Pannenberg maintains that by partaking of the Eucharist, the recipients are partaking of the sacrifice of the Cross, «not only in the “fruit” of Christ’s offering but also in its enactment.»¹⁹⁸ But he also rejects the classical Roman Catholic conception that the priest is instituted to make sacrifices,¹⁹⁹ and the specific Roman Catholic view that the Eucharist is «offered *in reparation* for the sins of the living and the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal benefits from God.»²⁰⁰

To understand Pannenberg’s view of the role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration, we need to recall his view of Christ and of Christ’s high-priestly ministry. He writes:

The self-offering of Jesus is a sacrifice to the Father only inasmuch as it expresses his obedience to the mission he received from the Father... If, then, we call the Lord’s Supper a sacrifice, what Jesus himself did at the Last Supper must be viewed as a sign-act of sacrifice. What we have in the sacrifice of Jesus is not a direct offering to God but Jesus’ obedience to his mission to the world as witness to the presence of salvation of the rule of God. His death was the consequence of this obedience. Because the goal of his mission, the presence of his rule, to significant form in what he did at the supper, the bread distributed at the

¹⁹⁴ *SysT* III:310

¹⁹⁵ *SysT* III:310

¹⁹⁶ *SysT* III:311

¹⁹⁷ *SysT* III:311

¹⁹⁸ *SysT* III:316

¹⁹⁹ *SysT* III:316-318, cf. 392-399

²⁰⁰ CCC 1414

supper could become a sign of his dedication to his mission to make the divine lordship present among us, and the cup that was handed around could become a sign of the sealing of this dedication by his death and of the new covenant of God with us that has its basis in that death. Hence the Lord's Supper, especially by the cup saying, gives us the meaning of the approaching death of Jesus on the cross. Meal and sacrifice go together at the Lord's Supper just as the covenant sacrifice and covenant meal did in Israel.²⁰¹

Pannenberg maintain that when we say that Christ offered himself, we must say that he offered himself to and for the Church, and that it was only secondarily an offering to God (the Father). This is a very important point, and has consequences for his view of the 'special' or 'ordained' priesthood. We see above that Pannenberg maintains that «[only] in relation to believing recollection in which congregation and celebrant are one is Jesus Christ present to his people in the bread and wine according to his promise.»²⁰² And this, Pannenberg maintains, is deeply connected to the work of the Spirit.²⁰³ Pannenberg puts much focus on the work of the Spirit and on the *epiclesis*. He maintains that this «can enrich Western eucharistic theology in many ways.»²⁰⁴ Pannenberg rejects, or is highly skeptical of, the view that the priest, acting *in persona Christi*, has the power to make Christ present by the words of institution. This is the work of the Spirit, and the anamnesis of the priest is a prayer or a petition. He writes:

Primarily it resists the restricting of the idea of Christ being made present in bread and wine to recitation of the words of institution by the celebrant and the related notion that the priest has special power to effect the change. Human action does not bring about Christ's presence, not even in the sense that Jesus Christ has tied himself to what the celebrant does. Similarly, we have to see that *epiclesis* means prayer. As such it does not itself effect Christ's presence in bread and wine. Only the Spirit himself to whom prayer is made can do that. This is precisely what is expressed by *prayer* for the Spirit.²⁰⁵

When the priest, during the Eucharistic celebration, is acting *in persona Christi*, he is not (according to Pannenberg) offering Christ. He is giving the Church a share in Christ, through pronouncing the words of institution. He understands these words, *in their liturgical setting*, to be uttered to the Church, like Christ uttered them to the Apostles.²⁰⁶ Addressing the public pastoral ministry of the Church, in which the pastor or minister is 'regularly called,'²⁰⁷ Pannenberg points out that what «makes the official ministry distinctive is that it discharges [its] function

²⁰¹ *SysT* III:318-319

²⁰² *SysT* III:311

²⁰³ *SysT* III:320-324

²⁰⁴ *SysT* III:322

²⁰⁵ *SysT* III:322

²⁰⁶ *SysT* III:329, cf. 106.386-392.

²⁰⁷ Cf. *CA/Apol.* XIV

publicly.»²⁰⁸ We see here first that he characterizes this as a ‘ministry,’ something which suggests that it is not directed towards God, but towards the Church. Pannenberg doesn’t think that acting *in persona Christi* is the most important part of the public ministry:

The basis of the distinctiveness is not that office bearers act in the stead of Christ (*in persona Christi*), as the bull of union for the Armenians stated at Florence in 1439 with reference to priests administering the sacrament (DS, 1321; cf. LG 21 and 10).²⁰⁹ If it is true that in virtue of their participation in Jesus Christ on the basis of faith all Christians share also in his ministry and mission, then it follows, as Luther wrote in 1520, that each is a Christ to the others.²¹⁰ Sharing in the mission of Christ, especially in his priestly ministry, implies interceding for others as Christ’s representatives.²¹¹

But he points out that this is important in regards to the Eucharist:

As regards the church’s ministry in particular, however, here again the only unique point is that this activity *in persona Christi* is a public activity in the name of the whole church. We see this especially in the presiding of church leaders at celebrations of the Eucharist²¹² when they celebrate the eucharistic anamnesis on behalf of the whole congregation, so that all the members share in their action when *in persona Christi* they pronounce the words of Jesus over the bread and wine. The public discharge in Christ’s name of the commission given to the whole church takes place also in proclamation of the Word as the Word is heard and accepted, not just as that of the pastor but as that of Christ himself, and therefore as the Word of God, the same applying to the pronouncing of forgiveness of sins that ministers proclaim and pronounce in virtue of the authority of Jesus Christ that is given to the whole church, and therefore in Christ’s stead.²¹³

We see from this that in one sense, the priest is interceding before God on behalf of the Church, *in persona Christi*, but not as in offering Christ, but as in giving the Church, the congregation, a share in the salvation given by Christ in the sacraments. When officiating in the Eucharistic celebration, the priest acts *in persona Christi* primarily before (and on behalf of) the Church. Commenting on the link between sacramentality and priestly ordination,²¹⁴ Pannenberg points out that Luther’s rejection of the medieval Catholic ordination practice was rooted in its sacrificial nature. Catholic ordination, Pannenberg points out, consisted of

...the handing over of the chalice and paten with the words: “Take authority to offer in the church the sacrifice for the living and the dead.”²¹⁵

²⁰⁸ SysT III:388

²⁰⁹ See SysT III:388, n.875

²¹⁰ Cf. *De lib. chr.* 27; WA 7, 66, 3ff.

²¹¹ SysT III:388-389

²¹² Cf. BEM 2:14 (with commentary)

²¹³ SysT III:389

²¹⁴ SysT III:393-397

²¹⁵ SysT III:393

Pannenberg maintains that Luther rightly rejected that, and he points out that this has been reformed somewhat in the Catholic Church. In 1947, Pannenberg notes,

Pius XII [concluded] from liturgical inquires into the history of ordination that laying on of hands is the proper sign (or matter, *materia*) of ordination (DS, 3859)²¹⁶ and state expressly that the handing over of the chalice and paten (*traditio instrumentorum*) is not to be seen as an essential part of the sacrament according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (DS, 3858).²¹⁷ This declaration created a new situation in ecumenical discussions of ordination.²¹⁸

Pannenberg's main point is that, as we see above, the sacrifice consists of Christ giving himself for and to his people. His sacrifice is basically being true to the mission — that he became one with us in order to drag ourselves to himself. Pannenberg holds that Christ drags us to himself by means of certain signatory acts (or 'sign-acts') — primarily baptism and the Eucharist. Thus, on Pannenberg's definition of (the) sacrifice (of Christ), the Eucharist is a sacrifice, or at least sacrificial. If the sacrifice of Christ is his mission, and his mission involves dragging us to himself in baptism and sustaining us through the Eucharist, it follows that the Eucharist is sacrificial; part of the sacrifice of Christ. But this is not something which is primarily directed towards God, but towards the Church. To sum up Pannenberg's view on the role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration, with some reservations we can say that the actions of the priest are deeply connected to Pannenberg's views of the role of Christ and of the Church. When the priest, as *pastor* or *minister*, celebrates the Eucharist, he acts *in persona Ecclesiae* before God, offering the sacrifice of the Church, and *in persona Christi* before the Church, administering the gifts and sacraments to the faithful. And although Pannenberg rejects part of the Catholic position on the priestly authority to sacrifice, he understands his position on anamnesis as partly compatible with the Catholic position:

The second, more significant difference in eucharistic understanding has to do with the Roman Catholic position that views that which is brought to God as a sacrifice—a view that, according to the judgment of Reformation critics, is an unacceptable competition to the all-sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Yet, ecumenical discussion has even reached understanding on this topic. The Eucharist is to be celebrated as a remembrance of the unique sacrifice of Christ on the cross, and, through that remembering, the celebrants allow themselves to be drawn into Christ's giving of his life. This new interpretation of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist, as well as the agreement concerning the meaning of transubstantiation, however, needs to be given expression in a joint declaration analogous

²¹⁶ Apostolic Constitution, «Sacramentum Ordinis», 4 (November 30, 1947).

²¹⁷ «Sacramentum Ordinis», op.cit., 3

²¹⁸ *Syst* III:393

to the one on justification (1999). That said, the basic lines of an understanding on these topics have already been won in ecumenical discussion.²¹⁹

²¹⁹ Pannenberg 2006:171

3 Analysis of Ratzinger's view

As pointed out above, I have identified some important research questions. In the following, I will analyze Ratzinger's views on the Eucharist, and especially its sacrificial character, with these in mind.

3.1 Introductory remarks on Ratzinger

In this section I will briefly present Ratzinger's view on sacraments in general, which is found particularly in *The Feast Of Faith* (esp. part 1:2),²²⁰ and his view on the real presence, which is primarily found in chapter 5 of *God Is Near Us*, and chapter 4 of *The Spirit of the Liturgy*.²²¹ This will present us with the background against which we must understand his view of the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist.²²²

Ratzinger defines the Eucharist as a part of systematic theology, but he points out that this placement haven't been so obvious in liturgist circles. In *The Feast of Faith*, Ratzinger refers to the liturgical debates from the interwar and postwar periods, where one started talking about the distinction between the *content* (Ger. *Gehalt*) and the *form* (Ger. *Gestalt*) of the Eucharistic celebration.²²³ The 'form' or 'structure' of Mass was no longer uninteresting, but was conceived of as a 'living form' or an 'inner expression' of the spiritual content of Mass.²²⁴ «They found that this form, or structure, was a theological and spiritual entity with an integrity of its own.»²²⁵ «Now the structure of the Mass, the form in which it manifests itself, ... was seen as the inner expression of the spiritual reality which takes place within the Mass.»²²⁶ This category of 'form' (which was close to unknown before this time) entered the debate and «gave birth to liturgical scholarship in the modern sense.»²²⁷

It became important to get 'behind' the individual rites, to find the 'basic form' which 'in-

²²⁰ *Feast* 33-60. For his basic theological conception, see *Principles* 15-190. See also Hahn (2006:97-140; 2009:13-24).

²²¹ *GINU* 74-93; *SofL* 85-91

²²² For biographical information, see Gösta Hallonsten's biography/monography from the book *Moderne teologi* (ed., Ståle Johannes Kristiansen & Svein Rise. Kristiansand: Høyskoleforlaget 2008), pp.324-337. See also Rowland 2008; Hahn 2006; Hahn 2009.

²²³ *Feast* 33-50. For a good introduction to the debate and to Ratzinger's points, see Hauke 2011:2-3.

²²⁴ *Feast* 33-60

²²⁵ *Feast* 33

²²⁶ *Feast* 34

²²⁷ *Feast* 34

forms' these, and acts as a 'key' to understand the content of the Eucharist. This 'key' could then be used in a 'reformatory' way: one could use it to identify the 'essential' and 'non-essential' prayers and gestures, and reform the liturgy in light of this. Thus liturgics became a stand alone discipline, alongside dogmatics and Canon Law. This 'form' was (commonly) identified as a meal. Very often, and especially in evangelical and in German (and Norwegian) Lutheran theology, the Eucharist is called 'the Supper'²²⁸ or 'the Lord's Supper.'²²⁹ «The determining structure is that of the meal,» said German Catholic liturgist Joseph Pascher.²³⁰ For Ratzinger, this is basically a (catholic) return to Luther's view on the Eucharist as a meal. Ratzinger points out that in answer to this objection, it was said that the *form* of the Eucharist (a meal) was not an obstacle to an understanding of the *content* of the Eucharist (a sacrifice).²³¹ «What was presented liturgically in the structure of the meal could without difficulty mediate what, dogmatically speaking, was a sacrifice.»²³² The Eucharist was thus (partially) removed from dogmatics, something Ratzinger holds was a wrong move. He questions this sharp distinction between 'form' and 'content.' «Particularly if the structure is not merely a ceremonial form, but at its core an indispensable manifestation of its essential content, it makes no sense absolutely to separate the one from the other.»²³³ This confusion on the relationship between dogmatics and liturgics is «the central problem of the liturgical reform. Failure to deal with it has resulted in a great many of the individual problems which have since preoccupied us.»²³⁴ Above I point out that Ratzinger's theology is decisively Christological. He presents us with four Christological theses in relation to dogma and preaching,²³⁵ the third of which represents a good starting point for an analysis of his view concerning (the sacrificial aspect of) the Eucharist: «*Christian preaching is not the presentation of a doctrinal system but, rather, training in Christian reality, the crystallization point of which is the eucharistic celebration.*»²³⁶

When it comes to the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, Ratzinger asks some important questions:²³⁷ (1) «Does the Bible actually say anything like that? Does it present us with this, or

²²⁸ Ger. *das Abendmahl*; no. *nattverden*.

²²⁹ Ger. *das Herrenmahl*; no. *Herrens nattverd*.

²³⁰ *Eucharistia. Gestalt und Vollzug* (Münster-Krailing 1947), p.27. Quoted in *Feast* 35.

²³¹ *Feast* 35-36

²³² *Feast* 35

²³³ *Feast* 35-36

²³⁴ *Feast* 36. For more on Ratzinger's critique of the (both Catholic and Protestant) calling into question of the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist, and sacrifice in general, see *BXVI* 142-144.

²³⁵ See *D/P* 40-55

²³⁶ *D/P* 51

²³⁷ *GINU* 76

is it just the naïve misunderstanding of a later age, which transposed the exalted and spiritual reality of Christianity down to a lesser ecclesiastical version?» (2) «Is it truly possible for a body to share itself out into all places and all times? Does this not simply contradict the limitations that are of the essence of a body?» (3) «Hasn't modern science, with everything it says about "substance" and material being, so obviously rendered obsolete those dogmas of the Church that relate to this that in the world of science we just finally have to throw them on the scrap heap, since we are unable to reconcile them with contemporary thought?»

He points out that the debates in the sixteenth century had too much emphasis on the meaning of 'is' (Gk. *εἰμί*; Lt. *est*), because such a dispute, over a single word «can only lead up a blind alley.»²³⁸ What is needed, he maintains, is a more thorough look at the context.²³⁹ And by 'context' Ratzinger doesn't merely refer to the immediate context of the Last Supper, but to the whole of Christ's ministry, as recorded in Scripture, in particular John 6: «Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ... My flesh is food indeed.» (John 6:53.55) He reads this literally, and maintains that in Scripture the real presence of Christ has both an objective and a subjective sense. Christ is really, substantially present. But our participation is also important. Ratzinger points out that we are taken up into Christ, citing Augustine's analogy of food, where the things are turned around: Instead of us taking up into ourselves the food we eat, we are taken up into Christ by partaking of the Eucharist.²⁴⁰ To explain this, Ratzinger first points out that in Scripture 'body' (as in «this is my body») does not merely denote physicality, in «contradistinction to the spirit,» but «rather the whole person, in whom body and spirit are indivisibly one.»²⁴¹ This body of Christ, Ratzinger points out,²⁴² is «given up for you.» It is «existing-for-others» and can therefore, on a personal level, «be shared out.» The body, he points out, is both that which separates us from others, which mark our personal existence, and a 'bridge,' that through which we express ourselves and through which other persons meet us.²⁴³ «[It] is both boundary and means of communion in one.»²⁴⁴ Because of this, Ratzinger points out, we can either be «more inclined toward shutting off or more inclined toward communion.»²⁴⁵ Christ inclined fully towards communion, especially through

²³⁸ *GINU* 76

²³⁹ *GINU* 76-77

²⁴⁰ *GINU* 77-78, cf. 77, n.2.

²⁴¹ *GINU* 79

²⁴² *GINU* 79

²⁴³ *GINU* 79-80

²⁴⁴ *GINU* 80

²⁴⁵ *GINU* 80, cf. 80-81

his resurrection which «means quite simply that the body ceases to be a limit and that its capacity for communion remains.»²⁴⁶ He explains this through transubstantiation,²⁴⁷ by pointing out that ‘substance’ was used as a counterweight to the ‘naïve’ view of reality as merely ‘physical’ or ‘empirical.’²⁴⁸ He makes three important points:

a. There is a «real transformation» taking place in the Eucharist.²⁴⁹ This means that «it cannot be the case that the Body of Christ comes to add itself to the bread, as if bread and Body were two similar things that could exist as two “substances”, in the same way, side by side.»²⁵⁰ The body of Christ is «greater than bread» which means that in the transformation the gifts (bread and wine) are taken «up into a higher order» and is changed «even if we cannot measure what happens.»²⁵¹ Ratzinger explains this by pointing out that when a thing is taken up into a higher order, like food taken up into the body or when a material thing is taken up into a living organism, «it remains the same, and yet as part of a new whole it is itself changed.»²⁵² Thus, when Christ takes up into himself the bread and wine they are transformed, «even if, from a purely physical point of view, they remain the same.»²⁵³ From this Ratzinger makes a more general point: «Wherever Christ has been present, afterward it cannot be just as if nothing had happened. There, where he has laid his hand, something new has come to be.»²⁵⁴ Ratzinger connects this explicitly to the transformation of the Christian person (and, finally, of the world). This doesn’t merely imply an argument against consubstantiation,²⁵⁵ but also against the soteriological and anthropological views concerning mankind’s twofold nature as sinner and just (Lt. *simul iustus et peccator*).

b. The transformation of the elements are objective, not merely something subjective we ‘project’ unto them.²⁵⁶ It is reality, not a game. If it were a game, the gifts of bread and wine would, in the Eucharistic celebration, «be only temporarily, for cultic purposes subject to a “change of use”,»²⁵⁷ Ratzinger rejects this idea of transignification, and points out that the reality is that

²⁴⁶ *GINU* 81, cf. *SofL* 86-91

²⁴⁷ *GINU* 83-93

²⁴⁸ *GINU* 84-85

²⁴⁹ *GINU* 85, cf. 85-87

²⁵⁰ *GINU* 86

²⁵¹ *GINU* 86

²⁵² *GINU* 86, cf. n.8

²⁵³ *GINU* 86

²⁵⁴ *GINU* 86

²⁵⁵ Luther rejected the term, but I fail to see the major difference between consubstantiation and Luther’s view (‘sacramental union’).

²⁵⁶ *GINU* 87-88

²⁵⁷ *GINU* 87

of a genuine transformation which the Catholic Church calls ‘transubstantiation.’²⁵⁸ Ratzinger laments the modern reduction of everything from being to ‘function.’²⁵⁹ «The significance of the Eucharist as a sacrament of faith,» he points out, «consists precisely in that it takes us out of functionality and reaches the basis of reality.»²⁶⁰

c. Ratzinger points out that from the fact of *transubstantiation* (and not merely transignification), it follows that the presence of Christ remains.²⁶¹ And because of this enduring presence, Christ is adored in the Host.²⁶² Ratzinger presents arguments in favor of Eucharistic adoration, but I will not deal with them here.²⁶³

In sum, Ratzinger maintains and defends the doctrine of transubstantiation, contrasting it particularly with consubstantiation and with the modern concepts of transignification and transfinalization, and he maintains that it is the whole person of Christ who is present, alongside His redemptive work.²⁶⁴

3.2 Ratzinger on the sacrificial character of the Eucharist

3.2.1 Ratzinger on the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist

My first research question is formulated as follows:

1. What is the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist?

In this section I am going to analyze Ratzinger’s view on the high-priestly ministry of Christ. I cannot here discuss the whole of Ratzinger’s Christology, but will focus on the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist, and his role as sacrifice.²⁶⁵

²⁵⁸ *GINU* 87-88, cf. 87, n.9

²⁵⁹ *GINU* 88

²⁶⁰ *GINU* 88

²⁶¹ *GINU* 88-93

²⁶² *GINU* 88

²⁶³ For a brief Aristotelian-Thomistic treatment of transubstantiation, see Peter A. Kwasniewski, «Substance, Accident, and Transubstantiation» (*Latin Mass: A Journal of Catholic Culture and Tradition* 18:1, 2009), pp.8-13. Available online: <http://bit.ly/LmgAF7> [retrieved from catholictradition.blogspot.com, Nov. 21, 2012].

²⁶⁴ *Feast* 90-96; *GINU* 87-88; *DCE* 12-13

²⁶⁵ For Ratzinger’s Christology, see *D/P* 40-51.117-120; *Jesus* I-II; Ratzinger, *Behold The Pierced One: An Approach to a Spiritual Christology* (Kindle Edition. Translated by Graham Harrison. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press 2011), pp.13-46. See also Hahn 2009:143-146.

As we see above, for Ratzinger the presence of Christ in the Eucharist is the sacramental, substantial and personal presence of Christ.²⁶⁶ For him, it is important to point out that it is the entire Christ who is present, and therefore also all that he does.²⁶⁷ As pope, in *Deus Caritas Est*, Ratzinger addresses the loving sacrifice of Christ,²⁶⁸ and maintains that «Jesus gave this act of oblation an enduring presence through his institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper.»²⁶⁹ To understand Ratzinger’s view on how the sacrifice of Christ is given «an enduring presence,» we need not only understand his view on the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, as we have analyzed above, but also his view on the high-priestly ministry, and his work in the liturgy.

In a lecture on the theology of the liturgy (delivered in a conference July 22-24, 2001),²⁷⁰ Ratzinger starts by citing Vatican II’s definition of the liturgy, in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, as «the work of Christ the Priest and of His Body which is the Church.»²⁷¹ He sees in this use of the ‘work’ of Christ a double meaning:

“By this Mystery, in dying He has destroyed our death, and in rising He has restored life.” At first sight, in these two sentences, the phrase “the work of Christ” seems to have been used in two different senses. “The work of Christ” refers first of all to the historical, redemptive actions of Jesus, his death and his Resurrection; at the same time, the celebration of the liturgy is called “the work of Christ.”²⁷²

Ratzinger point out that these two different usages «are inseparably linked,» that they have both interior and exterior qualities, and that this ‘paschal mystery’ is both historical and eternal, transcendent.²⁷³ Ratzinger goes on critiquing the (both Catholic and Protestant) calling into question of the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist, and sacrifice in general.²⁷⁴ He quotes *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: «In the liturgy, through which, especially in the divine Sacrifice of the Eucharist, ‘the work of Redemption is carried on,’ the faithful are most fully led to express and show to others the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church.»²⁷⁵ After addressing the principled

²⁶⁶ Cf. *GINU* 74-93

²⁶⁷ *GINU* 76-83; *SofL* 88

²⁶⁸ *DCE* 12

²⁶⁹ *DCE* 13

²⁷⁰ *BXVI* 141-154

²⁷¹ *BXVI* 141, cf. *SaCo* 7. (The official text of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, found at the Vatican website, uses ‘action,’ while Ratzinger quotes it as ‘work.’)

²⁷² *BXVI* 141, cf. *SaCo* 5-7.

²⁷³ *BXVI* 141, cf. 141-142

²⁷⁴ *BXVI* 142-144. I have treated this briefly in section 3.1.

²⁷⁵ *BXVI* 142, cf. *SaCo* 2.

of theological research,²⁷⁶ Ratzinger addresses Easter and sacrifice.²⁷⁷ Here Ratzinger makes the point that the self-offering of Christ didn't merely happen on the Cross; it started in the Upper Room. And without the Last Supper, the Cross is nothing but an execution. Ratzinger sees the Last Supper and the Cross as a single event, and maintains that the Romans didn't take his life on the Cross, because he gave at in the Last Supper:

Jesus transforms death into the spiritual act of affirmation, into the act of self-sharing love; into the act of adoration, which is offered to God, then from God is made available to men. Both are essentially interdependent: the words at the Last Supper without the death would be, so to speak, an issue of unsecured currency; and again, the death without these words would be a mere execution without any discernable point to it. Yet the two together constitute this new event, in which the senselessness of death is given meaning; in which what is irrational is transformed and made rational and articulate; in which the destruction of love, which is what death means in itself, becomes in fact the means of verifying and establishing it, of its enduring constancy.²⁷⁸

We also see this elsewhere, where points out that the early Church, «on the basis of the words of the Last Supper,» knew that Christ's death was a sacrifice «because the Last Supper would be an empty gesture without the reality of the cross and the Resurrection, which is anticipated in it and made accessible for all time in its interior content.»²⁷⁹ To explain this further, we must take a look at Ratzinger's view on the high-priestly prayer of Christ.²⁸⁰ In volum II of his book on Christ, Ratzinger, after being consecrated Pope,²⁸¹ addresses the high-priestly prayer of Christ.²⁸²

Ratzinger starts by pointing out that while the term for this prayer — *the high-priestly prayer of Christ* — is somewhat new, being introduced by Lutheran theologian David Chytraeus,²⁸³ it captures the essence of this prayer, an essence that had been alluded to by the Church Fathers.²⁸⁴ Ratzinger also points to André Feuillet's monograph on John 17, in which is found a saying of medieval Benedictine theologian Rupert of Deutz: «The High Priest who was himself the one

²⁷⁶ BXVI 145-146

²⁷⁷ BXVI 146-148, cf. *Feast* 60, n.1. See also Hahn 2009:137-161.

²⁷⁸ GINU 29-30

²⁷⁹ BXVI 147, cf. Hahn 2009:157-162

²⁸⁰ *Jesus* II:76-102

²⁸¹ In these books on Christ he uses both Joseph Ratzinger and Benedict XVI, because these are his personal reflections, and not any official papal teaching. See *Jesus* I:xi-xxiv. «Everyone is free, then, to contradict me. I would only ask my readers for that initial goodwill without which there can be no understanding.» (xxiv)

²⁸² *Jesus* II:76-102

²⁸³ Chytraeus was born on February 26, 1530 and died on June 25, 1600. See the entrance on him in the *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, vol. III (Ed., Samuel M. Jackson. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House), pp.116-117. Available online: <http://bit.ly/Oaaidf> [pdf-file, retrieved from ccel.org, Nov. 21, 2012].

²⁸⁴ For instance Cyril of Alexandria, cf. *Jesus* II:76.

making atonement as well as the expiatory offering, both priest and sacrifice, implored this for us.»²⁸⁵

For Ratzinger, *Yom Kippur* is the background of the high-priestly prayer.²⁸⁶ On *Yom Kippur*, Ratzinger points out,²⁸⁷ the High Priest «is required, through the appropriate sacrifice (two male goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering, a young animal: cf. 16:5-6), to make atonement, first for himself, then for “his house”, in other words for the priestly clan of Israel in general, and finally for the whole community of Israel (cf. 16:17).»²⁸⁸ Ratzinger points out that this is to be done in order to restore Israel as the *holy* people of God, «in the midst of the world.»²⁸⁹ This idea of God’s covenant is integral to biblical thought, and Ratzinger points out that rabbinic theology maintains that this idea «is prior to the idea of the creation of the world and supplies its inner motive.»²⁹⁰ The whole cosmos was a means for this covenant between God and man, and *Yom Kippur* marked its restoration.²⁹¹

Ratzinger points out that we find the structure of *Yom Kippur* in the high-priestly prayer of Christ:

[Just] as the high priest makes atonement for himself, for the priestly clan, and for the whole community of Israel, so Jesus prays for himself, for the Apostles, and finally for all who will come to believe in him through their word—for the Church of all times (cf. Jn 17:20). He sanctifies «himself,» and he obtains the sanctification of those who are his.²⁹²

Ratzinger points out that the high-priestly prayer of Christ «is the consummation of the Day of Atonement, the eternally accessible feast, as it were, of God’s reconciliation with men.»²⁹³ He goes on to explore the relationship between this offering and the Eucharist,²⁹⁴ and points out that this isn’t John’s original account of the institution, but that there exists a connection «on a deeper level.»²⁹⁵ Ratzinger maintains that through the self-offering of Christ, through his sanctifying of himself in his prayer, «the ritual of the Day of Atonement is transformed into

²⁸⁵ *Jesus* II:76. In latin: *Haec pontifex summus propitiator ipse et propitiatorium, sacerdos et sacrificium pro nobis oravit.*

²⁸⁶ *Jesus* II:77-82

²⁸⁷ Cf. Lev. 16; 23:26-32

²⁸⁸ *Jesus* II:77

²⁸⁹ *Jesus* II:78

²⁹⁰ *Jesus* II:78

²⁹¹ *Jesus* II:78

²⁹² *Jesus* II:78

²⁹³ *Jesus* II:79

²⁹⁴ *Jesus* II:79-80

²⁹⁵ *Jesus* II:80

prayer.»²⁹⁶ Ratzinger connects this to the Greek concept of reasonable or spiritual sacrifices, *θυσία λογική*, and what Paul (in Romans 12:1) called *λογικός λατρεία*, ‘reasonable worship,’ i.e. «worship shaped by the word, structured on reason.»²⁹⁷ «I am persuaded that the Roman Canon has in its petition hit upon the real intention of Paul in his exhortation in Romans 12.»²⁹⁸ In Roman Catholic liturgy, the Roman Canon is the Eucharistic prayer of the Extraordinary Form, and it is continued in a reformed manner in the first Eucharistic prayer of the Ordinary Form.²⁹⁹ As backgrounds for that, he points to influences from both Hebrew and Hellenistic sources.³⁰⁰ Ratzinger writes points out that as Israel progressed through salvation history, they

was beginning to grasp that the sacrifice pleasing to God is a man pleasing to God and that prayer, the grateful praise of God, is thus the true sacrifice in which we give ourselves back to him, thereby renewing ourselves and the world. The heart of Israel’s worship had always been what we express in the Latin word *memoriale: remembrance*.³⁰¹

The Hebrew examples he points to is the Paschal liturgy, with its blessing, the *Berakah*, and the late Hebrew concept of ‘the sacrifice of praise.’ He also points out that the Eucharistic liturgy have as its background «the mature religion of the Hellenistic world, which was increasingly close to Judaism.»³⁰² The most significant of these influences is the late Hellenistic concept of verbal sacrifice.³⁰³

This verbal sacrifice, Ratzinger maintains, is made complete in Christ’s high-priestly prayer. He points out that in the case of Christ, this is no «ordinary word,» but «the word of him who is “the Word”.»³⁰⁴ Referencing the biblical concept of spiritual self-offering, Ratzinger points out that Christ offers himself by giving himself in prayer:

With the institution of the Eucharist, Jesus transforms his cruel death into “word”, into the radical expression of his love, his self-giving to the point of death. So he himself becomes the “Temple”. Insofar as the high-priestly prayer forms the consummation of Jesus’ self-gift, it represents the new worship and has a deep inner connection with the Eucharist.³⁰⁵

²⁹⁶ *Jesus* II:80

²⁹⁷ *Jesus* II:80

²⁹⁸ *Pilgrim* 116-117, cf. Hahn 2009:179, n.48

²⁹⁹ See Thomas E. Woods Jr., «Extraordinary Form 101: A Beginner’s Guide to the Old Latin Mass.» *This Rock Magazine* 19:9, pp.6-11.

³⁰⁰ *Feast* 36-39.46-50; *GINU* 48-51; *Pilgrim* 115; Hahn 2009:154-157; 177-181

³⁰¹ *GINU* 48

³⁰² *GINU* 51, cf. 47-51; *Pilgrim* 115; Hahn 2009:177-181.

³⁰³ *Feast* 37, cf. *GINU* 51

³⁰⁴ *Jesus* II:80

³⁰⁵ *Jesus* II:80, cf. Ps. 40:6; Heb. 10:5. See *Jesus* II:1-23 for Ratzinger’s treatment of Christ’s entrance into Jerusalem and the cleansing of the Temple.

For Ratzinger the sacrifice of Christ is the logical end of the late Hebrew notion of self-sacrifice; that God doesn't demand the blood (death) of animals, but the lives of his people.³⁰⁶ Here Ratzinger references the four songs of Isaiah on the Suffering Servant,³⁰⁷ focusing on Isaiah 53. There we find a person who is both priest, sacrifice and temple.³⁰⁸ Ratzinger goes on to treat four major themes in the high-priestly prayer:³⁰⁹ (1) «This is eternal life ...» (2) «Sanctify them in the truth ...» (3) «I have made your name known to them ...» (4) «That they may all be one ...» I will focus on the second.³¹⁰ This theme of sanctification and sanctifying, Ratzinger maintains, «points strongly toward the connection with the event of atonement and with the high priesthood.»³¹¹ He starts by quoting part of Christ's prayer to the Father: «Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ... For their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth.»³¹² Ratzinger connects this to the Father's sanctification and sending of the Son (John 10:36), and postulates a triple 'sanctification':

[The] Father has sanctified the Son and sent him onto the world; the Son sanctifies himself; and he asks, on the basis of his own sanctification, that the disciples be sanctified in the truth.³¹³

Ratzinger explores what is meant by «sanctifying in truth.» 'Sanctifying,' Ratzinger maintains, «means handing over a reality—a person or even a thing—to God, especially through appropriation for worship.»³¹⁴ This can either be «consecration for sacrifice» or «priestly consecration,» i.e. «the designation of a man for God and for divine worship.»³¹⁵ Ratzinger points out that 'consecration' or 'sanctification' «includes two apparently opposed, but in reality deeply conjoined, aspects.»³¹⁶ These aspects are, on the one hand, 'consecration' or 'sanctification' in the sense of dedicating something to God, taking something out of everyday use, and, on the other hand, that what is 'consecrated' or 'sanctified' is 'existing for' the world. Ratzinger sums it up by noting that «setting apart and mission form a single whole.»³¹⁷ Ratzinger points out that while

³⁰⁶ *Sofl* 46-50

³⁰⁷ Cf. Isa 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12.

³⁰⁸ *Jesus* II:81-82

³⁰⁹ *Jesus* II:82-102

³¹⁰ *Jesus* II:85-90

³¹¹ *Jesus* II:85

³¹² *Jesus* II:85, cf. John 17:17.19. The greek verb *ἀγιάζω* is here translated as both 'sanctifying' and 'consecrating'

³¹³ *Jesus* II:85-86

³¹⁴ *Jesus* II:86

³¹⁵ *Jesus* II:86, cf. Ex. 13:2; Ex. 28:41; Deut. 15:19.

³¹⁶ *Jesus* II:86

³¹⁷ *Jesus* II:86

Israel, as a 'holy people,' was «set apart from all other peoples,» they were so «for a particular reason—in order to carry out a commission for all peoples, for the whole world.»³¹⁸

Ratzinger then asks, concerning the Gospel of John: «What is the meaning of the three sanctifications (consecrations) that are spoken of there?» First, Ratzinger points out, the Father consecrated the Son and sent him out (Joh 10:36), as he did with the prophet Jeremiah. God is «exercising a total claim over this man, “setting him apart” for himself, yet at the same time sending him out for the nations.»³¹⁹ Here the focus is primarily on the Incarnation.

Second, Christ consecrates himself (Joh 17:19), which Ratzinger (citing Rudolf Bultmann) maintains means that Christ consecrated himself as a sacrifice. Bultmann, Ratzinger adds, quotes John Chrysostom in support of this claim: «I sanctify myself—I present myself as a sacrifice.»³²⁰ Here the focus is primarily «on the Passion as sacrifice.»³²¹ The relationship between the first two consecrations is expressed in that Christ, through his consecration by the Father and through his self-consecration, is existing 'for' the world, and gives himself.³²² In this we find «the new atonement liturgy of Jesus Christ, the liturgy of the New Covenant, in its entire grandeur and purity. Jesus himself is the priest sent into the world by the Father; he himself is the sacrifice that is made present in the Eucharist of all times.»³²³ Ratzinger points to Philo of Alexandria, who spoke of the Logos as priest and high priest, and he adds that the *Yom Kippur* is fulfilled in Christ, the *Logos* made flesh.³²⁴

Third, Christ consecrates his disciples, in himself (Joh 17:19). Ratzinger maintains that Christ is drawing his disciples into his own self-offering, so that they might participate «in his state of sanctification.»³²⁵ Being sanctified in 'truth,' Ratzinger points out, means being sanctified in Christ. Here the focus is primarily on our participation.

In *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, Ratzinger makes a point which is related to the significance of this 'dialectic' between the Father's consecration of the Son, and the Son's consecration of himself, and his self-offering, his giving himself back to the Father. Ratzinger makes an important distinction between being a 'representative,' and being a 'replacement.'³²⁶ Ratzinger makes the point that the

³¹⁸ *Jesus* II:86

³¹⁹ *Jesus* II:87, cf. Jer. 1:5.

³²⁰ *Jesus* II:87-88

³²¹ *Jesus* II:88

³²² *Jesus* II:88

³²³ *Jesus* II:88

³²⁴ *Jesus* II:88-89

³²⁵ *Jesus* II:89

³²⁶ *SofL* 35-38.47-48.57-61, cf. 36, n.1

sacrifice which Abraham offers back to God, the lamb, and all the sacrifices of the old covenant, is a reminder that God wants us, wants our love and adoration. He writes:

Somehow there always has to be a stinging reminder of this story, an expectation of the true Lamb, who comes from God and is for that very reason not a replacement but a true representative, in whom we ourselves are taken to God. The Christian theology of worship—beginning with St. John the Baptist—sees in Christ the Lamb given by God. The Apocalypse presents this sacrificed Lamb, who lives as sacrificed, as the center of the heavenly liturgy, a liturgy that, through Christ's Sacrifice, is now present in the midst of the world and makes replacement liturgies superfluous (see Rev 5).³²⁷

For Ratzinger, then, the liturgy on earth is a participation in the heavenly liturgy, a participation in this work of Christ.³²⁸ And this sacrifice, while complete and perfect, has not ceased.

Ratzinger writes:

St. Bernard of Clairvaux has this in mind when he says that the true *semel* ("once") bears within itself the *semper* ("always"). What is perpetual takes place in what happens only once. In the Bible the Once for All is emphasized most vigorously in the epistle to the Hebrews, but the careful reader will discover that the point made by St. Bernard expresses its true meaning. The *ephapax* ("Once For All") is bound up with the *aiōnios* ("everlasting"). ... In the Eucharist we are caught up and made contemporary with the Paschal Mystery of Christ, in his passing from the tabernacle of the transitory to the presence and sight of God.³²⁹

The Church's liturgy — Christ's liturgy — «is ... not about replacement, but about representation, vicarious sacrifice.»³³⁰ In Ratzinger's view Christ gives himself, his whole life, back to God, as our representative, not to 'appease' God's 'wrath,' but to adore God, and to secure mankind's expiation and their reconciliation to God. He continues:

The liturgy is not about the sacrificing of animals, of a "something" that is ultimately alien to me. The liturgy is founded on the Passion endured by a man who with his "I" reaches into the mystery of the living God himself, by the man who is the Son. So it can never be a mere *actio liturgica*. Its origin also bears within it its future in the sense that representation, vicarious sacrifice, takes up into itself those whom it represents; it is not external to them, but a shaping influence on them. Becoming contemporary with the Pasch of Christ in the liturgy of the Church is also, in fact, an anthropological reality. The celebration is not just a rite, not just a liturgical "game". It is meant to be indeed a *logikē latreia*,³³¹ the "logicizing" of my existence, my interior contemporaneity with the self-giving of Christ. His self-giving is meant to become mine, so that I become contemporary with the Pasch of Christ and assimilated unto God.³³²

³²⁷ *SofL* 38

³²⁸ *BXVI* 141, cf. *SaCo* 7

³²⁹ *SofL* 56-57

³³⁰ *SofL* 57

³³¹ Cf. Rom. 12:1

³³² *SofL* 57-58, cf. *Jesus* II:38-41

Ratzinger points out that while «Christ's Sacrifice was accepted long ago,» it has, «in the form of representation ... not come to an end.»³³³ It is perpetual, everlasting.³³⁴ We see above that Ratzinger quotes medieval Benedictine theologian Rupert of Deutz: «The High Priest who was himself the one making atonement as well as the expiatory offering, both priest and sacrifice, implored this for us.»³³⁵ One important point than needs to be commented is that Ratzinger uses «the one making making atonement» and «expiatory offering» as a translation of, respectively, *propitiator* and *propitiatorium*. He sees, then, a clear connection between propitiation and expiation, but puts emphasis on on the latter. In his view, the self-sacrifice of Christ is primarily an «act of adoration, which is offered to God.»³³⁶ It is the offering of himself, as our representative, and therefore of ourselves, not because God demands blood, but because he wants our love and adoration. Ratzinger sees, then, the propitiatory character of Christ's self-sacrifice more as an *expiation*, more as a reconciling of man to God, than a *propitiation*, a reconciling of God, an 'appeasing' of God's 'wrath.'³³⁷

Before going on to the next section, I will try to summarize Ratzinger approach to the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist by pointing to what he writes at the beginning of the first chapter of *Jesus of Nazareth*, vol. II. Here Ratzinger compares the Johannine and Synoptic accounts of Christ's mission, and points out that while John postulates that Christ celebrated three distinct Passovers (2:13-25; 6:4; 12-19), the Synoptics only explicitly mentions one Passover, the Passover of Christ's Passion.³³⁸ He points in Luke, «Jesus' path is presented as a single pilgrim ascent from Galilee to Jerusalem.»³³⁹ This ascent, he points out, is first 'geographical.'³⁴⁰ Christ begins at the Sea of Galilee, «situated about 690 feet below sea level,» and ascends to Jerusalem, which «is on avarage 2500 feet above.»³⁴¹ But this outwardly ascension, Ratzinger points out, has an 'inner' meaning:

The ultimate goal of Jesus' "ascent" is his self-offering on the Cross, which supplants the old sacrifices; it is the ascent that the Letter to the Hebrews describes as going up, not to a sanctuary made of human hands, but to heaven itself, into the presence of God (9:24). This

³³³ *SofL* 58

³³⁴ *SofL* 58-61

³³⁵ *Jesus* II:76. In latin: *Haec pontifex summus propitiator ipse et propitiatorium, sacerdos et sacrificium pro nobis oravit.*

³³⁶ *GINU* 29

³³⁷ Cf. *Jesus* II:38-41.186-188.229-240.251-253

³³⁸ *Jesus* II:1-2

³³⁹ *Jesus* II:1

³⁴⁰ *Jesus* II:1-2

³⁴¹ *Jesus* II:1

ascent into God's presence leads via the Cross—it is the ascent toward “loving to the end” (cf. Jn 13:1), which is the real mountain of God.³⁴²

This perpetual self-offering is made present in the Eucharist, those who partake participate in the Eucharistic celebration are drawn «into Jesus' act of self-oblation,» drawn «into the very dynamic of his self-giving.»³⁴³

3.2.2 Ratzinger on the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration

My second research question is formulated as follows:

2. *What is the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration?*

In a lecture on the theology of the liturgy which is mentioned above,³⁴⁴ Ratzinger starts by citing Vatican II's definition of the liturgy as «the work of Christ the Priest and of His Body which is the Church.»³⁴⁵ Above, I have analyzed Ratzinger's view on the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist, and in this section and later (section 3.2.3), I will look at the action or work of the Church and the priest, which in essence is Christ's work.³⁴⁶

According to Ratzinger, there is a clear connection between the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, his sacrifice and the Eucharistic sacrifices of the Church. As pope, in *Deus Caritas Est*, Ratzinger addresses the sacrifice of Christ,³⁴⁷ and considers its relationship to the Eucharist:

Jesus gave this act of oblation an enduring presence through his institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. He anticipated his death and resurrection by giving his disciples, in the bread and wine, his very self, his body and blood as the new manna (cf. Jn 6:31-33). The ancient world had dimly perceived that man's real food—what truly nourishes him as man—is ultimately the *Logos*, eternal wisdom: this same *Logos* now truly becomes food for us—as love. The Eucharist draws us into Jesus' act of self-oblation. More than just statically receiving the incarnate *Logos*, we enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving. The imagery of marriage between God and Israel is now realized in a way previously inconceivable: it had meant standing in God's presence, but now it becomes union with God through sharing in Jesus' self-gift, sharing in his body and blood. The sacramental “mysticism”, grounded in God's condescension towards us, operates at a radically different level and lifts us to far greater heights than anything that any human mystical elevation could ever accomplish.³⁴⁸

³⁴² *Jesus* II:2, cf. Heb. 8:1-3; 9:11-12

³⁴³ *DCE* 13

³⁴⁴ *BXVI* 141-154

³⁴⁵ *BXVI* 141, cf. *SaCo* 7.

³⁴⁶ Cf. *Feast* 51-60

³⁴⁷ *DCE* 12

³⁴⁸ *DCE* 13

As a starting point of my analysis here, I will consider some important and relevant points from this text. First, in the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ is made present. It is not merely the sacrificial matter (the sacrificed body and blood of Christ, under the species of bread and wine) or the fruits or effects of the sacrifice (forgiveness, peace, salvation, etc.) that is made present, but its *enactment*. The «act of oblation» itself is given «an enduring presence» in the Eucharist. This relies upon Ratzinger's view of the Real Presence, where he emphasizes the personal presence of the whole Christ, and his view on the high-priestly ministry of Christ, both of which I have analyzed above. Second, the Eucharist, as 'spiritual manna,' is a gift given for our consumption through which we participate in Christ, in the *Logos*. Third, through the Eucharist we are drawn «into Jesus' act of self-oblation» and are allowed to «enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving.» In this section the two last parts are the important points. These two points illustrate two important points for Ratzinger: that the Eucharist is both a (Eucharistic) sacrifice in which the Church offers up praise and thanksgiving, through Christ, and a sacred meal in which the Church partakes of Christ for spiritual nourishment. In *Dogma and Preaching*, Ratzinger points out that the center of liturgy is «table fellowship with the glorified Lord in the Holy Sacrifice and Meal.»³⁴⁹ But, as we see above, this doesn't mean that it's only a meal.³⁵⁰ Above I quote a thesis of Ratzinger which can here be a summary of Ratzinger's view on the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Church: «*Christian preaching is not the presentation of a doctrinal system but, rather, training in Christian reality, the crystallization point of which is the eucharistic celebration.*»³⁵¹

Ratzinger points out that through the Eucharist we are drawn «into Jesus' act of self-oblation» and are allowed to «enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving.»³⁵² To understand this, we need to recall Ratzinger's views concerning what he calls the 'form' or 'structure' (Ger. *Gestalt*, *Grundgestalt*) of the Eucharistic liturgy (see above, section 3.1). We see that Pannenberg rejects that the 'structure' or 'form' of the Eucharistic celebration is a meal and nothing else. He agrees that there is a meal aspect, but he points out that even if those who focused on the meal allowed for it to be dogmatically understood as a sacrifice,³⁵³ the separation of form and content disentangled the Eucharistic celebration (and the Eucharist) from dogmatics. Ratzinger questions this sharp distinction between 'form' and 'content.' «Particularly if the structure is not merely a ceremonial form, but at its core an indispensable manifestation of its essential content, it makes no

³⁴⁹ *D/P* 51

³⁵⁰ *Feast* 35-37

³⁵¹ *D/P* 51

³⁵² *DCE* 13

³⁵³ *Feast* 35-36

sense absolutely to separate the one from the other.»³⁵⁴ Ratzinger points out that one eventually tried to reconcile the two:

We find a first attempt at reconciliation in Joseph Pascher, who speaks of sacrificial symbolism being introduced into the meal structure. The separation of the gifts of bread and wine, symbolically indicating the fatal spilling of Jesus' blood, introduces the mark into the basic structure of the meal.³⁵⁵

Ratzinger finds that this doesn't go far enough, pointing to the research of J.A. Jungmann.³⁵⁶ Contrary to the belief of many modern liturgists,³⁵⁷ and from «the liturgical texts themselves,» Jungmann points out that

even in the most ancient forms the *eucharistia*—the prayer of anamnesis in the shape of a thanksgiving—is more prominent than the meal aspect. According to Jungmann, the basic structure, at least from the end of the first century, is not the meal but the *eucharistia*; even in Ignatius of Antioch this is the term given to the whole action.³⁵⁸

Ratzinger also points out that Jungmann has shown that «linguistically speaking, Luther's use of the word "Supper" [*Abendmahl*] was a complete innovation.»³⁵⁹ Citing the research of H. Schürmann,³⁶⁰ Quoting Schürmann, Ratzinger points out that the context of the institution was undoubtedly a meal but that the Eucharistic action «had a *relatively autonomous existence and significance* in contrast to the meal event.»³⁶¹ Its preliminary context was a meal, but it had an existence outside of that. Ratzinger connects this to salvation history, pointing out that when the Eucharist was instituted, Christ hadn't yet been crucified, and «Jesus had not yet become separated from the Jewish community, i.e., the Church as Church has not yet come into being.»³⁶² The Eucharist hadn't yet gotten its definitive form. Ratzinger writes:

The real mistake of those who attempt uncritically to deduce the Christian liturgy directly from the Last Supper lies in their failing to see this fundamental point: the Last Supper of Jesus is certainly the basis of all Christian liturgy, but in itself it is not yet Christian. The act

³⁵⁴ *Feast* 35-36

³⁵⁵ *Feast* 36, cf. Joseph Pascher, *Eucharistia. Gestalt und Vollzug* (Münster-Krailing 1947)

³⁵⁶ *Missarum sollemnia*, 2 vols. (Freiburg 1948); *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, 2 vols. (New York 1951, 1955); «'Abendmahl' als Name der Eucharistie,» *ZKTh* 93 (1971), 91-94.

³⁵⁷ Cf. *Feast* 33-36

³⁵⁸ *Feast* 36-37

³⁵⁹ *Feast* 37. For suggestions for further study, see fn. 8.

³⁶⁰ «Die Gestalt der urchristlichen Eucharistiefeier,» *Ursprung und Gestalt. Erörterungen und Besinnungen zum Neuen Testament* (Düsseldorf 1970), pp.77-99.

³⁶¹ Schürmann, *op.cit.*, 83-84. Quoted in *Feast* 40.

³⁶² *Feast* 41

constituting the Christian reality takes place *within* the Jewish framework, but it has not yet attained a form, a structure [*Gestalt*] of its own as Christian liturgy. Salvation history is still open-ended; no definitive decision has been made as to whether the Christian phenomenon will or will not have to separate itself from its Jewish matrix as a distinct reality.³⁶³

To explain the relationship between form and content,³⁶⁴ Ratzinger turns to the concept of *εὐχαριστία*, which brings liturgy and dogmatics together.³⁶⁵ The Greek noun *εὐχαριστία* means literally ‘thanksgiving.’³⁶⁶ Ratzinger makes the point that the *εὐχαριστία* of the Church is a «participation in the thanksgiving of Jesus, which includes the prayer of gratitude for the gifts of the earth.»³⁶⁷ He continues:

Thus *eucharistia* is the gift of *communio* in which the Lord becomes our food; it also signifies the self-offering of Jesus Christ, perfecting his trinitarian Yes to the Father by his consent to the Cross, and reconciling us all to the Father in this “sacrifice”. There is no opposition between “meal” and “sacrifice”; they belong inseparably together in the new sacrifice of the Lord.³⁶⁸

Ratzinger points to Paul’s notion of a ‘reasonable worship’ (Gk. *λογικός λατρεία*) in Romans 12. As I’ve pointed out above (see section 3.2.1), we find here a coming together of Hellenistic and Hebrew concepts of worship and sacrifice. To expound on this view, Ratzinger analyzes the research of two German theologians, one Catholic, liturgist Lothar Lies,³⁶⁹ and one Lutheran, OT scholar Hartmut Gese.³⁷⁰

In connection to his discussion on the form or structure of the Eucharist,³⁷¹ Ratzinger analyzes Lies’ distinction between the ‘material structure’ (Ger. *Materialgestalt*) and the ‘formal structure’ (Ger. *Formalgestalt*) of the liturgy.³⁷² He quotes Lies, who defines the ‘formal structure’ as «that structure which is able to embrace the ideas of anamnesis, sacramental Real Presence, sacrifice and meal, imparting to all aspects of the Eucharist their formal meaning.»³⁷³ Lies finds this ‘formal structure’ in the concept of *εὐλογία* (‘blessing, praise, consecration’). Christ,

³⁶³ *Feast* 41

³⁶⁴ For Ratzinger’s discussion on the structure of the Eucharist and its connection to the meal, see *Feast* 39-50.

³⁶⁵ *Feast* 37.48-49

³⁶⁶ *BDAG* 37.48-49

³⁶⁷ *Feast* 49

³⁶⁸ *Feast* 49-50

³⁶⁹ *Feast* 50-51 (postscript 1)

³⁷⁰ *Feast* 51-60

³⁷¹ *Feast* 33-50

³⁷² *Feast* 50-51; L. Lies, «Eulogia—Überlegungen zur formalen Sinngestalt der Eucharistie,» *ZKTh* 100 (1978), pp.69-126.

³⁷³ Lies, *op.cit.*, 69. Quoted in *Feast* 50.

says Lies, is «the auto-eulogia of God,» and this concept of *εὐλογία* is able to embrace both Christology and sacrifice.³⁷⁴ On the basis of his own and Lies's study, Ratzinger rejects the view of the Eucharist which solely focuses on *meal*, in opposition to sacrifice.³⁷⁵ As we see above, Ratzinger points out that the Eucharist «draws us into Jesus' act of self-oblation. More than just statically receiving the incarnate *Logos*, we enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving.»³⁷⁶ Seen in light of Lies's focus, we can say that for Ratzinger the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Church is being drawn into «the auto-eulogia of God,»³⁷⁷ where the Church offers up praise and thanksgiving in and through Christ.

As we see above, having analyzed Hebrew and Hellenistic influences on New Testament worship, and having analyzed the approaches of Pascher, Jungmann and Lies, Ratzinger turns to the perspective of German OT scholar Hartmut Gese.³⁷⁸ He makes the point that the sacrifice of Christ is best 'illustrated' by looking to the Old Testament Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, the *Todah*.³⁷⁹ In an article on the origin of the Lord's Supper,³⁸⁰ (In *The Feast of Faith*, Ratzinger uses 'toda' and 'tōda.' In the english translation of Gese's article,³⁸¹ 'Todah' is used. In the following, outside of direct quotations, I will use 'Todah,' since this is normal usage this english translation, and in the other English sources I have read.³⁸²)

Gese examines many of the claims concerning the Eucharist. He starts by rejecting the idea that there were two 'Eucharists'; «a sacramental, Hellenistic form and a non-sacramental, Jewish form associated with Jerusalem.»³⁸³ This, Ratzinger and Gese points out, is based on the idea that «the sacramental view cannot have evolved from the Jewish view.»³⁸⁴ Ratzinger points out that this polarization between the 'Hellenistic' and 'Jewish' forms «causes Gese to take up the question of origins again, as a result of which he comes down in favor of the eucharistic view.»³⁸⁵ Ratzinger first points out that Gese goes on to examine, and reject, that the Eucharist has its origin in «the Jewish meal, the Passover, the Qumran meals, Jesus' meals, the miraculous feedings, the meals of

³⁷⁴ Lies, *op.cit.*, 69; *Feast* 50-51

³⁷⁵ *Feast* 33-51

³⁷⁶ *DCE* 13

³⁷⁷ *Feast* 50

³⁷⁸ *Feast* 51-60. See *Wikipedia* [http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hartmut_Gese].

³⁷⁹ *Feast* 51-60 (postscript 2)

³⁸⁰ Cf. Gese 1977; Gese 1981.

³⁸¹ Gese 1981

³⁸² See Hahn 2009:171-172; Gray 2004:65-76; Lindsay 1997:83-100.

³⁸³ *Feast* 52

³⁸⁴ *Feast* 52

³⁸⁵ *Feast* 52

the Risen Jesus.»³⁸⁶ Ratzinger points out that Gese shows that «none of these proposed solutions does justice to the evidence of the New Testament.»³⁸⁷ The approach of Gese, which Ratzinger borrows, combines the meal and sacrifice aspects. And the origin of this, according to Ratzinger (and Gese), is found in the relationship between the *zēbah* and *selamin* offerings of the OT.³⁸⁸ The *zēbah* is the primary offering which involves meat and slaughter. The *selamin* offerings are connected to them, as a subcategory.³⁸⁹ The *shelamin* offerings involves bread and wine, and does not necessarily involve an altar and a slaughtering. Ratzinger quotes Gese:

The sacrificial character of this meal has a twofold significance: it expresses communion with God, in whose sacrifice people are permitted to share, and communion among the participants; these two things correspond to the saving fact that *shalom* reigns among those who share in the sacrificial meal (which is why these sacrifices, celebrated as a public, liturgical feast, are called *šelamim*, “peace offerings”).³⁹⁰

Ratzinger makes a point of the fact that the ancient Church designation of the Eucharist as *pax*, ‘peace,’ which was a continuation of «the tradition of Israel, which itself reflects a fundamental human tradition.»³⁹¹ Here we see Ratzinger’s focus on the double influence from Hebrew and Hellenistic religion. Ratzinger points out with Gese that the ancient Hebrew ritual meal, beginning with the *Berakah*, «the blessing pronounced over bread and wine,» opens up to «a being-in-peace.»³⁹² The question Ratzinger then asks, is: «what was the special meal which was able to develop into the Lord’s Eucharist?»³⁹³ Gese, Ratzinger explains, points to a «particular form of the ritual meal which is deeply rooted in the Old Testament and which also played a prominent part in Judaism at the time of Jesus (according to the Mishnah).»³⁹⁴ This sacrifice, which «has been neglected by scholars,» is «the *toda*, ‘thanksgiving sacrifice.’»³⁹⁵ The *Todah* was offered to God and involved not only a sacrificial animal, but also bread (and, some maintain, wine).³⁹⁶ This sacrifice «formed the cultic basis of the major part of the Psalter.»³⁹⁷ Gese analyzes four Psalms (22; 40:1-12; 51; 69), all four of which have their *Sitz im Leben* in the celebration of the

³⁸⁶ *Feast 52*

³⁸⁷ *Feast 52*

³⁸⁸ *Feast 52-53*

³⁸⁹ The primitive root of *zēbah* means ‘to kill, slaughter.’ The primitive root of *selamin* (or *shelamin*) means ‘peace.’

³⁹⁰ *Feast 53*

³⁹¹ *Feast 53*

³⁹² *Feast 53*

³⁹³ *Feast 54*

³⁹⁴ *Feast 54*

³⁹⁵ *Feast 54*

³⁹⁶ Lev. 7:12-15; Ps. 116, cf. *Feast 53-56*; Hahn 2009:171

³⁹⁷ *Feast 54*

Todah, and which are also «the great christological psalms of the New Testament.»³⁹⁸ Ratzinger points out that what we can deduce from the research of Gese is that this is not a «retrospective application of Old Testament words to an event, transforming and “theologizing” it.»³⁹⁹ No, what we can deduce is that «the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus *is tōda*.»⁴⁰⁰

To explain the *Todah*, Ratzinger quotes Gese:

The thanksgiving sacrifice presupposes a particular *situation*. If a man is saved from death, from fatal illness or from those who seek his life, he celebrates this divine deliverance in a service of thanksgiving which marks an existential new start in his life. In it, he “confesses” (*jd[h]*) God to be his deliverer by celebrating a thank offering (*tōda*). He invites his friends and associates, provides the sacrificial animal ... and celebrates ... together with his invited guests, the inauguration of his new existence... In order to recall God’s deliverance and give thanks for it, it is necessary to reflect on one’s pilgrimage through suffering, to bring to mind the process of redemption... It is not a mere sacrificial rite; it is a sacrifice in which one professes one’s involvement... Here we have a unity which embraces a service of the word and ritual, praise and sacrifice. The sacrifice cannot be misunderstood as a ‘gift’ to God; rather it is a way of ‘honoring’ the Deliverer. And the fact that the rescued man is able to celebrate ‘life restored’ in the sacred meal is itself the gift of God.⁴⁰¹

Ratzinger identifies two important factors in this sacrifice: (1) the *Todah* is a «confession of thanksgiving»;⁴⁰² and (2) the *Todah*, unlike other sacrifices, is not restricted to bloody sacrifices.⁴⁰³ In regards to the first factor Ratzinger points out that this has roots not only in the ancient Hebrew sacrifices, but also in «the Hellenistic idea of verbal sacrifice.»⁴⁰⁴ Ratzinger writes:

It is bridge, already in existence, linking the Old Testament and Jesus to the “nations”, to the Greek world. Here distinct developments of the human mind are in touch with one another; it is as if both the Jewish and the Hellenistic traditions are awaiting him who is himself the Word, the crucified Logos, and the Righteous One who has been rescued from the abyss of death.⁴⁰⁵

In regards to the second factor Ratzinger, following Gese, makes a point that the *Todah* is *both* sacrifice and praise. Ratzinger quotes Gese:

The *tōda* is not restricted to a bloody sacrifice of flesh but also embraces the unbloody offering of bread; *tōda* is the only form of sacrifice which is concerned with unleavened bread.

³⁹⁸ *Feast 54*

³⁹⁹ *Feast 54*

⁴⁰⁰ *Feast 54*

⁴⁰¹ *Feast 55*

⁴⁰² *Feast 55-56*

⁴⁰³ *Feast 56*

⁴⁰⁴ *Feast 55*

⁴⁰⁵ *Feast 56*

Thus in the context of *tōda*, bread and wine acquire a special significance; the one becomes part of the sacrifice itself, the other plays a constitutive role in proclamation.⁴⁰⁶

Ratzinger goes on by pointing out two important points from Gese's analyze of the *Todah* psalms.⁴⁰⁷

1. In Psalms 51 and 40, we see an 'interiorizing' of the *Todah* sacrifice and the *Torah*, a total involvement in «the very nature of sacrifice» where, through thanksgiving, sacrifice and life has become one.⁴⁰⁸
2. In Psalms 22 and 69, we see a elevation of the suffering of the one who prays, and a making absolute of death and redemption.⁴⁰⁹

From these points Ratzinger comments:

Anyone who takes account of these factors will not find it difficult to understand the origins of the Eucharist of Jesus Christ. Structurally speaking, the whole of Christology, indeed the whole of eucharistic Christology, is present in the *tōda* spirituality of the Old Testament. As Gese sums it up: "The Lord's Supper is the *tōda* of the Risen One."⁴¹⁰

Ratzinger, following Gese, continues by making the point that the man who (within in the Old Testament *Todah* spirituality)⁴¹¹ celebrated the *Todah* on account of deliverance «provided a sacrificial animal as a sacrifice for himself and the community.»⁴¹² Christ, however, gave *himself*, his total life. And within the sacrifice, the Eucharistic bread is Christ himself. Ratzinger quotes Gese:

The bread does not signify the body of Jesus in a metaphorical sense; in its very nature, as the substance of the meal eaten in *tōda* sacrifice, it is the sacrifice of Jesus.⁴¹³

Ratzinger end his analysis of Gese by quoting a Rabbinic dictum: «In the coming (Messianic) time, all sacrifices will cease except the *tōda* sacrifice. This will never cease in all eternity. All (religious) song will cease too, but the songs of *tōda* will never cease in all eternity.»⁴¹⁴ Ratzinger

⁴⁰⁶ *Feast 56*

⁴⁰⁷ *Feast 56-57*, cf. Psalms 51; 40:1-12; 22; 69.

⁴⁰⁸ *Feast 56-57*

⁴⁰⁹ *Feast 57*

⁴¹⁰ *Feast 57*

⁴¹¹ This, of course, wasn't restricted to the time of the Old Testament, but was very prominent at the time of Christ. (See *Feast 54*.)

⁴¹² *Feast 57*

⁴¹³ *Feast 57-58*

⁴¹⁴ *Feast 58*. See *Pesikta De-Rab Kahana*. R. Kahana's Compilation of Discourses for Sabbaths and Festal Days. Translated from Hebrew and Arameic by William G. Braude and Israel J. Kapstein (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1975), pp.183-184

makes the point that he has reproduced the study of Gese in «some detail» because in his estimation «its importance cannot be overestimated.»⁴¹⁵ He maintains that it moves the dispute of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist in a way that presents us with «new possibilities» for ecumenical dialogue⁴¹⁶ because it «gives us a genuinely New Testament concept of sacrifice that both preserves the complete Catholic inheritance (and imparts to it a new profundity) and, on the other hand, is receptive to Luther’s central intentions.»⁴¹⁷

Ratzinger concluded his points by joining together the approaches of Lies and Gese by pointing out that Lies’ emphasis on *εὐλογία*, and Ratzinger’s focus on *εὐχαριστία* finds its confirmation and completion in Gese’s study.⁴¹⁸ He offers some critique of Gese, though not specifically of his focus on the *Todah* sacrifice:

If I were to question Gese, I should do so on the following lines: the *tōda* sacrifice is the thanksgiving of the man who has already been delivered; in a real sense, surely, it cannot take place until after the Resurrection. This would fit perfectly with the thesis I have presented, namely, that Eucharist is only possible at the Last Supper in an anticipatory form, and that therefore it cannot be a simple development of the Last Supper alone. The Last Supper looks to the Cross, where Jesus’ words of self-offering will be fulfilled, and to the hope of Resurrection. Apart from them it would be incomplete and, indeed, unreal. Again, this means that the form of the Last Supper is not complete in itself. If we trace the Eucharist back to the institution of *tōda*, it becomes impossible to see it as a development of the Last Supper alone. In view of *tōda*, the form of the Last Supper must be an “open” form, since *tōda* does not become a reality until it is complemented by Cross and Resurrection.⁴¹⁹

When the Church offers her Eucharistic sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, Ratzinger maintains, she is praising God, and «this praise returns as blessing over the gift.»⁴²⁰ He cites 1. Timothy 4:4-5 as support for this: «For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving;⁴²¹ for then it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.» (RSV) For Ratzinger, then, «the thanksgiving leads to blessing and transformation.»⁴²² In light of this, Ratzinger points out that the Church, from «her earliest days,» has understood the Eucharistic words «not simply as a kind of quasi-magical command, but as part of her praying in and with Jesus; as a central part of the praise and thanksgiving through which God’s earthly

⁴¹⁵ *Feast* 58

⁴¹⁶ *Feast* 58

⁴¹⁷ *Feast* 58

⁴¹⁸ *Feast* 60

⁴¹⁹ *Feast* 60, n.1

⁴²⁰ *Jesus* II:128

⁴²¹ Gk. *εὐχαριστία*.

⁴²² *Jesus* II:128

gift is given to us anew in the form of Jesus's body and blood, as God's gift of himself in his Son's self-emptying love.»⁴²³

But this isn't primarily about the meal, or the fellowship of the congregation. For Ratzinger, the Church's focus must be on God. He makes the point that the sacrifice offered up by the Church, her praise and thanksgiving, is essentially a participation in the sacrifice of Christ, in his obedient, thankful adoration of God.⁴²⁴ We see above that Ratzinger makes a distinction between replacement sacrifices and representative sacrifices. Christ is «the true Lamb, who comes from God and is for that very reason not a replacement but a true representative, in whom we ourselves are taken to God.»⁴²⁵ Liturgy is a participation in Christ's work,⁴²⁶ and the Church's liturgy, Christ's liturgy, «is ... not about replacement, but about representation, vicarious sacrifice.»⁴²⁷ We see, then, that the Church's liturgy is essentially orientated towards God (the Father). According to Ratzinger, this orientation should be manifested concretely in our physical liturgical orientation. He maintains that the Church's adoration should be oriented towards God, towards the east, and that the priest should be facing the altar (*ad orientem*).⁴²⁸

He makes the point⁴²⁹ that the modern insistence on the priest celebrating 'towards the people' (*versus populum*), and the accompanying characterization of the older orientation (*ad orientem*) as the priest 'celebrating toward the wall' or 'turning his back on the people,' represents «an unprecedented clericalization.»⁴³⁰ Through this, the priest «becomes the real point of reference for the whole liturgy.»⁴³¹ The main point is the turning towards the Lord. Ratzinger writes:

[We] obey the ancient call to prayer: "*Conversi ad Dominum*", Turn toward the Lord! In this way we look together at the One whose death tore the veil of the Temple—the One who stands before the Father for us and encloses us in his arms in order to make us the new and living Temple. Moving the altar cross to the side to give an uninterrupted view of the priest is something I regard as one of the truly absurd phenomena of recent decades. Is the cross disruptive during Mass? Is the priest more important than the Lord? (...) The Lord is the point of reference. He is the rising sun of history.⁴³²

⁴²³ *Jesus* II:128

⁴²⁴ *Feast* 50-60; *GINU* 29-30

⁴²⁵ *SofL* 38

⁴²⁶ *BXVI* 141, cf. *SaCo* 7

⁴²⁷ *SofL* 57

⁴²⁸ *SofL* 74-84; *Feast* 139-146, cf. Rowland 2008:135-137.

⁴²⁹ *SofL* 78-84

⁴³⁰ *SofL* 79-80

⁴³¹ *SofL* 80

⁴³² *SofL* 83-84

This view of orientation is also important in regards to the role of the priest. Before I go on to that subject, we can summarize Ratzinger’s view on the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration by saying that we find in his writings both an emphasis on meal and sacrifice, seen in light of the *Todah*. The Church is nourished by participating in the Lord, and she offers her Eucharistic sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, in and through Christ, by participating in his *Todah*, by being drawn into his sacrifice.⁴³³ As Ratzinger puts it: «There is no opposition between “meal” and “sacrifice”; they belong inseparably together in the new sacrifice of the Lord.»⁴³⁴

3.2.3 Ratzinger on the role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration

My third research question is formulated as follows:

3. What is the role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration?

As we see above, Ratzinger maintains that the role of the Church in the Eucharist is to offer a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, through Christ. He relates it to the late Hellenistic concept of verbal sacrifice,⁴³⁵ and Hebrew influences like the Paschal liturgy, with its blessing (the *Berakah*), the late Hebrew concept of ‘the sacrifice of praise,’⁴³⁶ and the *Todah* sacrifice.⁴³⁷ And this aspect is also present in his teaching on the role of the priest. In *Dogma and Preaching*, Ratzinger points to the beauty and the elevatory character of the Eucharistic celebration, but makes one important comment: «The feast is produced by the sacrifice.»⁴³⁸ Before going on, I would like to point out that we can say that ‘feast’ is here used not only to denote beauty or splendor, but that it is used in its proper sense, as «an elaborate and usually abundant meal often accompanied by a ceremony or entertainment,» to borrow the primary definition of *Merriam-Webster*.⁴³⁹ Thus we see that Ratzinger makes a similar point here as he does in *The Feast of Faith*; that liturgy and dogmatics belong together, that there isn’t any sharp distinction between ‘form’ and ‘content’ in the Eucharistic celebration, and that meal and sacrifice belong together.⁴⁴⁰ Ratzinger continues: «Only the grain of wheat that has died produces fruit. The center of a priest’s life, therefore, is the

⁴³³ DCE 13

⁴³⁴ Feast 50

⁴³⁵ Feast 37; GINU 51; Hahn 2009:154-157; 177-181

⁴³⁶ Feast 37-38; GINU 47-51; Hahn 2009:178

⁴³⁷ Feast 51-60; Hahn 2009:171-172

⁴³⁸ D/P 373

⁴³⁹ See <http://http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/feast>.

⁴⁴⁰ Feast 33-60

sacrifice of Jesus Christ. But it is a sacrifice that cannot be celebrated without our participation, without our sacrificing together with Christ.»⁴⁴¹

This, that the priest, as the Church, sacrifices «together with Christ,» is at the core of Ratzinger's view of the Eucharist. Again we need to go back to Ratzinger's thought on the high-priestly ministry of Christ. We see that Ratzinger, when analyzing the relationship between the sacrificial system of the Old Testament and the sacrificial high-priestly ministry of Christ, points out that the sacrifice of Christ, like the sacrifices of old, is a representative sacrifice, but not a replacement sacrifice.⁴⁴² Unlike the sacrifices of old, however, it is complete, perfect and efficacious.⁴⁴³ Because it is a representative sacrifice, it allows the priest and the people to worship God by means of this sacrifice. We must see this in light of Ratzinger's view concerning the *Todah*.

Ratzinger finds a double role for the priest: On the one hand, the priest is presiding as the Church offers up her Eucharistic sacrifice, her sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, her *Todah*. On the other hand, in offering this Eucharistic sacrifice, this *Todah*, the Church is participating in the *Todah* of Christ. In this action, the priest represents Christ, both before God and before the Church. Following the norm in Catholic theology,⁴⁴⁴ Ratzinger holds that in the Eucharistic Celebration, the priest *qua* priest acts *in persona Christi*.⁴⁴⁵ He points out⁴⁴⁶ that the notion of representation present in this idea is not that of «being delegated by someone to be present in his place, to speak and act in his stead because the person he represents is absent from the practical action,» since «in the Church Christ is never absent, the Church is his living Body and he is the Head of the Church, present and active within her.» When a priest acts *in persona Christi*, then, he «never acts in the name of someone who is absent but, rather, in the very Person of the Risen Christ, who makes himself present with his truly effective action. He really acts today and brings about what the priest would be incapable of: the consecration of the wine and the bread so that they may really be the Lord's presence, the absolution of sins. The Lord makes his own action present in the person who carries out these gestures.»

⁴⁴¹ D/P 373-374

⁴⁴² *SofL* 35-38.47-48.57-61, cf. 36, n.1

⁴⁴³ *SofL* 58; *Jesus* II:229-240, cf. Heb. 7:26-27: «For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people; he did this once for all when he offered up himself.»

⁴⁴⁴ Cf. CCC 1548-1551; *LG* 10, 28; *SaCo* 33; *CD* 11; *PO* 2, 6; *ST* 3a, 22.4

⁴⁴⁵ *MD*; *SofL* 171-177

⁴⁴⁶ *MD*

Ratzinger maintains that this representation is not merely before the Church (providing the gift of forgiveness, salvation, etc.) but also before God. The priest acts *in persona Christi*, as a representative of Christ the High Priest. The priest doesn't merely hand over the gifts, he makes them present in the consecration. By means of the sacrament of ordination, the priest participates to a certain degree in the creativity of God, in the creative word of God. In *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, Ratzinger references the ancient, inter-wordly concept of the *oratio*.⁴⁴⁷ This, he says, does not denote 'prayer' *as such* (which Ratzinger notes is *prex* in Latin), but «solemn public speech,»⁴⁴⁸ which is fulfilled and made perfect in God. To explain this, Ratzinger makes reference not only to the Bible, but also to ancient pagan religions, utilizing modern research. Scott Hahn points out that in this context Ratzinger «easily integrates modern rhetorical insights into Scripture, especially speech-act theories, with the perspectives of liturgical theology and metaphysics in order to articulate a compelling, biblically grounded understanding of what happens in the divine liturgy.»⁴⁴⁹ Ratzinger writes:

This *oratio*—the Eucharistic Prayer, the “Canon”—is really more than speech; it is *actio* in the highest sense of the word. For what happens in it is that the human *actio* (as performed hitherto by the priests in the various religions of the world) steps back and makes way for the *actio divina*, the action of God. In this *oratio*, the priest speaks with the I of the Lord—“This is my body,” “This is my blood.” He knows that he is not now speaking from his own resources but in virtue of the Sacrament that he has received, he has become the voice of Someone Else, who is now speaking and acting. This action of God, which takes place through human speech, is the real “action” for which all of creation is an expectation. The elements of the earth are transubstantiated, pulled, so to speak, from their creaturely anchorage, grasped at the deepest ground of their being, and changed into the Body and Blood of the Lord. The new heaven and new earth are anticipated.⁴⁵⁰

Ratzinger holds that when the priest celebrates the Eucharist, when he offers the Eucharistic sacrifice, he is acting *in persona Christi*, being a ‘mouthpiece’ of Christ. In the Eucharistic celebration, then, Christ offers up his *Todah*, offers up *Himself*, through the priest.⁴⁵¹ To understand this, we need to first understand the Catholic context into which Ratzinger is writing. In Catholic theology, the words of institution are primarily *directed towards God the Father*. We see this in all four Eucharistic prayers of the Ordinary Form. One example suffices, the first (emphasis

⁴⁴⁷ For some discussions of this in Ratzinger's theology, see Hahn 2009:145-146.172-181. For a general discussion of this in regards to the Eucharistic celebration, see Dix 1945:473.489.

⁴⁴⁸ *SofL* 172

⁴⁴⁹ Hahn 2006:135

⁴⁵⁰ *SofL* 172-173, cf. 171-177. See also Hahn 2006:134-136

⁴⁵¹ Cf. CCC 1407.1409-1411; CCC 1548-1551

added): «On the day before he was to suffer, he took break in his holy and venerable hands, and with eyes raised to heaven *to you, O God, his almighty Father*, giving you thanks, he said the blessing...»⁴⁵²

The crucial words of the narrative, «this is my body,» «this is my blood,» «take,» «do this...» etc., are of course directed towards the Apostles. But in the Catholic tradition, this narrative *functions* as a (or the most important) part of the *whole* Eucharistic prayer. The narrative is an integral part of the Canon itself, and this Canon is *directed towards God the Father*. Thus, when Ratzinger maintains that the priest acts *in persona Christi* as he (sacrificially) offers the Eucharist and «speaks with the I of the Lord,»⁴⁵³ he *is* saying that he offers it to God, that he offers Christ.

As I've pointed out above, Ratzinger sees a clear connection the priest acts *in persona Ecclesiae*, even though Ratzinger doesn't use this phrase himself in the works I have dealt with. We see this especially in Ratzinger's insistence that the interpretive lense of the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Church is Paul's notion of a 'reasonable worship' (Gk. *λογικός λατρεία*) in Romans 12. «I am persuaded that the Roman Canon has in its petition hit upon the real intention of Paul in his exhortation in Romans 12.»⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵² *MassEng* 35

⁴⁵³ *SofL* 172

⁴⁵⁴ *Pilgrim* 116-117, cf. Hahn 2009:179, n.48.

4 Discussion of the views of Pannenberg and Ratzinger

In this thesis I have asked three research questions. The answer we give to my research questions ‘determines’ (at least logically, if we emphasize coherence) our view of the Eucharistic sacrifice. In the following I will, on the basis of these questions, compare and discuss Pannenberg and Ratzinger, and try to develop a view of my own.

My intention here is to discuss the answers to these questions I have deduced from the theology of Pannenberg and Ratzinger, respectively. I will compare them critically and evaluate their views by use of *coherence as a criterion of truth*. Both of these are fairly systematic, and most of their arguments are based upon research within the field of dogmatics, systematic theology, liturgy, history of theology and exegesis.⁴⁵⁵ To understand better the subject I am examining, however, I intend in this discussion not only to make use of research within those fields, but also research on liturgy, ritual theory and linguistics (specifically speech act theory). Through discussing Pannenberg and Ratzinger comparatively, I try to answer this question: Is the Eucharist a sacrifice, and if so, in what sense?

4.1 Introductory remarks

Before I go into the discussion of Pannenberg’s and Ratzinger’s views of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist, I need to consider two issues: (1) what place the Eucharist has within systematic theology; and (2) how Christ is present in the Eucharist. The first is important for the understanding of the Eucharist in general, and the second is crucial for how you view the sacrificial character of the Eucharist. This will not constitute a major part of this thesis, but these issues are important, and this will provide the background against which my discussion can be read. Though I will reference my figurants in this introductory section, I will not discuss them here.

4.1.1 The place of the Eucharist within theology

Before I go into the discussion of Pannenberg’s and Ratzinger’s views of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist, I need to consider the question of what place the Eucharist has within theology. This means that we first need to consider systematic theology as such. I cannot discuss this here, but will make a few remarks. Pannenberg makes a point out of the fact that his field is called *systematic theology*. He maintains that theology is a *systematic* representation of Christian teach-

⁴⁵⁵ Søvik 2011:98-106; Hahn 2006:97; Hahn 2009:15-19,92-95

ing, with emphasis on *coherence*.⁴⁵⁶ On the other hand we have Ratzinger, who also emphasises systematicity, but differently from Pannenberg. Scott Hahn points out that Ratzinger «is less a systematic thinker than he is a symphonic thinker.»⁴⁵⁷ Hahn points out that he has more in common with the (presumably less systematic) Church Fathers than with systematic thinkers like Aquinas. Hahn writes:

In the Fathers, we find the notion that truth consists of a unity of diverse elements, much as a symphony brings into a single, harmonious whole the music played on a variety of instruments. This is how it is with the biblical theology of Benedict. Even his occasional writings, which make up the bulk of his oeuvre are usually composed like a polyphonic melody from many differentiated strains—scriptural, historical, literary, liturgical, and patristic.

We see this in the way he sees the relationship between the different sources of dogma, *Scripture*, *the Creeds*, *the Magisterium* and *the (concrete) faith of faithful*.⁴⁵⁸ In some sense we might say that Ratzinger doesn't exemplify the same level of systematicity as Pannenberg. But if we simply see systematicity as coherence, Ratzinger's 'symphonic' theology *is* systematic.

As we see above (section 1.2.2), systematic theology has essentially five distinct, yet not separated, tasks:⁴⁵⁹ the *synthetic*, *critical*, *apologetic*, *creative* and *normative* tasks. This discussion will focus on the second, *critical*, task.⁴⁶⁰ This task is important in paving the way of the subsequent tasks. Pannenberg and Ratzinger has attempted at the first, *synthetic*, task. They present a holistic picture of faith, and I will here discuss this critically. The subsequent tasks, the *apologetic*, *creative* and *normative* tasks need to take this critical point into consideration. This is important for several reasons, two of which I will emphasize here. First, by critically analyzing and discussing different Christian systems of thoughts, we can come closer to truth, which must be the end, the goal, of theology. We might not succeed in creating some kind of theological 'grand unifying theory,' but we must try to get closer to truth.⁴⁶¹

In Lutheran theology, the question of the Eucharist, and of other doctrines, has always been seen in light of the issue of justification by faith alone.⁴⁶² In Catholic theology, it has always been

⁴⁵⁶ *SysT* I:17-26; Søvik 2011:95-111

⁴⁵⁷ Hahn 2009:16

⁴⁵⁸ *D/P* 26-27

⁴⁵⁹ Austad 2008:49-54

⁴⁶⁰ To shed some more light on this, I recommend reading the discussion between Niels Henrik Gregersen (2008:290-310; 2011:167-172) and Asle Eikrem (Eikrem 2011:152-166).

⁴⁶¹ It's important here to remind ourselves of Rescher's (1985:795, cf. 800-806) distinction between ideal and manifest/factual coherence. See also Niels Henrik Gregersen, *Rethinking Theology and Science* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 1998), pp.181-182.

⁴⁶² CA IV, cf. CA V-XIV.

seen as something distinct, part of the inner center of theology. In the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the Eucharist is characterized as «the source and summit of the Christian life.»⁴⁶³ Where people, by baptism, are «raised to the dignity of the royal priesthood,» and «configured more deeply to Christ by Confirmation,» in the Eucharist they «participate with the whole community in the Lord's own sacrifice,» which means that the Eucharist «completes Christian initiation.»⁴⁶⁴ There are important differences here. Where Lutheran theology has traditionally put much, perhaps too much emphasis, on justification, while this is not the case with Catholic theology. I find the Catholic method better, and I maintain that if we let the doctrine of justification become the absolute foundation, we can lose sight of other important strands of theology. And if this, like the teachings of the Reformation, grows out of a polemic background, the issue can become still more polarized. Frank C. Senn makes the point that «[the] pressure of polemics prohibited ... a positive patristic conception of the Eucharistic sacrifice from being integrated by Luther into his Eucharistic formularies.»⁴⁶⁵

One question that is important here, is what is Eucharistic theology. Is it 'systematic,' 'dogmatic,' 'practical,' or what? In my thesis I will treat both ('purely') systematic subjects like the sacrifice of Christ and ecclesiology, and ('purely') liturgical subjects like the purpose and function of Eucharistic liturgy as such. In academia, the former is often separated from the latter (as systematic theology and liturgical studies, respectively). Both Pannenberg and Ratzinger is critical of this. Pannenberg doesn't treat this subject directly, but in his *systematic treatment* of the Eucharist he makes use not only of sources from what is commonly called systematic theology, but also sources from liturgical studies.⁴⁶⁶ Ratzinger treats this directly, and explicitly criticizes the separation in Eucharistic theology of liturgical studies ('form') and systematic theology ('content').⁴⁶⁷ We can express this by the early ecclesial dictum *lex orandi est lex credendi*. This can be loosely translated «the law of prayer is the law of faith.» I would add that it works both way, and thus also *lex credendi est lex orandi*, «the law of faith is the law of prayer.» Alexander Schmemmann, one of the great Orthodox liturgical theologians of the 20th century, holds that «the "essence" of the liturgy or *lex orandi* is ultimately nothing else but the Church's faith itself or better to say, the manifestation, communication and fulfillment of that faith. It is in this sense

⁴⁶³ CCC 1324

⁴⁶⁴ CCC 1322

⁴⁶⁵ Senn 1973:105

⁴⁶⁶ See for example *SysT* III:283-284, n.591-592; *SysT* III:296, n.626, etc.

⁴⁶⁷ *Feast* 33-50. For a good introduction to the debate and to Ratzinger's points, see Hauke 2011:2-3.

that one must understand, it seems to me, the famous dictum *lex orandi est lex credendi*.»⁴⁶⁸ He rejects any polarization between the two, and makes the point that we need to rethink the «separation of faith and liturgy into two distinct “essences” whose content and meaning are to be grasped by two different means of investigation.»⁴⁶⁹ This is simply the deployment of the method of coherence. Coherence dictates that there needs to be a connection between the ‘form’ of an action and its ‘content,’ that which it aims at or tries to express.

4.1.2 The presence of Christ in the Eucharist

Both Pannenberg and Ratzinger holds to the belief that Christ is really present in the Eucharist.⁴⁷⁰ Though they have different approaches and different methods, the main point for both of them is that Christ is *personally present*. I will not deal directly with them here, and will not discuss this question at length, but I will present some points and arguments. When approaching the question of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, two questions are especially important: (1) What does Scripture teach? (2) If Scripture teaches that Christ is really present in the Eucharist, how can we explain this presence?

Scripture on Christ’s presence in the Eucharist. Allow me to quote Mark 14:22-24:

22 And as they were eating, he took bread, and blessed,⁴⁷¹ and broke it, and gave it to them, and said, «Take; this is my body.» 23 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. 24 And he said to them, «This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.»⁴⁷²

The question we need to ask, is: What does ‘is’ (Gk. *εἰμί*) mean in this text? It has been said that *εἰμί* doesn’t have to refer to something that really, ontologically *is* what it says it is. An example from the english language can be a person laughing, and saying, «this is literally killing me.» We know perfectly well that this is to be understood figuratively. And we also have an example from the NT. In Philemon 12, Paul writes about Onesimus: «He is my heart.»⁴⁷³ Here *τοῦτ’ ἔστιν* is used to refer to Onesimus, whom Paul is calling his ‘heart’ in an obviously metaphorical fasion. The conclusion is that one cannot, by this phrase alone, come to the conclusion that the elements

⁴⁶⁸ Schmemann, *Liturgy and Tradition: Theological Reflections of Alexander Schmemann* (ed., Thomas Fisch. New York, NY: SVS Press 1990), pp.38-39 (38-47).

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.39

⁴⁷⁰ *SysT* III:295-311; *GINU* 74-93

⁴⁷¹ The object of blessing is probably God, and not the bread (Thiselton 2000:870-871).

⁴⁷² If not otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations is from the *Revised Standard Version* (RSV).

⁴⁷³ My trans. Gk. *τοῦτ’ ἔστιν τὰ ἐμὰ σπλάγχνα*.

of the Eucharist really is the body and blood of Christ, and that one therefore has to ground that somewhere else. That may be true, but if it is, we need to ask one question: What is the metaphor? In Philemon 12, the metaphor is obviously the *heart*, and *τοῦτ' ἔστιν* has nothing directly to do with that. Figuratively speaking, Onesimus *is* Paul's heart. The question, then, becomes: If 'body' (*σῶμα*) and 'blood' (*αἷμα*) is used metaphorically in Mark 14:22-24, what are they metaphors *for*? If we are to claim that they are indeed metaphors, we also need to articulate *what they are metaphors for*. I can easily see bread being a metaphor for a body, or wine being a metaphor for blood, but what would body and blood be metaphors for?

One solution could be to say that they act as metaphors for the person as a whole, and his life. Pannenberg seems to take this approach.⁴⁷⁴ But if that is so, the meaning would remain virtually identical. It would still mean that Christ was present. Furthermore, it is not incoherent to assume that Christ is speaking literally in Mark 14, and that Christ is speaking figuratively (or, rather, *phenomenologically*) when he refers to himself as «the bread of life» in John 6:35, or that Paul is likewise using *phenomenological* language when he refers to the elements of the Eucharist as 'cup' and 'bread' in 1Cor. 10:16-17. Furthermore, the biblical basis of the real presence becomes more apparent in John 6:48-58, as Ratzinger points out.⁴⁷⁵ Three verses are essential here:

«I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.» (v.51)

«Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.» (v.53)

«For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.» (v.55)

If Christ is speaking figuratively here, it seems to me that we would have to become docetists. It is common in all textual interpretation to assume that, unless otherwise noted, an author uses a term in the same way throughout a text. Therefore it is safe to assume that Christ uses 'flesh' in the same way in vv.51, 53 and 55. If this text is to be read literally, Christ, from a pre-crucifixion point of view, is then telling us that he will give his flesh for the world (v.51), and that we must eat this flesh and drink this blood to have life in us (v.53.55). But if we are to read this figuratively, what does that make of v.51? Let me restate: «I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my *flesh*.» To read this figuratively, would then be very close to, if not an actual instance of, docetism in regards to Christ's crucifixion (that Christ's flesh may have been

⁴⁷⁴ SysT III:299

⁴⁷⁵ GINU 76-77

real, but that his crucifixion and death was only figurative), or perhaps even a fully docetic view of Christ's humanity (that Christ's flesh was only figurative).⁴⁷⁶

Seen in light of John 6, I maintain that the most coherent reading of the institution narratives is to read them literally. But how do we explain this?

Explaining Christ's presence in the Eucharist. There has been different approaches to explaining Christ's presence in the Eucharist. In Lutheran theology, the view has historically been Luther's *sacramental union*.⁴⁷⁷ Given a 'substantial' view of reality, which I will briefly consider below, there seems to be little difference between this and what has been called *consubstantiation*. I will therefore refer to this as *consubstantiation*, with the qualification that Luther didn't employ this term himself. In Catholic theology, the view has generally been that of transubstantiation.⁴⁷⁸ (Since the Catholic Church has a defined teaching authority, the *status* of a given teaching is clearer than in Lutheran churches.) The first that needs to be addressed, is the use of philosophical language.

A belief in some kind of 'substantial' world view is in any case part of the Lutheran heritage. *Confessio Augustana* employs the categories of the Nicene Creed,⁴⁷⁹ and this creed is part of the doctrinal background of Lutheranism. This creed makes use of the Platonic concept of *οὐσία*,⁴⁸⁰ when it states that Christ is «of one substance [essence] with the Father.»⁴⁸¹ This same category, seen not through Platonic, but Aristotelian eyes, is found later, at the fourth Lateran council in 1215, which used the category of *substantia* in defining transubstantiation.⁴⁸² If some Lutherans protest this (transubstantiation) as 'philosophying,' I want to point out that allowing for philosophical concepts in one area of theology (Christology), and deny the use in others (such as sacramental theology) is incoherent.

⁴⁷⁶ For a brief introduction to Docetism, see *Wikipedia* [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Docetism>, retrieved Nov. 21, 2012].

⁴⁷⁷ LW 37:295-303; *Sol. Dec.* VII:14-15.64

⁴⁷⁸ CCC 1373-1377.1413; *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America* 8, n.19. (USCCB, June 14, 2001). Available online: <http://bit.ly/UXHAgI> [retrieved from old.usccb.org, Nov. 21, 2012].

⁴⁷⁹ CA I.II

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. Lt. *substantia*.

⁴⁸¹ See Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 2. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House 1919), pp.57-61. Available online: <http://bit.ly/PzIKQn> [retrieved Nov. 21, 2012].

⁴⁸² See Henri Leclercq, «Fourth Lateran Council (1215)» (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 9. New York, NY: Robert Appleton Company 1910). Available online: <http://bit.ly/hGnFvT> [retrieved from newadvent.org, Nov. 21, 2012].

The question now turns to consubstantiation or transubstantiation. To explain his teaching on the real presence, Luther developed his view of Christ's 'ubiquity'.⁴⁸³ The problem with this view is that it's metaphysically incoherent. Even if the body of Christ has «personal union with the omnipresent God,» it is still a body, and cannot be omnipresent. We must surrender our intellect to God,⁴⁸⁴ but that doesn't mean that God acts irrationally or that he can do that which is logically contradictory. God cannot, for instance, create a circular square or a married bachelor.⁴⁸⁵ But isn't this also a problem for transubstantiation? Here we need to examine the metaphysical basis of the real presence.

The first we need to address is the question of *substance*. Pannenberg makes the point that there is virtual agreement between Protestants and Catholics «that the theological core of the Roman dogma of transubstantiation, independent of the Aristotelian terminology of substance and accidents, affirms the real presence of Christ in the elements of bread and wine, which was also decisively affirmed and defended by the Lutheran Reformation.»⁴⁸⁶ Pannenberg argues for a kind of 'objective' view of transignification, built upon a 'relational' ontology, not unlike Lorenz Puntel's.⁴⁸⁷ Given a kind of 'relational' (or 'contextual'/'configurative') ontology, there wouldn't be much of a difference between transignification and transubstantiation/consubstantiation, since (in Pannenberg's view) the 'identity' or 'essence' of a thing «depends on the relations in which it stands» and thus «its identity alters with the alteration of its system of reference or context by which its meaning is defined.»⁴⁸⁸ Ratzinger, on the other hand, affirms the classical view of transubstantiation.⁴⁸⁹ I find Ratzinger's arguments persuasive, but he can be a little vague. Pannenberg's approach, on the other hand, has a few problems: Pannenberg assumes that the concept transubstantiation can be divorced from its metaphysical presuppositions, a claim which I find implausible. I find Pannenberg's relational ontology incoherent. While it is true that we don't experience substances directly, on an 'empirical' level, it is incoherent to say that relations are more basic than substance, that a being, as Pannenberg says, «depends on the relations in

⁴⁸³ LW 37:222-224, cf. 295-303. See Alexander Balmain Bruce, *The Humiliation of Christ in its Physical, Ethical, and Official Aspects* (Second ed. revised and enlarged. New York, NY: A.C. Armstrong & Son 1889, p.91, n.2)

⁴⁸⁴ LW 37:296, cf. 2Cor. 10:5

⁴⁸⁵ Cf. ST 1a, 25.3-4. For a summary and analysis of Luther's view of ubiquity, see Oddvar Johan Jensen, *Kristi person: Til betydningen av læren om Kristi person i Martin Luthers teolog 1520-1546* (Doctoral thesis. Bergen 1987), pp.157-179.

⁴⁸⁶ Pannenberg 2006:171

⁴⁸⁷ SysT I:365-370 (cf. 353-359); SysT III:300-304, cf. Puntel 2001:229-240; Søvik 2011:88-89.112-116

⁴⁸⁸ SysT III:301

⁴⁸⁹ GINU 83-93

which it stands.»⁴⁹⁰ If he merely says that a substance is ‘influenced’ by its relations, Pannenberg is right, but the fact remains that even if this is so, a relation presupposes something to be related. There are furthermore good arguments in favour of an Aristotelian-Thomistic conception of metaphysics.⁴⁹¹ And last, but not least, the concept of an ‘objective’ view of transignification is incoherent. It’s the objectivization of something which is by definition subjective.

The choice, it seems to me, is in reality between transubstantiation and consubstantiation. Both transubstantiation and consubstantiation assumes a sort of Aristotelian belief in form, matter, substance and accidents. Before I go on, some remarks are in order. When it comes to *transubstantiation*, ‘Aristotelian’ is used in a somewhat loose fashion. For Aristotle an accident without its proper substance was inconceivable, and Aquinas held it on faith, saying that we believe that God keeps them in existence miraculously. But he also pointed out that this doesn’t involve a (logical) self-contradiction, something God cannot do.⁴⁹² It would, however, be more correct to say that transubstantiation is Thomistic than to say that it’s ‘Aristotelian.’ In the case of *transubstantiation*, the whole substance of bread is changed (transformed) into the whole substance of Christ’s body, and the whole substance of wine is changed into the whole substance of Christ’s blood.⁴⁹³ In the case of *consubstantiation*, the substance of bread and wine remains, while the substance of Christ’s body and blood is present alongside the bread and wine.⁴⁹⁴

To explain transubstantiation, the Catholic Church has generally said that it’s not that Christ is present on multiple locations, but that through the symbols, though the accidents/species of bread and wine, we participate in the heavenly liturgy, we are taken up to heaven. The reason for this is that the Christ who is substantially or sacramentally present in the Eucharist has the accident of being placed in heaven. Therefore it is more accurate to say that we are taken up to him.⁴⁹⁵ We also see this reflected in the Roman Canon of the Ordinary Form:

In humble prayer we ask you, almighty God: command that these gifts be borne by the

⁴⁹⁰ SysT III:301

⁴⁹¹ See Norris Clarke 1994:102-122 and Oderberg 2011:85-111, especially, as they address the question of relation. See also Tahko 2012:26-44; Feser 2009, 2010.

⁴⁹² ST 3a, 77.1, cf. ST 1a, 25.3-4; ST 3a, 74-76

⁴⁹³ *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America* 8, n.19. (USCCB, June 14, 2001). Available online: <http://bit.ly/UXHAGI> [retrieved from old.usccb.org, Nov. 21, 2012].

⁴⁹⁴ CA X

⁴⁹⁵ Jimmy Akin has, in a slightly ‘un-scholarly’ way, explained this by reference to science and/or science fiction. See Akin, «Space Warp To Heaven.» *JimmyAkin.Com*, May 2005. Available online: <http://bit.ly/VPoGGz> [retrieved from <http://jimmyakin.com>, Nov. 21, 2012].

hands of your holy Angel to your altar on high in the sight of your divine majesty, so that all of us, who through the participation at the altar receive the most holy Body and Blood of your Son, may be filled with every grace and heavenly blessing. (Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)⁴⁹⁶

This can also be held under consubstantiation, but there are some problems with this approach. While it affirms an Aristotelian-Thomistic conception of metaphysics to a certain degree, it is ultimately incompatible with it. Under an Aristotelian-Thomistic conception of metaphysics, higher substances take lower substances up in themselves. That two substances exist ‘side by side’ in the way assumed by consubstantiation is incompatible with Aristotelian-Thomistic ontology. Furthermore, there needs to be said that there is an important difference between Aristotelian-Thomistic and modern philosophy that may shed some light on this. Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy distinguishes between essence and properties, while the latter doesn’t (necessarily) do that.⁴⁹⁷ In modern philosophy, many hold to the so-called ‘bundle theory,’ saying that a thing has a certain collection of properties which together form a sort of ‘essence,’ ‘essential character’ or ‘essential structure,’ making that thing an instance of its kind.⁴⁹⁸ Puntel is among those who hold that properties and (their) relations constitute a thing’s ‘essential structure.’⁴⁹⁹ This, then, means that what an Aristotelian or a Thomist would, for example in the case of bread, call an accident (essential or non-essential), a modern philosopher might call a property, claiming that it forms a part of the ‘essential structure’ of bread. This means that a modern philosopher might say that transubstantiation is wrong because it is quite clear that the properties of bread remain. The problem, of course, is that the Thomist would agree that after consecration there remains in the host accidents (what a modern philosopher might call ‘physical properties’) that to a scientist would indicate that what we see *is* bread. But this is a case where we have two different philosophical and metaphysical conceptions, and where one is criticizing the other by assuming their own view.

With this I go on to my main discussion.

⁴⁹⁶ *MassEng* 41

⁴⁹⁷ Oderberg 2011:85-111

⁴⁹⁸ See Henry Laycock, «Object» (*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Winter 2011), section 2.6. Available online: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/object/> [retrieved Nov. 21, 2012]. See also Howard Robinson, «Substance» (*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Winter 2009), section 3.2. Available online: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/substance/> [retrieved Nov. 21, 2012].

⁴⁹⁹ Puntel 2001:229-240

4.2 The sacrificial character of the Eucharist

Before I go on with my discussion, allow me to restate the problem and research questions:

A systematic critical-comparative analysis and discussion of the Eucharistic theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg and Joseph Ratzinger with emphasis on the sacrificial character of the Eucharistic celebration.

My three research questions is as follows:

1. What is the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist?
2. What is the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration?
3. What is the role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration?

In the following I will discuss Pannenberg's and Ratzinger's views on the Eucharist, and especially its sacrificial character, through my research questions. I will primarily focus on Austad's second (critical) task.⁵⁰⁰

4.2.1 The high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist

My first research question is formulated as follows:

1. *What is the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist?*

Both Pannenberg and Ratzinger starts with revelation, and primarily with Scripture.⁵⁰¹ Both points towards the high-priestly ministry of Christ, and both points out that through the Eucharist, the communicants are partaking of the sacrifice of Christ, not merely in its fruits or effects (forgiveness, peace, salvation, etc.), but in its *enactment*.⁵⁰² They have both addressed the question of Christ's high-priestly role. Therefore it is appropriate to examine their Christological views (primarily as it refers to Christ's high-priestly ministry) in light of what Scripture has to say about Christ as High Priest.

Both Pannenberg and Ratzinger maintain that the Eucharist is an anamnesis of Christ, a liturgical commemoration. Pannenberg points out that the early Church «related the understanding of the Eucharist as a sacrifice to the fact that in celebrating the Lord's Supper we re-

⁵⁰⁰ Austad 2008:50-52

⁵⁰¹ Pannenberg 2002:25-33; *D/P* 26-27

⁵⁰² *SysT* III:316; *DCE* 12-13

call Christ's sacrifice on the cross.»⁵⁰³ He points out that Luther, citing John Chrysostom, followed this, but that this was not «an independent offering but recollection of Christ's offering.»⁵⁰⁴ Luther, Pannenberg points out, could call the Eucharistic celebration the *signum memoriale* of the promises given at the institution of the sacrament,⁵⁰⁵ but with a clear distinction between recollection and sacrifice. Pannenberg's view of the signficatory nature of the Eucharist (as a 'sign-act') is connected to his view of the sacrifice of Christ:

The self-offering of Jesus is a sacrifice to the Father only inasmuch as it expresses his obedience to the mission he received from the Father... If, then, we call the Lord's Supper a sacrifice, what Jesus himself did at the Last Supper must be viewed as a sign-act of sacrifice. What we have in the sacrifice of Jesus is not a direct offering to God but Jesus' obedience to his mission to the world as witness to the presence of salvation of the rule of God. His death was the consequence of this obedience. Because the goal of his mission, the presence of his rule, to signficatory form in what he did at the supper, the bread distributed at the supper could become a sign of his dedication to his mission to make the divine lordship present among us, and the cup that was handed around could become a sign of the sealing of this dedication by his death and of the new covenant of God with us that has its basis in that death. Hence the Lord's Supper, especially by the cup saying, gives us the meaning of the approaching death of Jesus on the cross. Meal and sacrifice go together at the Lord's Supper just as the covenant sacrifice and covenant meal did in Israel.⁵⁰⁶

Pannenberg maintain that when we say that Christ offered himself, we must say that he offered himself to and for the Church, and that it was only secondarily an offering to God (the Father).

Ratzinger, on the other hand, emphasizes Christ's self-offering to God (the Father). This did not start on the Cross, but in the Upper Room. He points out that Christ «*transforms death into the spiritual act of affirmation, into the act of self-sharing love*; into the act of adoration, which is offered to God, then from God is made available to men.»⁵⁰⁷ This self-offering unites the high-priestly prayer and the institution of the Eucharist on the one hand, and the expiatory death on the other. Both these strands «are essentially interdependent: the words at the Last Supper without the death would be, so to speak, an issue of unsecured currency; and again, the death without these words would be a mere execution without any discernable point to it.»⁵⁰⁸ The high-priestly prayer becomes the starting point through which we must understand the sacrifice of Christ:

⁵⁰³ SysT III:309

⁵⁰⁴ SysT III:309, cf. WA 57, 218, 1; Chrysostom, *Hebr. comm.* 17.3 (Heb 9:25), PG, 63, 131.

⁵⁰⁵ SysT III:309, cf. WA 6, 518, 10-11.

⁵⁰⁶ SysT III:318-319

⁵⁰⁷ GINU 29

⁵⁰⁸ GINU 29, cf. BXVI 147; Hahn 2009:157-162

[Just] as the high priest makes atonement for himself, for the priestly clan, and for the whole community of Israel, so Jesus prays for himself, for the Apostles, and finally for all who will come to believe in him through their word—for the Church of all times (cf. Jn 17:20). He sanctifies «himself,» and he obtains the sanctification of those who are his.⁵⁰⁹

Ratzinger points out that the high-priestly prayer of Christ «is the consummation of the Day of Atonement, the eternally accesible feast, as it were, of God’s reconciliation with men.»⁵¹⁰ Ratzinger maintains that through the self-offering of Christ, through his sanctifying of himself in his prayer, «the ritual of the Day of Atonement is transformed into prayer.»⁵¹¹

There is much agreement between Pannenberg and Ratzinger, but there is also disagreements which, it seems to me, hinges on how they understand the role of the Trinitarian persons, and our role in relation to this. Pannenberg emphasizes the dimension of ‘gift,’ where Christ primarily gives himself *to* the Church, in obedience to the Father. Pannenberg connects this primarily to the Incarnation, which he sees as «the means of actualizing the royal rule of the Father in the world.»⁵¹² The emphasis is on the Church’s participation in the Trinity, which they can become partakers of through the Son, through his self-gift. Ratzinger, on the other hand, emphasizes Christ the priest, though he sees the expiatory and propitiatory sacrifice not as an appeasing of an ‘angy deity,’ but as the adoration, the love, we owe to God.

To discuss this further, we first need to recapture the points of the traditional Lutheran-Catholic debates. As a background for this, we can take a look at what Melanchthon writes, in the *Apology*, concerning the concept of sacrifice:

Moreover, the proximate species of sacrifice are two, and there are no more. One is the *propitiatory sacrifice*, i.e., a work which makes satisfaction for guilt and punishment, i.e., one that reconciles God, or appeases God’s wrath, or which merits the remission of sins for others. The other species is the *eucharistic sacrifice*, which does not merit the remission of sins or reconciliation, but is rendered by those who have been reconciled, in order that we may give thanks or return gratitude for the remission of sins that has been received, or for other benefits received.⁵¹³

Melanchthon maintains that that there is a separation between the two concepts of sacrifice, that this separation is absolute, and that both cannot be part of the same sacrament. The propitiatory sacrifices are offered for sins. And therefore the Eucharist cannot be propitiatory sacrifice. One

⁵⁰⁹ *Jesus* II:78, cf. 76-102

⁵¹⁰ *Jesus* II:79

⁵¹¹ *Jesus* II:80

⁵¹² *SysT* III:389-390

⁵¹³ *Apol.* XXIV:19

problem here is the unspoken assumption that sacrifice always means sacrificial *event*. So, when Catholics say that the sacrifice of Calvary is present in the Eucharist, Melancthon sees this as a re-sacrificing of Christ. This unspoken assumption, however, is not obvious. If we rather saw 'sacrifice' as *that which is sacrificed* (the animal, Christ, etc.), and not as *the sacrificial event* (slaughter, crucifixion, etc.), the picture changes. With this perspective, we can say that the sacrifice of Calvary is present in the Eucharist, because Christ, who *is* the sacrifice, is present personally.

To understand this better, we need to consider one of the key texts in the disputes on the sacrificial character of the Eucharist; Hebrews chapters 5-10, especially 7:26-27:

For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people; he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

A reading of Hebrews 5-10 reveals that the sacrifice of Christ is perpetual and complete, and cannot be repeated (7:27; 9:12; 10:10). But what does this mean? In Hebrews 7:23-25 we read:

The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office; but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues for ever. Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

The priesthood of Christ, it says, is permanent, and on that basis Christ performs his heavenly ministry. We see that in Hebrews, the sacrifice of Christ isn't reducible to the Cross. The self-offering on the Cross is foreshadowed in *Yom Kippur*.⁵¹⁴ If we analyze this sin offering on *Yom Kippur*, we find a pattern: (1) the lamb was chosen and presented to be slaughtered; (2) the lamb was slaughtered; (3) the blood of the lamb was carried into the Holy of Holies and presented as an offering to God. We find the same pattern in Hebrews, where Christ not only sacrifices himself on the Cross, but also presented his sacrifice when he entered the heavenly sanctuary (Heb. 9:11-12.24). And this presentation is perpetual (Heb. 7:24-25; 8:1-6). As I've pointed out,⁵¹⁵ the methodology of contextual coherence dictates that the immediate context is the primary source of interpretation, and that, in Rescher's words, «[the] better (the more smoothly and coherently) an interpretation fits a text into its wider context, the better it is as an interpretation.»⁵¹⁶ The

⁵¹⁴ Lev. 16, cf. Heb. 5:1-10; 7:20-28; 8:1-6; 9:7.11-28; 10:1-18.

⁵¹⁵ Section 1.2; A1:6-7

⁵¹⁶ Rescher 2001:69

immediate context of v.27 is the discussion beginning in chapter 5, and which continues through chapter 10. Allow me to quote Hebrews 8:1-3, which comes directly after 7:27 (emphasis added):

1 Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, 2 *a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent* which is set up not by man but by the Lord. 3 *For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer.*

One question presents itself when we meet this text: Why, if Christ has already offered his sacrifice, would he have to have something to offer? Before I attempt to answer this question, it needs to be said that this text suggests that Christ being seated has nothing to do with him ceasing to offer his sacrifice. I have often heard that Hebrews says that Christ no longer offers, no longer presents himself as offered because he sat down (Heb. 10:11-14). But this text states that, *as Christ is seated*, he is «a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent.» And he adds that, as «every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices,» Christ also needs «to have something to offer» (v.3). Commenting on Heb. 7:27, Paul Ellingworth makes the point that the sacrifice of Christ is «continuous rather than repeated.»⁵¹⁷ And commenting on Heb. 8:3, he makes the point that «there is no question, here or elsewhere in Hebrews, of the sacrifice of Christ itself taking place continuously in heaven.»⁵¹⁸ To understand how we can coherently hold *both* that Christ's sacrifice was offered «once for all» *and* that Christ still needs to offer his sacrifice, we need to examine just what sacrifice *is*.

Neither Pannenberg nor Ratzinger gives a direct definition of what a sacrifice is, but a definition can be found through analyzing their texts. They both focus primarily on the concept of gift, a gift given to God in love and obedience. To come to a definition myself, I have consulted a lecture on the Eucharistic sacrifice according to the Orthodox tradition, delivered by Bishop Kallistos Ware in 2002.⁵¹⁹ Ware identifies three parts to sacrifice in general: (1) *offering*, that you bring along something, for example an animal, as an offering; (2) *consecration*, that your offering is dedicated to God by a priest; and (3) *communion*, that both you and God get a share in the consecrated offering, thereby gaining communion.⁵²⁰

Ware sees this as the 'basic pattern,' yet he admits, however, that this doesn't cover every biblical sacrifice.⁵²¹ He goes on to point out that «the Eucharist conforms to this pattern.»⁵²²

⁵¹⁷ Ellingworth 1993:395

⁵¹⁸ Ellingworth 1993:395

⁵¹⁹ Ware 2002

⁵²⁰ Ware 2002 (WK-91-03, 6:37-11:44)

⁵²¹ Ware 2002 (WK-91-03, 11:44-12:10)

⁵²² Ware 2002 (WK-91-03, 12:16-12:20, cf. 12:09-12:55)

This is basically the offertory, the consecration and the communion. Because his pattern doesn't entirely conform to the sacrifices of the Old Testament, I present a fourfold pattern that I do believe conforms to the sacrifices of the Old Testament:

1. **Offering:** Something is *given as a gift*, representing the giver.
2. **Consecration:** The gift is *consecrated*, dedicated to God by an 'ordained' or authorized priest.
3. **Presentation:** The consecrated gift is *presented* to God.
4. **Participation:** Through the presentation the consecrated gift, God *participates* in the sacrifice, and (in the case of certain sacrifices) the people *participate* in the sacrifice through communion. This fourth part is technically not part of the *sacrifice*, but refer to the participation in the sacrifice.

Let's examine these closer.

1. **Offering.** The action of offering refers to the fact that you choose (and perhaps prepare) something to offer, and bring it along to be offered, presumably in the Temple. This is an initial offering, a giving of a gift. In the case of the goat sin offering at *Yom Kippur*, this refers to the choosing and bringing as an offering of said goat (Lev. 16:7-9). In the case of Christ, this refers to the fact that God prepared him (Heb. 10:5-10), the fact that he became incarnate and (perhaps) to his life and ministry. In the *Septuagint*, this is signified by the Greek verb *προσφέρω*, which means to 'offer,' 'present,' or 'bring along.' It denotes bringing along something to offer in the Temple, and giving it to the priest.⁵²³

2. **Consecration.** The consecration refers to the 'making holy' of the thing offered, the dedication of that to God. The word 'consecration' is derived from the latin verb *consecrare* which means to dedicate something to God or to make it holy (from *sacer*, 'sacred, dedicated'). In the case of the goat, this refers to its slaughtering (Lev. 16:15). In the case of Christ, this primarily refers to his Crucifixion, but it could also include his life and ministry before, culminating in his Crucifixion. In the *Septuagint*, this is signified by the Greek verb *ἀναφέρω*, which means to 'offer up,' 'carry up,' or 'lift up.' It denotes the offering *up* of the sacrifice on the altar.⁵²⁴ Before I go on, I would like to point out that while consecration often involved the killing of an animal, it doesn't necessarily have to include that.⁵²⁵ According to Ware,⁵²⁶ the point of the killing was not the death of the animal in itself (perhaps, I would add, with the exception of the Scapegoat⁵²⁷)

⁵²³ Cf. Lev. 1:2-3; 2:1; 2:8; 2:14, etc. See *Septuaginta* (ed. Alfred Rahlfs & Robert Hanhart. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 2006).

⁵²⁴ Cf. Lev. 2:16, 3:5.11.14-16; 7:5, etc.

⁵²⁵ Cf. Lev. 6:15 where what is offered up is an offering of flour and grain.

⁵²⁶ Ware 2002 (WK-91-03, 9:3-10:15; 11:11-11:44)

⁵²⁷ The Scapegoat wasn't literally slaughtered, but died as a consequence of being sent out (Lev. 16:7-10).

but the dedicating of the *life* of the animal to God. To dedicate something to God is to take it out of the *profane* realm, out of everyday use, and to bring it into the *sacred* realm, and give it a special, dedicated (or 'religious') purpose.

3. Presentation. The presentation refers to the presentation of what is offered to God. In the case of the goat, this refers to the sprinkling of its blood «upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat» (Lev. 16:15). In the case of Christ, this primarily refers to his presentation of Himself (and his blood) in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb. 9:11-12.24), which he continues forever (Heb. 8:1-3). I point out above that the offering is an initial offering. We still have an offering on this third stage, but here the offering is of the consecrated gift. It is now a presentation.

4. Participation. As I've pointed out above, my fourfold pattern does not claim that there are exactly four parts to each sacrifice, but that we can find four distinctions in each sacrifice. I must also add that this is technically not part of the *sacrifice*, but refer to the participation in the sacrifice. In the case of the goat, this refers to the sprinkling of its blood «upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat» (Lev. 16:15). By presenting the consecrated animal to God, by virtue of its blood, God partakes of the sacrifice (or at least has ordained for us that he should do so).⁵²⁸ In the case of Christ, this refers again primarily to his presentation of Himself (and his blood) in the heavenly sanctuary by which God is made to partake of the sacrifice.

In sum, we see a fourfold pattern where, in the case of the sacrifice of Christ, he offered himself as a sacrifice, consecrating himself on the cross.⁵²⁹ The Cross is absolutely central, and it's the (culminating) place of consecration, but it belongs within a particular context outside of which it becomes meaningless. The cross is connected to the institution of the Eucharist where Christ consecrated himself, and prayed for the consecration of his disciples. Christ is not only both priest and sacrifice, he encompasses the whole sacrifice. First, representing humanity, he is the one who comes to offer a gift, himself, in the temple, also himself.⁵³⁰ Second, he is the one who, as the priest, consecrates his self-gift on behalf of humanity, in the Upper Room and on the Cross. Third, he is the one who presents himself perpetually in the heavenly sanctuary.⁵³¹ Fourth,

⁵²⁸ We could say that, as God is not bound by the sacraments, but has bound us to them, as the Catechism of the Catholic Church states (CCC 1257), he is likewise not bound by the sacrifices, but instituted them for the sake of his people (cf. Ps. 51:16-19).

⁵²⁹ The cross could also be seen as a focus point, also including his life, ministry, passion, resurrection, ascension, etc.

⁵³⁰ Cf. John 2:13-22.

⁵³¹ Heb. 7:24-27; 8:1-3; 9:11-12.24

by his presentation of himself to God he is himself a participant in his own offering because he is himself God, one in being with the Father and the Holy Spirit. It is important to point out here that in Heb. 7:27, the word that is translated 'offered up' is, in its lexical form, ἀναφέρω. In Heb. 8:3, however, the word that is translated 'offer' is, in its lexical form, προσφέρω. We see here the difference; though there can only be one consecration, the consecrated sacrifice can still be offered, presented.

Pannenberg points out that the Cross is essential, yet not necessarily as a sacrifice proper. Ratzinger points out that the Cross as sacrifice is deeply connected both to the Last Supper in which Christ «actually underwent, in an inward and anticipatory manner, his death on the Cross,»⁵³² and to the Eucharist, in which we celebrate «the *tōda* of the Risen One.»⁵³³ He even says that without the institution of the Last Supper, we have no way of knowing whether or not the Cross is a sacrifice.⁵³⁴

In Hebrews, the sacrifice of Christ is understood in light of the high-priestly sacrifice on *Yom Kippur*. We read in Hebrews 9:12 that Christ «entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, *thus securing* an eternal redemption.» (Emphasis added) He secured our redemption, not by the Cross alone, but also by entering into 'the holy places.' My main point, however, is that this action is perpetual:

«[Christ] holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues for ever. Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.» (Heb. 7:24-25)

«For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer.» (Heb. 8:3)

«For Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.» (Heb. 9:24)

The point of the author of Hebrews is that Christ, like any other priest, must offer sacrifices. But the sacrifice he offers, and offers perpetually, is *Himself*. This sacrifice, this heavenly ministry is, as Paul Ellingworth says, «continuous rather than repeated.»⁵³⁵ It's important here that we distinguish properly between the four sacrificial elements I have outlined above. The (initial) *offering* and the *consecration* can obviously not be repeated, for both practical and theological reasons. If you give something as an offering, it is no longer yours to give. And if this offering

⁵³² *Feast 38*

⁵³³ *Feast 57*, cf. Gese 1981:134.

⁵³⁴ *GINU* 29-30; *BXVI* 147, cf. Hahn 2009:157-162

⁵³⁵ Ellingworth 1993:395

is perfect or complete, no more gifts and consecrations are needed. But the *presentation* (and the *partaking*) can continue perpetually, in this case by Christ's self-presentation in the Holy sanctuary,⁵³⁶ by God's partaking of the sacrifice by this perpetual self-presentation, and by our partaking of the sacrifice through communion, and through our self-offering in Christ.

Here it's appropriate to ask what is meant in Hebrews 7:27 by 'once for all' (*ἐφάπαξ*). Does it denote once in relation to time? An affirmative answer to this question would imply seeing time (as we understand it, anyhow) as a feature of heaven, since Hebrews 9:12 states that Christ «entered *once for all* into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.» It seems then, particularly in light of Hebrews 7:24-25 and 9:24 which points out that Christ appears on our behalf in God's presence, that *ἐφάπαξ* denotes something definitive, something conclusive, but not in relation to (chronological) time. There is no more need to consecrate, but the one sacrifice is still being offered on our behalf (Heb. 7:24-25; 8:1-3).

Here is where the 'concomitarians' view of both Pannenberg and Ratzinger becomes important for the proper understanding of the Eucharist — especially its relation to the sacrifice of Christ and to the sacrifice of Church. We see from Hebrews that Christ is at this moment presenting his sacrifice before God in the heavenly sanctuary. Now, Pannenberg makes two relevant claims concerning the Eucharist: (1) what is present in the Eucharist is «the whole and undivided Christ,»⁵³⁷ and (2) that «believing celebration and reception of the Supper give a share not only in the "fruit" of Christ's offering but also in its enactment.»⁵³⁸ Ratzinger makes similar claims, saying that the sacrifice of Christ is a representative sacrifice which is made available to us, and which we can participate in.⁵³⁹ Both Pannenberg and Ratzinger, then, says that the Eucharistic celebration is a participation in Christ's offering of himself to God. But there are some important differences.

In light of my preceding discussion I maintain that Ratzinger is more coherent, more in line not only with Scripture, but also the way the sacrifice of Christ has been understood historically. While I agree with much of what Pannenberg says, and I also agree with his critique of the 'Anselmian' tradition, though I cannot judge if this is a fair assessment of Anselm himself, since I haven't read him, or have only read excerpts. I disagree, though, with Pannenberg's interpre-

⁵³⁶ Cf. Heb. 7:24-25; 8:1-3, 9:11-12.24

⁵³⁷ *SysT* III:295

⁵³⁸ *SysT* III:316

⁵³⁹ *Sofl* 38.56-61

tation of the intra-trinitarian roles in the sacrifice, and his insistence that the sacrifice of Christ to God (the Father) is secondary.

Panneberg points out that Scripture tells us that Christ is sent *by and* from the Father, yet it also states that Christ offered himself *to* the Father. He asks: «Who is the subject of the giving up?»⁵⁴⁰ I think that a better way of looking at this is the way Ratzinger does. He points out that the lamb that Abraham offered to God, instead of Isaac, was given to him by God. God provided the offering, and Abraham offered it back, as a representative sacrifice. Ratzinger writes:

Out of obedience, Abraham is willing to do something that goes against the mission given by God: to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, the bearer of the promise. In so doing, he would be giving up everything, for, without descendants, the land promised to his descendants has no meaning. At the very last moment God himself stops Abraham from offering this kind of sacrifice. He is given something else to offer instead of the son of God—a male lamb. And so representative sacrifice is established by divine command. God gives the lamb, which Abraham then offers back to him. Accordingly, we offer sacrifice, as the Roman Canon says, “*de tuis donis ac datis*” (from your own gracious gifts).⁵⁴¹

What we see here is that both God and Abraham were subjects. And the same is true of Christ, as our representative. He offered himself in our stead, on our behalf. This perspective manages to embrace *both* the intra-trinitarian points of Pannenber *and* the classical notion of sacrifice. Everything we offer belongs to God. Everything in the world belongs to God. God gave the Hebrews a system of sacrifice, a way of achieving reconciliation. The problem was not that God doesn't want sacrifice but, as Hebrews points out, that «it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins» (10:4). This was only a shadow. What God wants is not death, but life. He wants us, as Ratzinger points out, to give ourselves to him, in adoration — in praise and thanksgiving.⁵⁴² And that is exactly what Christ did.

Ratzinger has managed to embrace both the expiatory and propiatory character of the sacrifice by, on the one hand, avoiding and outright rejecting the image of the angry God who ‘demands’ blood, and, on the other hand, pointing out that Christ is a representative sacrifice which is given to God in adoration — in praise, thanksgiving and reparation.⁵⁴³ The sacrificial animals represented those who offered them, but what God demands is that we give ourselves to him, not in the sense of dying, but in the sense of recapitulating, of ‘coming home.’

⁵⁴⁰ *SysT* II:439

⁵⁴¹ *SofL* 37-38

⁵⁴² *GINU* 29-30; *Feast* 50-60

⁵⁴³ *GINU* 29-30, cf. *CCC* 1407

God gave us this in Christ, who is forshadowed not only in the priests and the sacrifices, but also the people. Employing my four-fold sacrificial distinction, he is: (1) the one who *offers* the gift, (2) the one who *consecrates* the gift, (3) the one who *presents* the gift, and (4) by virtue of his divinity, the one *to whom the gift is presented*. Pannenberg maintains that Christ did not offer himself as a propitiatory sacrifice, and I agree to some extent. The image of the ‘angry deity,’ at least the way this is often understood, is not Scriptural. The Bible talks about the wrath of God, but portrays it more as a wrath against sin, than against sinners, and it is also important to point out that God’s wrath is not human wrath. God doesn’t get ‘emotional’ or ‘capricious.’⁵⁴⁴ But my main point here is that I don’t see that this is a necessary property of propitiatory sacrifices. Instead of seeing it as a appeasing of God because he is angry, we can see it as a pleasing of God by doing his will, by ‘coming home.’ Then propitiation in reality becomes the equivalent of expiation, the reconciliation of man with God.⁵⁴⁵ Ratzinger avoids the image of the ‘angry deity’ and sees rather this sacrifice as a self-offering, a giving of oneself to God, through Christ, through the sacrificial gift God has provided for us.

I also disagree with Pannenberg’s point that the sacrifice of Christ to God (the Father) is secondary. I maintain that it is primary; the primary means through which we can approach God, the means through which we can offer ourselves.⁵⁴⁶ I would also add that Pannenberg’s points about our self-sacrifice, our participation in Christ’s self-offering, which will be discussed in the next section, makes much more sense if the sacrifice of Christ to God is given its primary place. There is, however, no need to choose either the gift given to us, or the gift given to God. It is the same. Christ gave himself to God, and we are made partakers in this through communion, and we can offer ourselves through this, through Christ. A good way of looking at this, which I will be coming back to in the next section, is that of Benedictine theologian Cyprian (Cipriano) Vagaggini who points out that the direction of sacrifice is always from the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit and back again. He makes the point that «every good gift comes to us from the Father, through the medium of Jesus Christ His incarnate Son, in the presence of the Holy Spirit; and likewise, it is in the presence of the Holy Spirit, through the medium of Jesus Christ the incarnate Son, that everything must return to the Father and be reunited to its end, the most blessed Trinity.»⁵⁴⁷ With these words I go on to the next main point.

⁵⁴⁴ Cf. Jas. 1:17

⁵⁴⁵ Cf. *SysT* II:411.438-449

⁵⁴⁶ Cf. Rom. 12:1; 1Pet. 2:5; Heb. 4:14-16; 10:19-22.

⁵⁴⁷ Vagaggini 1976:191-192

4.2.2 The role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration

My second research question is formulated as follows:

2. *What is the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration?*

We see that for both Pannenberg and Ratzinger, the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration is a role that is performed in and through Christ.⁵⁴⁸ Pannenberg roots this in a discussion around the question of what, exactly, *anamnesis* is.⁵⁴⁹ He points out that anamnesis «a presentation and re-presentation of the paschal mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus.»⁵⁵⁰ It's not merely a mental recollection, but «the self-representing of Jesus Christ by his Spirit.»⁵⁵¹ This anamnesis, Pannenberg maintains, is rooted in thanksgiving: «Thanksgiving leads on to recollection of the institution of the Lord's Supper, at which bread and wine become the medium of Christ's presence.»⁵⁵² The words of institution are an integral part of this, but «within the framework of anamnesis and as its climax.»⁵⁵³ This offering of praise and thanksgiving, Pannenberg maintains, is «a letting oneself be taken up into the actual sacrifice of Jesus Christ, not an additional offering to God.»⁵⁵⁴ The thanksgiving sacrifice is «the entry of the church into the self-giving of Christ, i.e., the offering of ourselves, by, with and in Jesus Christ, as a loving sacrifice in the signs of bread and wine.»⁵⁵⁵ For Pannenberg, then, the sacrifice of the Church is in reality a participation in the sacrifice of Christ, in Christ himself:

[We] do not offer Christ but (...) he offers us, and in this manner it is acceptable and even useful that we should call the mass a sacrifice, not for its own sake, but because we offer ourselves with Christ, that is, we entrust ourselves to Christ with firm faith in his testament, and only thus, through him and his means, come before God with our prayers and praise and offerings not doubting that he will be our pastor or priest before the face of God in heaven.⁵⁵⁶

This, I maintain, captures the essence of the Offertory, and of the whole Eucharistic celebration. Ratzinger follows a similar path, though he grounds his analysis more concretely in the

⁵⁴⁸ *SysT* III:316-317; *BXVI* 141; *Feast* 51-60

⁵⁴⁹ *SysT* III:305-311

⁵⁵⁰ *SysT* III:306

⁵⁵¹ *SysT* III:306, cf. 320-324

⁵⁵² *SysT* III:308

⁵⁵³ *SysT* III:308

⁵⁵⁴ *SysT* III:316, cf. n.694.

⁵⁵⁵ *SysT* III:316, cf. n.696-697

⁵⁵⁶ *SysT* III:317, cf. *WA* 6, 379, 3ff, cf. *Rom* 12:1-2

Hellenistic-Hebrew concepts of *εὐλογία* ('blessing, praise, consecration') and *εὐχαριστία* ('thanksgiving'), and explicitly in the *Todah* sacrifice as such.⁵⁵⁷ The *εὐχαριστία* of the Church, then, is a «participation in the thanksgiving of Jesus, which includes the prayer of gratitude for the gifts of the earth.»⁵⁵⁸ He continues:

Thus *eucharistia* is the gift of *communio* in which the Lord becomes our food; it also signifies the self-offering of Jesus Christ, perfecting his trinitarian Yes to the Father by his consent to the Cross, and reconciling us all to the Father in this "sacrifice". There is no opposition between "meal" and "sacrifice"; they belong inseparably together in the new sacrifice of the Lord.⁵⁵⁹

In this question we find great similarities between Pannenberg and Ratzinger. Both maintain that the Church offers up herself as a living sacrifice by participating in Christ. To shed more light on this, I will now turn to 1. Corinthians 11:23-25:

23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, «This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.» 25 In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, «This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.»

Reading this text we need to ask two important questions: (1) What is it that we are supposed to *do*, in remembrance of Christ? (2) What is *remembrance*? Of these questions, the second one has gotten much attention, but we also need to answer the first. Orthodox liturgist Alexander Schmemmann makes the point that Western theology often care too much about content, to the extent that some Western approaches can discuss sacraments without taking note of their liturgical setting.⁵⁶⁰ He thus makes a similar point to Ratzinger's.⁵⁶¹ But before we do that, we will consider the second question: What is *remembrance*?

Pannenberg maintains that *remembrance*, or *anamnesis*, is not «merely an act of human remembering of which we are still the subjects but the self-representing of Jesus Christ by his Spirit.»⁵⁶² The *anamnesis* of the Church, then, is something akin to an invocation of Christ, a re-representation of Christ in the midst of his Church, not in the sense of something 'magical,' but

⁵⁵⁷ *Feast* 39-60

⁵⁵⁸ *Feast* 49

⁵⁵⁹ *Feast* 49-50

⁵⁶⁰ Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World* (New York, NY: SVS Press 1973), pp.135-151.

⁵⁶¹ *Feast* 33-50, cf. Hauke 2011:2-3

⁵⁶² *SysT* III:306, cf. 320-324

as in a participation in the prayer and offering of Christ.⁵⁶³ Hartmut Gese⁵⁶⁴ touches this, and points out that the *Todah*, which one holds together with one's whole community, includes not only a sacrificial meal but also a confessing of God's salvation, expressed as prayer, song and/or poetry. This prayer «refers back to the time of troubles and “thinks on” (*zkr*) the deliverance and the experience of death and salvation.»⁵⁶⁵ The Hebrew verb *zakhar*⁵⁶⁶ has the meaning of *remembering* or *reminding*, roughly the same as the Greek verb ἀναμνησκω.⁵⁶⁷ This 'reminder' «can assume special importance through recitation of the song of lament which the individual sang when in trouble and which when possible concluded with the vow of a thank offering, which has now been brought.»⁵⁶⁸ This comes to expression in Psalm 50:14-15, which is not dealt with by Gese:

*Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,
and pay your vows to the Most High;
and call upon me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.*

For Gese, the Psalms of Thanksgiving in the OT, which often start with lament but end with thanks and praise, have the *Todah* as their *Sitz im Leben*.⁵⁶⁹ This is the reason for their past point of view. They are «formulated with reference to the situation in which the thank offering is presented.»⁵⁷⁰ The *Todah* is celebrated in remembrance of the salvation of God «by commemorating the passage through troubles and the event of deliverance.»⁵⁷¹ The focus of the *Todah*, and the Psalms of Thanksgiving, isn't on «a general state of well-being, *shalom*, as it is in a normal meal offering but on the bringing of well-being out of a state of trouble.»⁵⁷² The *Todah* is different from other offerings in that it's not merely an offering to God, a propitiatory sacrifice, but an adoration of God.⁵⁷³ The Psalms of Thanksgiving have their *Sitz im Leben* within a specific ritual. A good example is Psalm 116, where we can read about the 'cup of salvation' being raised up as a *Todah*.⁵⁷⁴ The Eucharistic liturgies of the LCMS contains an offering, and two of the

⁵⁶³ *SysT* III:311, cf. *Jesus* II:128.

⁵⁶⁴ Gese 1981; Gese 1977, cf. *Feast* 51-60. I have primarily consulted the english version (1981).

⁵⁶⁵ Gese 1981:129

⁵⁶⁶ Cf. the noun *zikkaron*, 'memory, reminder.'

⁵⁶⁷ Cf. the noun ἀνάμνησις, 'memory, reminder.'

⁵⁶⁸ Gese 1981:129, cf. the prayer and God's response to it, in *Jonah* 2:3-11.

⁵⁶⁹ Gese 1981:128

⁵⁷⁰ Gese 1981:129

⁵⁷¹ Gese 1981:129

⁵⁷² Gese 1981:129, cf. 120-121

⁵⁷³ Gese 1981:129, cf. *Ps.* 50:14-15.

⁵⁷⁴ Gese 1981:130

liturgies (1 and 2) contain an offertory in which Psalm 116:12-13.17-19 is recited:

What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me? I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of salvation and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.⁵⁷⁵

Gese point out that «[the] cup corresponds to the proclamation and the sacrifice to the meal of the thank offering.»⁵⁷⁶ The main point of Gese is that the Eucharist is the *Todah* of Christ, which will be celebrated perpetually. Gese quotes an ancient Rabbinic dictum: «In the coming (messianic) age all sacrifices will cease, but the thank offering will never cease; all (religious) songs will cease, but the songs of thanks will never cease.»⁵⁷⁷ We can find this in *Pesikta De-Rab Kahana*:

And when ye sacrifice a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the Lord—you will continue to offer it [even in the time-to-come] when you have all that delights you (Lev. 22:29). R. Phineas, R. Levi, and R. Johanan citing R. Menahem of Gallia said: In the time-to-come all offerings will cease, except the thank offering which will never cease. All prayers will cease, except the prayer of thanksgiving which will never cease. Hence it is written of the time-to-come The voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that say: "Give thanks to the Lord of Hosts, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever" (Jer. 33:11): these are prayers of thanksgiving; and of them that bring offerings of thanksgiving into the house of the Lord (ibid.): these are thank offerings. So, too, David said: Thy vows are upon me, O God (Ps. 56:13). He did not go on to say, "I will render a thank offering" but I will render thank offerings unto Thee (ibid.), a statement which intimates that both thanksgiving and thank offering will be rendered [in the time-to-come].⁵⁷⁸

But now we must turn back to the first question: What is it that we are supposed to *do*, in remembrance of Christ? Two theologians who have both treated this similarly, is Anglican liturgist Dom Gregory Dix and Danish Lutheran theologian Regin Prenter.⁵⁷⁹ Both of these point

⁵⁷⁵ LSB 159-160.175-176.

⁵⁷⁶ Gese 1981:130

⁵⁷⁷ Gese 1981:133, cf. *Feast* 58

⁵⁷⁸ *Pesikta De-Rab Kahana*. R. Kahana's Compilation of Discourses for Sabbaths and Festal Days. Translated from Hebrew and Arameic by William G. Braude and Israel J. Kapstein (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1975), pp.183-184.

⁵⁷⁹ Dix 1945:48-102; Prenter 1977:75-86

out that the structure of what we are to ‘do’ is found right there in the text (1Cor. 11:24-25). What Christ commands us to do, is that which he himself did. In most liturgies (both lutheran and Catholic), and in the *Textus Receptus*, «do this» (cf. 1Cor. 11:24.25) seems to refer to the receiving of the body and blood of Christ and their subsequent consumption. But if we actually take a look at the few places in the NT where we actually find the phrase «do this in remembrance of me» (Gk. *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν*, Luk 22:19; 1Cor. 11:24.25), we do not find any command to eat and drink *in connection with* the command in question. 1Cor. 11:25 comes closest, but only with a paranthetical remark: «Do this, *as often as you drink it*, in remembrance of me.»⁵⁸⁰ It is clear, from other texts that we are supposed to eat and drink, but that is neither the focus of Luke or Paul, nor the way in which they understand the phrase in question.

But what, exactly, does ‘this’ refer to in the imperative to ‘do this’? As I’ve already pointed out, the liturgy and the *Textus Receptus* can make this look as a command to take and eat.⁵⁸¹ But we find this neither in Luk 22 nor in the oldest copies of 1. Corinthians. Bruce M. Metzger comments that it is highly improbable that *Λάβετε, φαγετε* was part of the original version of 1Cor. 11:24.⁵⁸² But if the imperative does not refer to a meal, what does it refer to? We do not find any direct imperative to eat or to drink in the Pauline/Markan accounts. Dix discerns a seven-fold pattern:⁵⁸³ Christ (1) took bread, (2) gave thanks, (3) broke the bread, (4) said «this is my body which is for you; do this in remembrance of me,» (5) took the cup, (6) gave thanks, and (7) said «this cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.» He also points out a later, ‘shortened down’ (liturgical) version: (1) take bread and wine (the offertory); (2) give thanks (the Eucharistic prayer); (3) break the bread (the fraction); and (4) distribute the elements (the communion).⁵⁸⁴ Where some commentators⁵⁸⁵ focus on the *remembrance*, Regin Prenter focuses primarily on the imperative to «do this.»⁵⁸⁶ He discovers two parallel groups: Allow me to organize them:

⁵⁸⁰ *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, ὁσάκις ἐὰν πίνητε, εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν.*

⁵⁸¹ Gk. *Λάβετε, φαγετε*, 1Cor. 11:24 TR.

⁵⁸² Metzger, *A textual commentary on the Greek New Testament*. Corrected ed. London: United Bible Societies 1975, p.562

⁵⁸³ Dix 1945:48

⁵⁸⁴ Dix 1945:48-50

⁵⁸⁵ For example Thiselton 2000:878-882

⁵⁸⁶ Prenter 1977:76-83

(1A) «*This* is my body which is for you» (τοῦτό μου ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν).

(1B) «Do *this* in remembrance of me» (τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν).

(2A) «*This* cup is the new covenant in my blood» (τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι).

(2B) «Do *this*, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me» (τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, ὡσάκις ἐὰν πίνητε, εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν).

Prenter points out that what Christ is saying is «do the bread» and «do the cup.»⁵⁸⁷ According to Prenter, with references to old liturgical traditions going back to Justin Martyr, especially the chapter 66 of his *First Apology* and chapter 41 of his dialogue with Tryphon,⁵⁸⁸ ‘doing the bread’ means to do what Christ did. This action, ‘doing the bread’ and ‘doing the wine’ is expressed in sacrificial terms, «where the priest imitate what Christ did at the Last Supper, i.e. he takes the bread and the wine, respectively, and when he gives thanks, he brings it forth to God, in remembrance of Jesus.»⁵⁸⁹ Prenter’s focus, when it comes to the Eucharistic sacrifice, is on the offertory. He points out that the Church offers unto God its spiritual sacrifices, ‘symbolized’ by the bread and wine, and gives this sacrifice to God, through Christ.⁵⁹⁰ The anamnesis, Prenter points out, is what «you »do« in remembrance of Christ, i.e. the offertory, the bringing forth of bread and cup and the thanksgiving which accompany it. It is the eucharistic sacrifice.» He doesn’t see this as an offering of Christ, but a thanksgiving directed towards the Lord, which results in Christ becoming present, and in Christ giving himself to the Church.⁵⁹¹

While I maintain that Dix is correct in maintaining the seven/fourfold pattern, and I also find Prenter’s point an interesting one, it seems that there is, at least in Prenter, an unnecessary separation of the elements signified by the words of institution. To explain this, I will utilize the insight of linguistics, and specifically speech act theory. This theory was introduced by John L. Austin and developed further by John R. Searle (who studied under Austin).⁵⁹² I’m not going to go into the discussions about which speech act theory is the ‘best,’ but will point to Austin’s research in which he points to ‘performative utterances’ or simply ‘performatives.’ What is important here is the context of the utterance and the utterance in itself (and what is signified by the utterance). The context defines the meaning of a given utterance. Let’s say that a person says, «I

⁵⁸⁷ Prenter 1977:76-78

⁵⁸⁸ Prenter 1977:77-78, cf. Roberts/Donaldson 1995a:185.215 (PG 6:427-429; 6:503-506).

⁵⁸⁹ Prenter 1977:77-78

⁵⁹⁰ Prenter 1977:80

⁵⁹¹ Prenter 1977:80-82

⁵⁹² Austin 1975; Searle 1968

declare you guilty of speeding.» If he is performing the role of a judge in a play, no ‘real’ change will come by his words, and he has no legal ‘right’ to pronounce these words with authority. If, however, he is a judge with the right to judge on behalf of the state, and he utters these words *as a judge* within the context of a legal case, a lawsuit or a trial, the accused will be *made legally guilty* of the act of speeding.⁵⁹³

When it comes to the utterance in itself, Austin points out that it functions on three levels: the *locutionary*, the *illocutionary* and the *perlocutionary*.⁵⁹⁴ The first two parts of the speech act (the *locutionary* and *illocutionary* acts) are an integral part of the *one* (speech) act, while the third is external and primarily pertains to the one(s) to whom the speech is uttered. Let me explain this by the example of the judge. First, the *locutionary act* is the words themselves (and their meaning) as they are physically uttered by the judge within its judicial context. Second, the *illocutionary act* is what is signified and done by the *locutionary act*; that the accused is made legally guilty. Third the *perlocutionary act* is the ‘external’ result of the *illocutionary act*, for instance that the accused becomes angry, that the people who might have gotten harmed by his speeding are satisfied, etc. We can now use this on the institution narrative.

We must understand that per speech act theory, the *locutionary* and *illocutionary* acts are an integral part of the *one* (speech) act. The original institution narrative, the whole action — the taking of bread and wine, the blessing and giving thanks, the breaking of the bread and the distribution — is part of one act, with Christ as its subject. The question then becomes: Who is its object? The Church or God? The object of the distribution is, it seems, the Church, represented by the Apostles. But the blessing and thanksgiving seems to have God as its object. It is my opinion that this becomes much clearer if we make use of the fourfold distinction of sacrifice, which I provided above. This will also help to cast light on the difference between traditional Lutheran and traditional Catholic theology.

First, you have Christ offering bread and wine, where he is giving himself back to God, in the gifts, in bread and wine. This is reflected in the Church’s liturgy, in the *offertory*, where the Church gives herself to God in the gifts, in bread and wine, and sometimes also in other gifts such as money, food for the poor, etc. This is a real offering, but it’s not an «additional offering

⁵⁹³ The first example is what Searle (1968:406, n.3) might call an ‘unserious unliteral utterance,’ while the latter is what he would call a ‘serious literal utterance.’

⁵⁹⁴ Austin 1975:91-94.98-132.144-151. Searle (1968:405-424) critiques Austin’s distinction between *locutionary* and *illocutionary* acts, but they are useful for my purpose here.

to God.»⁵⁹⁵ It is an offering of ourselves through Christ, a participation in his sacrifice.

Second, you have Christ giving the blessing (Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24) and/or giving thanks (Luke 22:19-20; 1Cor. 11:24-25). If you see this blessing as a blessing of the gifts, primarily as a consecration, a case might be made that the primary orientation of the narrative is towards the Church (Christ taking bread and wine, giving it new significance and/or existence, breaking the bread and distributing the gifts). But if, as most exegetes maintain,⁵⁹⁶ this is a blessing primarily of God, a praising of him, the case can be made that the primary orientation of the narrative is towards God (Christ taking bread and wine, blessing God, breaking the bread and distributing the gifts). This is also strengthened by the fact that Luke and Paul, writing in a Greek environment, 'translated' this into thanksgiving.⁵⁹⁷ This is also reflected in the Church's liturgy, in the *consecration*, the Eucharistic prayer which culminates in the institution narrative,⁵⁹⁸ and which makes Christ present.⁵⁹⁹

Third, you have Christ distributing his gifts. This is where the difference between traditional Lutheran and traditional Catholic theology becomes most apparent. On the traditional Catholic view, as it's reflected in Catholic liturgy, Christ is presented/offered to God the Father, and distributed to the people, in the gifts.⁶⁰⁰ On the traditional Lutheran view, as it's reflected in Lutheran liturgy, Christ is distributed to the people in the gifts.⁶⁰¹

Fourth, the gifts are consumed, participated in. Here we see a major difference between traditional Lutheran and traditional Catholic theology. On the traditional Catholic view, God participates in the sacrifice of Christ by having it presented, and the people participates in the sacrifice of Christ by consuming it.⁶⁰² On the traditional Lutheran view, the people participates

⁵⁹⁵ *SysT* III:316, cf. 316-319

⁵⁹⁶ Thiselton 2000:870-871

⁵⁹⁷ Thiselton 2000:870-871

⁵⁹⁸ I am here writing of the 'normal' situation in Western liturgies. I am not here making a judgement either of liturgies which (currently) do not contain the institution narrative, such as the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, or of Eastern Eucharistic prayers which culminate in the epiclesis, such as the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. On the Anaphora of Addai and Mari, see Nils Hallvard Korsvoll, «Nattverd utan innstiftingsorda?» (*Teologisk tidsskrift* 1, 2012, pp.249-267) and Robert F. Taft, «Mass Without the Consecration?» (*America*, May 12, 2003, pp.7-11). For the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, see the greek text with an english translation from Faith Press, London, 1969, 6. ed.

⁵⁹⁹ *SysT* III:295-311; *GINU* 74-93

⁶⁰⁰ CCC 1407-1419

⁶⁰¹ CA X

⁶⁰² CCC 1407-1419

in the sacrifice of Christ by consuming it.⁶⁰³

There is a real difference here between traditional Lutheran and traditional Catholic teaching. But here I must point out that the traditional Catholic approach seems more coherent. Pannenberg points out that the Eucharist «is to be celebrated as a remembrance of the unique sacrifice of Christ on the cross, and, through that remembering, the celebrants allow themselves to be drawn into Christ's giving of his life.»⁶⁰⁴ This is what the Catholic Church holds. In Catholic theology, the offertory, while being distinct from the other parts of the institution, such as the consecration, is part of the one (speech) act of Christ, including the offering of bread and wine, the blessing/giving thanks, and the distribution. The Offertory prayers, and the bread and wine, have therefore traditionally been offered not only in thanksgiving, but also for sins. We see this clearly in the Offertory prayers of the Roman Canon (the Extraordinary Form), said forth by the priest, acting *in persona Christi*:

Accept, holy Father, almighty, eternal God, this spotless host, which I, your unworthy servant, offer to you, my living and true God, for my innumerable sins, offenses and indifferences. ... Accept, O Holy Trinity, this oblation which we offer to Thee in remembrance of the passion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, our Lord.⁶⁰⁵

This offering of bread and wine, before the consecration, is offered for the sins of the people.⁶⁰⁶ The reason is that while the offertory is distinct from the other parts of the sacrifice of the Mass, it's not separated from them. It is offered (cf. #1 of my four-fold pattern) for the purpose of becoming a vehicle of grace, of Christ's sacrifice, in the consecration.

This hinges not only upon the belief that Christ is offering himself in the heavenly sanctuary, as we see in Hebrews (7:24-25; 8:1-3; 9:24), but that this 'heavenly liturgy' is made present in our Eucharistic celebration, and that Christ, in the Spirit, acts as the 'principal celebrant' of this Eucharistic celebration.⁶⁰⁷ This perspective is crucial also in Lutheran tradition. It seems to me that if we as Lutherans want to affirm that there is a real offering going on, a 'eucharistic sacrifice' of praise and thanksgiving, yet we want to avoid, as Pannenberg, letting this offertory,

⁶⁰³ CA X

⁶⁰⁴ Pannenberg 2006:171

⁶⁰⁵ MiRo 446.449. Lt.: *Súscipe, sancte Pater, omnipotens ætérne Deus, hanc immaculátam hóstiam, quam ego indignus fámulus tuus offero tibi Deo meo vivo et voro, pro innumerábilibus peccátis, et offensióibus, et negligétiis meis. ... Súscipe, sancta Trínitas, hanc oblatiónem, quam tibi offerimus ob memóriam passióinis, resurectiόnis, et ascensiόnis Jesu Christi, Dómin nostri.*

⁶⁰⁶ MiRo 446

⁶⁰⁷ CCC 1348.1359-1361; SaCo 7; SofL 38; BXVI 141; Kelly 1978:451-452

or any other part of the Eucharistic celebration, become «an additional offering to God,»⁶⁰⁸ we must acknowledge that it is Christ who offers them all. We need here to consider the doctrine of justification. We see above that Pannenberg places the Eucharist (and the sacraments) within, or at least in close proximity to, the doctrine of *justification*. For Pannenberg, the fellowship with Christ, mediated through the Church, *dogmatically* «forms a theme in the doctrine of the regeneration and justification of believers and their adoption into the filial relation of Jesus to the Father.»⁶⁰⁹

One of the most important themes, if not the most important theme, of the Lutheran reformation was the doctrine of justification. In the Church of Norway, of which I am a member, the only binding documents are, besides Scripture and the ancient creeds, is *Confessio Augustana* and Luther's *Small Catechism*.⁶¹⁰ In *Confessio Augustana*, we read:

Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight. Rom. 3 and 4.⁶¹¹

The question, then, becomes how we see our offering in light of this. Pannenberg makes the point that we must see it not as something we do ourselves, but as a participation in Christ: «Faith's offering of praise and thanksgiving is then a letting oneself be taken up into the actual sacrifice of Jesus Christ, not an additional offering to God.»⁶¹² Pannenberg points out that «the notion of such an additional offering» was one of the objects of critique in the Reformation. This, he maintains, was not merely the point of a proper distinction between thank offering and sin offering, but a recognition that if the congregation's sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving «is viewed as an independent subject of sacrifice alongside Jesus Christ,» this becomes «an additional work.»⁶¹³ The Church's thank offering, Pannenberg maintains, is a participation in Christ, and the Church's (and the Christian's) thank offering «finds acceptance with the Father only as faith's offering of praise, i.e. as participation in the praise Jesus Christ offered to God.» If we see the Eucharistic offering not as something we do ourselves, but something done in God,

⁶⁰⁸ SysT III:316

⁶⁰⁹ SysT III:237, cf. 211-236.

⁶¹⁰ See Arve Brunvoll, *Vedkjenningskriftene åt Den norske kyrkja*. Ny omsetjing med innleiingar og notar. Oslo: Lunde 1979.

⁶¹¹ CA IV, cf. V-VI.XII-XIII.XX.XXIV.XXVI-XXVIII.

⁶¹² SysT III:316

⁶¹³ SysT III:316, cf. n.694.

in Christ, we do not have any ‘conflict’ with justification, any more than Jas. 2:14-26 represents a ‘conflict’ with the doctrine of justification. Christ is the subject of the whole action, not only of the consecration but of the thanksgiving, the blessing, the distribution, etc. And this, it seems, is directed primarily at God. The whole action of Christ, which he commanded his Apostles to do in remembrance of him, is part of the one speech act. As I point out above, we must understand that per speech act theory, the *locutionary* and *illocutionary* acts are an integral part of the *one* (speech) act. Ratzinger, as we see above, is concerned with the issue of orientation. He maintains that the Church’s adoration should be oriented towards God, towards the east, and that the priest should be facing the altar (*ad orientem*).⁶¹⁴ To explore this, we can consider the work of Benedictine theologian Cyprian (Cipriano) Vagaggini.⁶¹⁵

Citing Vagaggini’s work, Catholic priest and author Fr. Thomas Kocik makes the point that «[the] Latin theological tradition views the liturgical re-presentation of Christ’s sacrifice (however conceived) as an offering of the whole Christ, Head and members, *to the Father through* (and with) the Son *in the Holy Spirit.*»⁶¹⁶ Exploring this theme, Vagaggini points out that in the NT, we find that there are certain specific roles for each of the divine Persons. This scheme, he writes, «is neither rigid nor absolute, but ... is always present whenever sacred salvation history is discussed in its relationship to the divine Persons.»⁶¹⁷ Vagaggini formulates the scheme thus:

[Every] good thing comes to us from the Father, through the mediation of Jesus Christ His incarnate Son, by means of the presence in us of the Holy Spirit; and likewise, it is by means of the presence of the Holy Spirit, through the mediation of the incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, that everything returns to the Father.⁶¹⁸

The Church is therefore oriented towards the altar, towards east, where she offers her prayer in the Spirit, through Christ. Vagaggini expresses this in Latin: *A Patre, per Filium eius, Iesum Christum, in Spiritu Sancto, ad Patrem.*⁶¹⁹ Thus we have four important prepositions: *a, per, in, ad.* Vagaggini points to this scheme in many different passages in the NT,⁶²⁰ but my focus is on

⁶¹⁴ *SofL* 74-84; *Feast* 139-146, cf. Rowland 2008:135-137. Interestingly the word ‘orientation’ is derived from *orientem*.

⁶¹⁵ Vagaggini 1976:191-246, chapter 7: ‘From the Father, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, to the Father: The Liturgy and the Christological-Trinitarian Activity in the Divine Plan.’

⁶¹⁶ Kocik, «The End of Orientation.» *New Liturgical Movement*, Feb. 23, 2011. Available online: <http://bit.ly/hBcl8g> [retrieved from newliturgicalmovement.org, Nov. 21, 2012].

⁶¹⁷ Vagaggini 1976:198

⁶¹⁸ Vagaggini 1976:198

⁶¹⁹ Vagaggini 1976:198

⁶²⁰ Vagaggini 1976:198-206

the liturgy, and specifically the Eucharist.⁶²¹ Vagaggini, writing within Catholic tradition, point out that the sacrifice of the Mass «is structured essentially on the Christological-Trinitarian perspective according to the scheme *a, per, in, ad*, and primarily in the extratrinitarian sense.»⁶²² This, he points out, «can be seen from the essential form of its central part, called the anaphora, canon, or Eucharistic prayer.» Here, he points out, the Father appears «as the *principium a quo* and the *terminus ad quem* of the Eucharistic action.»⁶²³ Christ is «the High Priest *through* whom we perform the same priestly action,»⁶²⁴ and the Spirit is «appears there as the *in quo*» (‘in whom’). Vagaggini refers to Heb. 9:14 when pointing out that sacrifice «is brought to completion *in Spiritu*.»⁶²⁵ Allow me to quote vv.13-14:

For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

The point of Vagaggini is that the anamnesis of the Church comes from the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit, and is offered back to the Father, in the Holy Spirit, through the Son.⁶²⁶ He points especially to the Roman Canon, both in the Ordinary and Extraordinary Form, in which the Church offers her gifts to God, offers back to him what she has herself received.

This is a perspective which resonates both with Pannenberg and Ratzinger. Pannenberg makes the point, as we see above, that as Christians «thank God that the Son gave up his life in faithfulness to the mission he had received from the Father, and as they themselves are drawn into this his sacrifice, [they] offer God thanks for their own lives and for the gifts of his creation.»⁶²⁷ This Eucharistic anamnesis, this thanksgiving, is then an offering in the Spirit, through Christ, to the Father, of something the Church has herself *received*. Ratzinger points out that, on Moria «God gives the lamb, which Abraham then offers back to him. Accordingly, we offer sacrifice, as the Roman Canon says, “*de tuis donis ac datis*” (from your own gracious gifts).»⁶²⁸ We thus see that the action is not ours, but God’s, expressed ‘extratrinitariouly’ in the different roles of the divine Persons.

⁶²¹ Vagaggini 1976:223-230 (207-246)

⁶²² Vagaggini 1976:223

⁶²³ That is, ‘the principle from which’ the action comes, and ‘the end to which’ the action aims (Vagaggini 1976:223).

⁶²⁴ Vagaggini 1976:223-224

⁶²⁵ Vagaggini 1976:224, n.54

⁶²⁶ Vagaggini 1976:224-226

⁶²⁷ *Syst* III:324

⁶²⁸ *SofL* 38

We see a strong connection here between Christ and the Church for whom he offered himself. His offering is at its deepest level also the Church's offering, because he offered it on her behalf. And it is also something given by God, which is subsequently given back. The whole Eucharistic celebration is sacrificial, but not in the sense of offering something new, but of giving oneself to God, in Jesus Christ. But there are major differences between traditional Lutheran and traditional Catholic theology. While Lutheran theologians will (normally) only go as far as stating that the Church is taken up into the sacrifice of Christ, and offered with him to God,⁶²⁹ Catholic theologians will add that in the Eucharistic celebration, Christ is himself offered by the Church, to God, through the priest who acts *in persona Christi*.⁶³⁰ This is a significant difference which I will discuss next.

4.2.3 The role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration

My third research question is formulated as follows:

3. *What is the role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration?*

As we have seen, Pannenberg and Ratzinger agrees, or are at least somewhat compatible with each other, on the issues from the preceding three sections. They both maintain the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist,⁶³¹ that Christ gave himself as a sacrifice of expiation,⁶³² and that the Church, through the Eucharistic celebration, offers up herself through bread and wine, in praise and thanksgiving.⁶³³ On the following topic, however, we see the main disagreement between the two, and between Lutheran and Catholic theology in general. And the disagreements we see between them in the preceding section are bound up to the question of the role of the priest as he acts *in persona Christi*. This question is the determining question that traditionally divided Lutherans and Catholics.

Pannenberg rejects a major part of the Catholic ordination ritual, the part where the ordinand is given the chalice and paten, with the following words: «Take authority to offer in the church the sacrifice for the living and the dead.»⁶³⁴ Pannenberg doesn't reject the fact that the

⁶²⁹ *SysT* III:316, cf. n.694. See Rom. 12:1; 1Pet. 2:5.

⁶³⁰ *MD*; *SofL* 171–177

⁶³¹ *SysT* III:293-304.311-315.320-324; *GINU* 74-93

⁶³² *SysT* II:411.438-449; *SysT* III:316-319; *Jesus* II:38-41.76-102.186-188.229-240.251-253; *GINU* 29-30

⁶³³ *SysT* III:316-317; *Feast* 50-60

⁶³⁴ *SysT* III:393, cf. DS 1326 (Pope Eugenius IV's bull *Exultate Deo*, November 22, 1439, from the Council of Florence).

Eucharist is a sacrifice, and that those who participate in the Eucharist participate in this sacrifice (both its fruits and its enactment).⁶³⁵ But he rejects the role of the priests in offering this «in the church ... for the living and the dead.» As we see, he points out that this has ‘softened’ a bit since the Council of Florence, and that Pope Pius XII, in 1947

[concluded] from liturgical inquires into the history of ordination that laying on of hands is the proper sign (or matter, *materia*) of ordination (DS, 3859)⁶³⁶ and state expressly that the handing over of the chalice and paten (*traditio instrumentorum*) is not to be seen as an essential part of the sacrament according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ (DS, 3858).⁶³⁷ This declaration created a new situation in ecumenical discussions of ordination.⁶³⁸

While it is true that Pope Pius XII did indeed conclude that «the handing over of the chalice and paten ... is not to be seen as an essential part of the sacrament according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ,»⁶³⁹ the Pope did not change the *meaning* or *content* of Catholic Holy Orders. Even if the Catholic Church says that «laying on of hands is the proper sign (or matter, *materia*) of ordination,» the content of Catholic Holy Orders still includes the belief that the priest is ordained, amongst other things, «to offer in the church the sacrifice for the living and the dead.»⁶⁴⁰ We read in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

«The Eucharist is the heart and the summit of the Church’s life, for in it Christ associates his Church and all her members with his sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving offered once for all on the cross to his Father; by this sacrifice he pours out the graces of salvation on his Body which is the Church.» (CCC 1407)

«It is Christ himself, the eternal high priest of the New Covenant who, acting through the ministry of the priests, offers the Eucharistic sacrifice. And it is the same Christ, really present under the species of bread and wine, who is the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice.» (CCC 1410)

«As sacrifice, the Eucharist is also offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal benefits from God.» (CCC 1414)

«Having passed from this world to the Father, Christ gives us in the Eucharist the pledge of glory with him. Participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with his Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, makes us long for eternal life, and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints.» (CCC 1419)

What divides traditional Lutheran and Catholic theology here, is the idea that Christ, «acting through the ministry of the priests, offers the Eucharistic sacrifice,» that it is he «who is the of-

⁶³⁵ *SysT* III:316

⁶³⁶ Apostolic Constitution, «*Sacramentum Ordinis*,» 4 (November 30, 1947).

⁶³⁷ «*Sacramentum Ordinis*,» op.cit., 3

⁶³⁸ *SysT* III:393

⁶³⁹ *SysT* III:393

⁶⁴⁰ *SysT* III:393

fering of the Eucharistic sacrifice,» and that the Eucharistic sacrifice is «offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead.» (CCC 1410.1414) In Lutheran theology the priest is not seen as operating *in persona Christi* in the same way as in Catholic theology. Pannenberg agrees that there is a certain way in which the priest acts in such a way,⁶⁴¹ but for him this primarily denotes the priest representing Christ before the Church, with the Gospel and with the Eucharistic gifts, and not primarily a representation before God. In classic Lutheran theology, the priest is acting on behalf of Christ when he is preaching, teaching and administering the sacraments to the congregation. Addressing the issue of Donatism,⁶⁴² Philip Melanchthon points out, in the Apology of *Confessio Augustana*, that the priest is not representing himself, but Christ:

[The ministers of the Church] represent the person of Christ, and do not represent their own persons, as Christ testifies, Luke 10:16: He that heareth you heareth Me. [Thus even Judas was sent to preach.] When they offer the Word of God, when they offer the Sacraments, they offer them in the stead and place of Christ. Those words of Christ teach us not to be offended by the unworthiness of the ministers.⁶⁴³

Notice the use of the word ‘offer.’ In this context it denotes the giving of gifts. It is not necessarily a sacrificial term. (On Pannenberg’s definition of *sacrifice*, however, where Christ is offering himself to the Church in obedience to the Father, this is a sacrificial term.) As I’ve pointed out above, Pannenberg has the same approach. He points out that the priest is representing Christ when he reads the Word of God to the Church, when he preaches and when he administers the sacraments.⁶⁴⁴ He explicitly connects it to the priests recitation of the words of institution,⁶⁴⁵ which is directed at the Church. And his focus is primarily on the meal, on communion.⁶⁴⁶ Never in the Apology do we read that the priest represents Christ *before God*, as high priest. This view, however, is held in Catholic theology.

First, the idea that the sacrifice of Christ (and thus the Eucharist) is «offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead» follows from the Catholic teaching concerning the afterlife and especially the Catholic view on Purgatory. I cannot go into that debate here,⁶⁴⁷ But let’s get

⁶⁴¹ *SysT* III:106.388-389; Pannenberg 2002:25

⁶⁴² For a brief explanation, see *Wikipedia* [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donatism>, retrieved Nov. 21, 2012].

⁶⁴³ *Apol.* VII/VIII:28

⁶⁴⁴ Pannenberg 2002:25

⁶⁴⁵ *SysT* III:106.388-389

⁶⁴⁶ *SysT* III:319.

⁶⁴⁷ For the Catholic view of the doctrine, see CCC 1030-1032. For the classic Lutheran critique of the doctrine, see *Apol.* VI:21.26.35-43.65-70. For a positive Protestant take on the issue, see Jerry L. Walls, «Purgatory for Everyone» (*First Things*, April 2002), pp.26-30. Available online: <http://bit.ly/fpsH4I> [retrieved from firstthings.com, Nov. 21, 2012].

back to the second part, the idea that Christ, «acting through the ministry of the priests, offers the Eucharistic sacrifice,» and that it is he «who is the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice.» We see that classic Lutheran teaching accepts that the priest acts on behalf of Christ *before the Church*, but not *before God*. Herein lies a major difference between Lutheran and Catholic teaching. The question, then, is: In what way does the priest discharge this office in the Eucharistic celebration?

We need here to ask two questions: (A) When presiding at the Eucharistic celebration, is the priest acting *in persona Christi*? (B) When the words of institution are uttered by the priest in the Eucharistic celebration, to whom is he uttering them? Allow me to start with the first.

A. *Does the priest act in persona Christi in the Eucharistic celebration?*

Pannenberg maintains that «the minister who with the whole congregation makes anamnesis of Christ's crucifixion for us, inasmuch as he repeats the words of institution that Jesus spoke, acts in the persona of Christ.»⁶⁴⁸ The priest, according to Pannenberg, is giving the Church a share in Christ, through pronouncing the words of institution. He understands these words, *in their liturgical setting*, to be uttered to the Church, like Christ uttered them to the Apostles.⁶⁴⁹ He writes:

As regards the church's ministry in particular, however, here again the only unique point is that this activity *in persona Christi* is a public activity in the name of the whole church. We see this especially in the presiding of church leaders at celebrations of the Eucharist⁶⁵⁰ when they celebrate the eucharistic anamnesis on behalf of the whole congregation, so that all the members share in their action when *in persona Christi* they pronounce the words of Jesus over the bread and wine. The public discharge in Christ's name of the commission given to the whole church takes place also in proclamation of the Word as the Word is heard and accepted, not just as that of the pastor but as that of Christ himself, and therefore as the Word of God, the same applying to the pronouncing of forgiveness of sins that ministers proclaim and pronounce in virtue of the authority of Jesus Christ that is given to the whole church, and therefore in Christ's stead.⁶⁵¹

We see from this that in one sense, the priest is interceding before God on behalf of the Church, *in persona Christi*, but not as in offering Christ, but as in praying on their behalf, and as in administering from God to the Church, the congregation, the answer to this intercession and petition, giving them a share in the salvation given by Christ in the sacraments. When officiating in the Eucharistic celebration, the priest acts *in persona Christi* primarily before the Church.

⁶⁴⁸ SysT III:106

⁶⁴⁹ SysT III:329, cf. 106.386-392

⁶⁵⁰ Cf. BEM 2:14 (with commentary)

⁶⁵¹ SysT III:389

Ratzinger, on the other hand, is writing within Catholic tradition, and maintains that in the Eucharistic Celebration, the priest *qua* priest acts *in persona Christi*.⁶⁵² The priest acts *in persona Christi*, as a representative of Christ the High Priest. According to Ratzinger, the priest, as he prays the Eucharistic prayer, the *oratio*, «speaks with the I of the Lord.»⁶⁵³ Ratzinger holds that when the priest celebrates the Eucharist, when he offers the Eucharistic sacrifice, he is acting *in persona Christi*, being a ‘mouthpiece’ of Christ. Ratzinger writes within Catholic tradition, where the words of institution (in their liturgical setting) are primarily *directed towards God the Father*. Thus, when Ratzinger maintains that the priest is acting *in persona Christi* as he (sacrificially) offers the Eucharist and «speaks with the I of the Lord,»⁶⁵⁴ he is saying that he offers it to God, that he offers Christ.

The idea that the priest acts *in persona Christi*, and has a special task, is found early on, for instance in the writings of Justin Martyr and Cyprian of Carthage. In his *First Apology*, chapters 65-67, Justin Martyr writes about the early Church’s celebration of the Eucharist.⁶⁵⁵ Fr. Timothy Finigan, a Catholic parish priest of Our Lady of the Rosary in Blackfen, part of the Archdiocese of Southwark, England, has made the point that «the translation [of Justin] most readily available on the internet and in libraries betrays a Protestant bias.»⁶⁵⁶ The reason for this is that it translates *εὐχαριστίας, ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ* as «he gives thanks to the best of his ability» rather than «he offers the Eucharist according to the power which he has.» Most translations available make it seem that Justin has in mind a priest ‘doing the best he can.’ In a Norwegian translation,⁶⁵⁷ Justin writes that the presider offers prayers and thanksgiving «of all his might» («av all sin kraft»). In Norwegian usage, this suggests an image of the priest almost shouting out the prayers. What seems to be suggested by the greek text, however, is that the priest offers this according to the power he has as a priest, maybe a ‘grace’ given in ordination. This has become more explicit in the writings of Cyprian of Carthage. He writes:

For if Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, is Himself the chief priest of God the Father, and has first offered Himself a sacrifice to the Father, and has commanded this to be done in commemoration of Himself, certainly that priest truly discharges the office of Christ, who imitates that which Christ did; and he then offers a true and full sacrifice in the Church to God the Father, when he proceeds to offer it according to what he sees Christ Himself to

⁶⁵² *MD*; *SofL* 171–177, cf. *CCC* 1548; *LG* 10, 28; *SaCo* 33; *CD* 11; *PO* 2, 6; *ST* 3a, 22.4.

⁶⁵³ *SofL* 172, cf. 171–177. See also Hahn 2006:134-136

⁶⁵⁴ *SofL* 172

⁶⁵⁵ Roberts/Donaldson 1995a:185-186 (PG 6:427-432)

⁶⁵⁶ Finigan 2008:9

⁶⁵⁷ Justin, *Første Apologi*. Trans. Jostein Garcia de Presno. Oslo: Solum 2004, p.106

have offered.⁶⁵⁸

We see that according to Cyprian, Christ «has commanded *this* to be done in commemoration of Himself.» Here '*this*' refers to that fact that Christ, as «the chief priest of God the Father,» has «first offered Himself a sacrifice to the Father.» Cyprian is thus telling us that what Christ has commanded is that the priest is to offer (the sacrifice of) Christ to God the Father, as the representative of Christ. He does what Christ does: He offers the Eucharistic sacrifice «according to what he sees Christ Himself to have offered.» Now, this could simply mean that the priest, on behalf of Christ, offers unto the congregation his gifts; the Word and the sacraments. This has traditionally been held in Lutheran circles, and, as we see above, it is in essence the approach of Pannenberg.⁶⁵⁹ We also find a similar belief held by the Lutheran-Orthodox Joint Commission.⁶⁶⁰ In Oslo, Norway, on October 3-10 2002, they held their 11th Plenary meeting, in which the topic of discussion was the Mystery of the Church, and especially the sacraments (or 'myseria') as means of salvation. In the joint statement of this meeting, we read:

3. We also agree that those who perform the sacraments in the church do so in persona Christi. When the ordained servants of Christ carry out their sacramental ministries in the church, Christ himself acts as the true high priest and chief liturgist. The sacraments of the church are therefore the acts of Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, by means of which he baptizes, forgives sin, bestows life, and gives his own body and blood for the salvation of all believers. As St. Ambrose says, in the consecration "the priest does not use his own words, but uses the words of Christ. Therefore the word of Christ effects this sacrament" (De sacramentis, 4, 14). The salvation given in the church is thus the work of the triune God, as St. John Chrysostom says: "The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit do everything, while the priest lends his tongue and offers his hand" (Commentary on the Gospel of St. John, PG 59, 472).⁶⁶¹

While the focus of this statement is on Christ as he administers his gifts to his holy people, we do see here an somewhat official Lutheran statement to the fact that in the Eucharistic celebration the priest acts *in persona Christi*, on behalf of Christ who, through the priest, in the celebration «acts as the true high priest and chief liturgist.» The difference between the Lutheran and Catholic views (and between Pannenberg and Ratzinger) is not that the latter holds that the sacrifice of Christ is made present while the former denies this, but that the latter holds that the

⁶⁵⁸ *Epistolae* 62:14 (Roberts/Donaldson 1995b:362, cf. PL 4:385-386). See Finigan 2008:9.

⁶⁵⁹ *SysT* III:106.388-389; Pannenberg 2002:25

⁶⁶⁰ See <http://www.helsinki.fi/risaarin/lutort.html> [retrieved Nov. 21, 2012].

⁶⁶¹ See <http://bit.ly/VoFvw7> [retrieved Nov. 21, 2012]. See also Rev. Rodney L. Eberhardt, «The Pastor as *In Persona Christi*.» Lecture at the Society of the Holy Trinity General Retreat, Sept. 29, 2009. <http://bit.ly/S1ZUoN> [pdf-file, retrieved from societyholytrinity.org, Nov. 21, 2012].

priest — acting *in persona Christi* — is offering Christ to the Father in the Eucharistic celebration. Before we go on to our second question, we need to point out that there need not be a huge separation between the priest and the rest of the people. In Catholic theology, the priest has a special role in regards to the celebration of the Eucharist,⁶⁶² yet this does not mean that he doesn't also offer this on behalf of the Church. As we have seen in our analysis of Ratzinger's view concerning the sacrifice of Christ and the Eucharist, he sees the roles of Christ, the Church and the priest in the Eucharistic celebration as part of one, integral whole. There is but one sacrifice; the *Todah* of Christ, and this he offers in heaven, while his priests offer this *in persona Christi* on earth. Yet his Church is also offering this sacrifice by participating in Christ. The reason for this is that the sacrifice of Christ *is* the sacrifice of the Church, the sacrifice of humanity, offered up by Christ, who is our representative.⁶⁶³ This is not a novel idea in Catholic theology. We find it for example in the 1979 *Elucidation* of the statement on ministry and ordination in the documents from the Anglican-Catholic dialogue (ARCIC):⁶⁶⁴

[The] ordained ministry is called priestly principally because it has a particular sacramental relationship with Christ as High Priest. At the eucharist Christ's people do what he commanded in memory of himself and Christ unites them. sacramentally with himself in his self-offering. But in this action it is only the ordained minister who presides at the eucharist, in which, in the name of Christ and on behalf of his Church, he recites the narrative of the institution of the Last Supper, and invokes the Holy Spirit upon the gifts.⁶⁶⁵

It's also found in *Mediator Dei*, an encyclical of Pope Pius XII from 1947:

Now it is clear that the faithful offer the sacrifice by the hands of the priest from the fact that the minister at the altar, in offering a sacrifice in the name of all His members, represents Christ, the Head of the Mystical Body. Hence the whole Church can rightly be said to offer up the victim through Christ. But the conclusion that the people offer the sacrifice with the priest himself is not based on the fact that, being members of the Church no less than the priest himself, they perform a visible liturgical rite; for this is the privilege only of the minister who has been divinely appointed to this office: rather it is based on the fact that the people unite their hearts in praise, impetration, expiation and thanksgiving with prayers or intention of the priest, even of the High Priest himself, so that in the one and

⁶⁶² CIC 900

⁶⁶³ *Feast* 50-60; *Jesus* II:1-2.76-90.115-138.223-240; *DCE* 12-13; *Sofl* 37-50.53-61.171-177; *MD*, cf. Rom. 12:1; 1Pet 2:5; Heb. 8:1-3; 9:11-12.

⁶⁶⁴ For a brief introduction to ARCIC, see *Wikipedia* (<http://bit.ly/ROQvPQ>, retrieved from en.wikipedia.org, Nov. 21, 2012).

⁶⁶⁵ See <http://bit.ly/ULze8L> [retrieved from prounione.urbe.it, Nov. 21, 2012]. See *Consecrated Women? A Contribution to the Women Bishops Debate* (ed., Jonathan Baker. Norwich: Canterbury Press 2004), pp.56-57, cf. pp.48-58.

same offering of the victim and according to a visible sacerdotal rite, they may be presented to God the Father. It is obviously necessary that the external sacrificial rite should, of its very nature, signify the internal worship of the heart. Now the sacrifice of the New Law signifies that supreme worship by which the principal Offerer himself, who is Christ, and, in union with Him and through Him, all the members of the Mystical Body pay God the honor and reverence that are due to Him.⁶⁶⁶

This differentiation, in the Eucharistic celebration, between the people and the priest, the latter acting *in persona Christi*, can thus serve symbolically as a reminder of the fact that while the sacrifice of Christ is in many ways *our* sacrifice, offered by our representative, this sacrifice was offered partly, if not primarily, because we ourselves were unable to offer it, on account of our sins. The priest is thus not only a representative of the Church, acting *in persona Ecclesiae*, but a representative of (the uniqueness of) the person of Christ. We must now turn to our second question.

B. At whom is the institution narrative directed?

I maintain that this question has large consequences for how we see sacrificial character of the Eucharist, and especially the role of the priest. Both Pannenberg and Ratzinger maintains that the priest ‘delivers’ the Eucharistic Prayer *in persona Christi*, and therefore it is very important to understand how these words function.

Pannenberg writes within Lutheran tradition. In the liturgical tradition of Lutheranism, represented here by Luther’s *Formula Missae* and *Deutsche Messe* (from 1523 and 1526, respectively),⁶⁶⁷ the Eucharistic liturgies of the Church of Norway,⁶⁶⁸ and the Eucharistic liturgies of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS),⁶⁶⁹ the words of institution are uttered by the priest and directed towards the congregation. They function as ‘words of promise’ in which what is signified by the promise happens there and then, by Christ becoming truly present under the species of bread and wine, and subsequently distributed to the congregation for their consumption.⁶⁷⁰ We see the direction of the words of institution especially in the fifth service of

⁶⁶⁶ *Mediator Dei* 93. Encyclical of Pope Pius XII on the sacred liturgy, 1947. Available online: <http://bit.ly/pW9iTH> [retrieved from vatican.va, Nov. 21, 2012]. See Vagaggini 1976:153-156

⁶⁶⁷ *LW* 53:5-40.51-90. See also Senn 1973:101-118.

⁶⁶⁸ *Gudstenestebok for Den norske kyrkja*, part 2 (Oslo: Verbum 1996), pp.66-81.283-286.290-297.301-307; *Gudstjeneste for Den norske kirke* (Bergen: Eide 2011), pp.2.15-2.18, 2.71-2.81.

⁶⁶⁹ *LSB* 160-163.177-181.194-199.208-210.216-218

⁶⁷⁰ *CA/Apol. X*; Luther’s *Small Catechism* VI. See Carl Fr. Wisløff, ««Des Sacraments ym Wortt warnemen». Svar til biskop Bjarne Skard» (*TTK* 26, 1955), pp.164-165 (160-173).

the LCMS, where, right before uttering the institution narrative, the priest says: «In the name of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ, at His command, and with His own words, we receive His testament.»⁶⁷¹

Ratzinger, on the other hand, writes within Catholic tradition. He points out that Eucharistic Prayer is the *oratio* of the Church, a term which doesn't necessarily denote prayer, but «solemn public speech.»⁶⁷² In the liturgical tradition of Catholicism, as represented by the Roman Canon (the Extraordinary Form)⁶⁷³ and the Eucharistic prayers of the Ordinary Form,⁶⁷⁴ the words of institution are not primarily directed towards the congregation. In fact, they are not directed towards anyone in particular, but function as a narrative *within* the Eucharistic Prayer as a whole. And this prayer is primarily directed towards God the Father. As we read in the first Eucharistic prayer of the Ordinary Form: «On the day before he was to suffer, he took bread in his holy and venerable hands, and with eyes raised to heaven *to you, O God, his almighty Father*, giving you thanks, he said the blessing...»⁶⁷⁵

To explain the difference between the traditional Lutheran and the traditional Catholic view of the Eucharistic liturgy, I will turn again to speech act theory. Briefly, the speech act theory of Austin states that a speech act functions on three levels: the *locutionary*, the *illocutionary* and the *perlocutionary*.⁶⁷⁶ If we 'transfer' this to the Eucharistic liturgy, we see the difference between the traditional Lutheran and the traditional Catholic view of the Eucharistic liturgy.

Within classical or traditional Lutheran view of the Eucharistic liturgy, the institution narrative is uttered by the Eucharistic president,⁶⁷⁷ *in the direction of the congregation*, as 'words of promise.'⁶⁷⁸ Within the context of the Eucharistic celebration the duly ordained minister (cf. CA XIV) utters the institution narrative, and here we find the difference acts, or parts of the one speech act: (1) The (physical) utterance in itself, and its meaning, within and the context in which it is uttered (the *locutionary act*). (2) The 'force' of the utterance (the *locutionary act*);

⁶⁷¹ LSB 217

⁶⁷² *SofL* 172

⁶⁷³ *MiRo*.

⁶⁷⁴ *MassEng* 29-81

⁶⁷⁵ *MassEng* 35

⁶⁷⁶ Austin 1975:91-94.98-132.144-151. For examples of Lutheran and Catholic liturgies, see *LSB* 160-163.177-181.194-199.208-210.216-218; *MassEng* 29-43.

⁶⁷⁷ That is, the one who presides at the Eucharistic celebration (e.g. a priest or bishop). Within Lutheranism there are different views on who can do this. Within Catholicism, only baptised males who has been ordained as a priest/bishop may (can) preside at the Eucharistic celebration (cf. *CIC* 900).

⁶⁷⁸ Wisløff, op.cit. (*TTK* 26, 1955), pp.164-165.

that the Eucharistic elements becomes the body and blood of Christ,⁶⁷⁹ and that the consecrated elements may be distributed to those present. (3) The ‘external’ result of the preceding acts (the *perlocutionary act*): Those present can partake, they can be nourished spiritually, they can receive forgiveness of sins, they can offer themselves in praise and thanksgiving, they can adore Christ in the consecrated elements, etc. But this is different within Catholic tradition.

Within classical or traditional Catholic view of the Eucharistic liturgy, the institution narrative is uttered by the Eucharistic president, *in the direction of God*, as a part of the whole Eucharistic prayer, arguably its high point. Not only is the Eucharistic prayer directed at God the Father, the institution narrative is itself directed at him (maybe as a ‘cultic reminder’). Within the context of the Eucharistic celebration the duly ordained minister (cf. *CIC* 900) utters the institution narrative, which functions within the larger context of the Eucharistic prayer and here we find the difference acts, or parts of the one speech act: (1) The (physical) utterance in itself, and its meaning, within and the context in which it is uttered (the *locutionary act*). (2) The ‘force’ of the utterance (the *locutionary act*); that the Eucharistic elements becomes the body and blood of Christ,⁶⁸⁰ that the consecrated elements are offered unto God, as part of the Eucharistic prayer, and that the consecrated elements may be distributed to those present. (3) The ‘external’ result of the preceding acts (the *perlocutionary act*): God partakes of the offering of Christ, those present can partake, they can be nourished spiritually, they can receive forgiveness of sins, they can offer themselves in praise and thanksgiving, they can adore Christ in the consecrated elements, etc.

The difference between these two approaches relies on the direction of the words of institution, and how they function liturgically. To explain the difference between the Lutheran and the Catholic tradition on the question we must understand that per speech act theory, the *locutionary* and *illocutionary* acts are an integral part of the *one* (speech) act. In the Lutheran tradition, since these words, as they are uttered by the priest, are directed towards the congregation, they all pertain to them (as ‘words of promise’).⁶⁸¹ In the Catholic tradition, however, Christ is offered unto God by these words. The *locutionary* and *illocutionary* acts are an integral part of the

⁶⁷⁹ That is, «the true body and blood of Christ truly present under the species [ger. *Gestalt*] of bread and wine in the Supper.» (*CA* X, German text)

⁶⁸⁰ That is, «the marvelous conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the Body and the whole substance of the wine into the Blood of Christ.» See *Mysterium Fidei* (Encyclical Letter of Pope Paul VI on the Holy Eucharist. September 3, 1965. An official pontifical document) 11, cf. 46. Available online: <http://bit.ly/qk2j8R> [retrieved from vatican.va, Nov. 21, 2012].

⁶⁸¹ Wisløff, *op.cit.* (*TTK* 26, 1955), pp.164-165.

one (speech) act, and this *one* (speech) act is not merely the words of institution themselves, but the whole Eucharistic prayer. The speech act in question is directed towards God the Father, and therefore it is the Father who is the primary recipient of the act. And because the speech act in question is a (verbal) sacrifice, its parts make up that sacrifice.

The major difference between Lutheran and Catholic teaching lies then not in the idea of the priest acting *in persona Christi* as such, although some Lutherans might reject the idea, but in how they view the function of the Eucharistic liturgy, and, consequently, how they view the function of the priest. If the priest acts *in persona Christi* as he prays the Eucharistic liturgy, if that liturgy is directed at the congregation, and if the primary function of that liturgy is to make Christ present and administer him to the faithful, the priest represents Christ as he distributes his gifts to his people, and nothing more. If, however, the priest acts *in persona Christi* as he prays the Eucharistic liturgy, if that liturgy is directed at God, and if the primary function of that liturgy is to offer unto God, the priest represents Christ as he offers himself to God (the Father).

In western Christianity this prayer (the whole Eucharistic prayer of which the words of institution is a part) has traditionally been called the Canon of Mass and the Roman Canon, and in the Catholic Church this is indeed seen as a sacrificial act.⁶⁸² But this is even more explicit in the title given to this prayer in in Eastern Christianity.⁶⁸³ In Eastern Christianity, the Eucharistic Prayer is called the *Anaphora* (Gk. ἀναφορά).⁶⁸⁴ In Greek, this has the meaning of ‘offering, carrying, lifting up.’ It is related to the verb ἀναφέρω.⁶⁸⁵ In the *Septuagint*, the Greek verb προσφέρω (meaning ‘offer, present, bring along’) denotes bringing along something to offer, while ἀναφέρω denotes the offering *up* of the sacrifice on the altar.⁶⁸⁶ If the words of institution is at the heart of the Eucharistic prayer which the priest offers *in persona Christi*, and if this prayer is offered up on the altar to God, and if Christ (made present under the species of bread and wine) is an integral part of this (speech) act, it follows that the priest does offer Christ in the Eucharistic celebration. What is needed in the ecumenical discussions, then, is research into the history of doctrine and history of liturgy, with emphasis not only on the pre-reformatorial, but also the pre-medieval, era, and particularly on what is often called ‘the undivided Church of the

⁶⁸² For a popularized introduction to this, in the Ordinary Form, see Milton Walsh, *In Memory of Me: A Meditation on the Roman Canon* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press 2011).

⁶⁸³ Interestingly, Phillip Melancthon favorably cites the Eastern liturgical tradition in his argument against the Roman Catholic doctrine (*Apol.* XXIV:6-8.78-88.93-95.).

⁶⁸⁴ For a brief introduction, see Vagaggini 1976:162-171.

⁶⁸⁵ *BDAG* 75

⁶⁸⁶ Cf. Lev. 1:2-3; 2:1; 2:8; 2:14-16, 3:1.5.11.14-16; 7:5, etc.

first millennium.⁶⁸⁷ This notion is not unproblematic, but it is important to give this era ‘extra attention,’ since it was emphasized by the early Lutherans.⁶⁸⁸

The question that must be asked is who coheres more with the witness of the Church Fathers; Pannenberg (and Lutherans), or Ratzinger (and Catholics)? Pannenberg maintains a ‘standard’ Lutheran position on the institution narrative; that it is directed primarily at the Church, but reads this together with an ‘untraditional’ view of the sacrifice of Christ, where Christ gives himself primarily to the Church, secondarily to God. Ratzinger, on the other hand, maintains a ‘standard’ Catholic position on the institution narrative; that it is directed primarily at God, and he reads this together with an more ‘traditional’ view of the sacrifice of Christ, where Christ gives himself primarily to God, secondarily (and derivately) to the Church. Due to the restrictions in a master’s thesis, both in scope, extent and depth, I cannot dwell deeply into this question. But some examples can be put forth (emphasis added).

And in the Anaphora of the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil,⁶⁸⁹ we read in the institution narrative that Christ, «when he was about to go out to his voluntary, blessed, and life-giving death, on the night on which he gave up himself for the life of the world, he took bread in his holy and unstained hands, and *presenting it to you, God and Father*, offered thanks, blessed, sanctified, broke it and gave it to his holy disciples and apostles, with these words...» And in the Anaphora of a Gallic liturgy,⁶⁹⁰ we read in the institution narrative that Christ, «on the day before he suffered for our salvation, and for all,⁶⁹¹ [he] stood in the midst his apostles, took bread in his holy hands, and *looked up to heaven, to you, God the Father almighty*, offered thanks, blessed, broke and gave it to his apostles with these words...»

In these liturgies, dating from the third, fourth and fifth centuries, the institution narrative functions within the Eucharistic prayer, and that it is, as a narrative, directed primarily at God. More examples can be found,⁶⁹² but I will not dwell upon them here.

⁶⁸⁷ See, for example, the Old Catholic Unity of Scranton [<http://www.unionofscranton>, retrieved Nov. 21, 2012].

⁶⁸⁸ *Apol.* XXIV:6-8.14-15.22-24.31-33.66-67.75-76.93-99

⁶⁸⁹ Translated from Swedish (*SPB* I:34), through consulting an English translation found at the website of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America [<http://bit.ly/10taxTI>, retrieved from goarch.org, Nov. 21, 2012]. Emphasis added.

⁶⁹⁰ Translated from Swedish (*SPB* I:47).

⁶⁹¹ Sv.: «...för vår och allas frälsning...»

⁶⁹² See Mike Aquilina, *The Mass of the Early Christians* (2nd ed. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor 2007), esp. pp.113-114.190-191.204-205.215-216. The usage of ‘likeness’ on pp.204-205 is most likely meant in a ‘literal’ sense, where words like ‘likeness’ and ‘symbol’ has a more ‘realistic’ usage than in modern times. See Kelly 1978:212-213.

In connection to this, research into early doctrines concerning the sacraments are in order. On contribution to consider is that of Anglican Church historian J.N.D. Kelly.⁶⁹³ He points out that the Church Fathers of the post-Nicene and pre-Chalcedonian period held that the Eucharist was a sacrifice. Cyril of Jerusalem, Kelly points out, described the Eucharist as ‘the spiritual sacrifice,’ ‘the unbloody service’ and even ‘the holy and most awful sacrifice’ and ‘the sacrifice of propitiation.’⁶⁹⁴ This wouldn’t in itself be proof of some the belief that the Eucharist was a propitiatory (or expiatory) sacrifice. It could mean that Christ is sacrificed anew, or ‘re-crucified,’ in the Eucharistic celebration, which is the view erroneously attributed to the Roman Catholic Church and the Council of Trent.⁶⁹⁵ Or it could mean that the *sacrificial matter* of the once for all sacrifice of Christ (his body and blood) is made present under the (species of) bread and wine and distributed as gifts to the Church, which is the traditional Lutheran view.⁶⁹⁶ Norwegian Lutheran theologian Sverre Aalen makes the point that what is given in the Eucharist is the *sacrificial matter* (Ger. *der Opfermaterie*) of the once for all sacrifice of Christ (his body and blood), the *victim* (Lt. *victima*).⁶⁹⁷ Or it could mean that the once for all sacrifice of Christ is made present under the species of bread and wine, offered to God in the Eucharistic celebration by the priest who acts in the person of Christ and distributed by the priest as gifts to the Church, which is the traditional Catholic view.⁶⁹⁸

What is interesting is that Kelly points out that Cyril didn’t merely say that the Eucharist is a sacrifice objectively speaking, which is true for both traditional Lutheran and traditional Catholic thought. He holds furthermore that «intercession may be offered for the dead as well as the living while the dread victim lies before us, for what we offer is ‘Christ slain on behalf of our sins, propitiating the merciful God on behalf both of them and of ourselves.’»⁶⁹⁹ We see, then, that there is a natural progression from Cyril to the Catholic notion that Christ is offered unto God in the Eucharistic celebration, and that this can be offered for the living as well as the

⁶⁹³ Kelly 1978:193-199.211-216.440-455

⁶⁹⁴ Kelly 1978:451

⁶⁹⁵ Cf. *SysT* III:308

⁶⁹⁶ *CA/Apol.* X

⁶⁹⁷ Aalen, «Das Abendmahl als Opfermahl im Neuen Testament» (*Novum Testamentum* 6, 1963), pp.137-138.142 (128-152). This exists also in Norwegian: «Nattverden som offermåltid i Det nye testamente» (*TTK* 35, 1964), pp.201.205 (193-213). He writes this partly as a polemic against Catholic notion of the sacrifice of the Mass.

This is more explicit in the norwegian verison (pp.205).

⁶⁹⁸ *MassEng* 24-45; *MiRo* 446-450.462-470

⁶⁹⁹ Kelly 1978:451

dead.⁷⁰⁰ Kelly further points to Chrysostom, who developed the ideas of Cyril. Kelly presents a different interpretation than that of Luther,⁷⁰¹ and maintains that ‘memorial’ for Chrysostom is a making present of Christ, and an offering of him by prayers, and a partaking, in the Eucharistic celebration, of Christ’s heavenly ministry.⁷⁰² We see here, and especially in Cyril, the belief that the primary function of liturgy is to sacrifice, that it is directed primarily at God, and that Christ is offered in the Eucharistic celebration. It seems to me that the evidence points in the direction of a ‘Godward’ direction when it comes to the Eucharistic prayer, and to the institution narrative.

I cannot go further here. The scope of my thesis has been to analyze and discuss Pannenberg and Ratzinger. Some remarks, however, are in order. In *Confessio Augustana*, we read in the conclusion of the first (doctrinal) part (parts I-XXI):

This is about the Sum of our Doctrine, in which, as can be seen, there is nothing that varies from the Scriptures, or from the Church Catholic, or from the Church of Rome as known from its writers.⁷⁰³

In his *Commonitory*, Vincent of Lerin defined ‘catholic’ as «that faith which has been believed everywhere, always, by all.»⁷⁰⁴ If we were to conclude, from exegesis and liturgical research, that the institution narrative is primarily uttered unto the Father in the Eucharistic celebration, the coherent choice, given my preceding analysis and discussion, would be to embrace a Catholic view of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist. If we were unwilling to do so, the ‘catholic principle’ — that there is nothing in *Confessio Augustana* which «varies from the Scriptures, or from the Church Catholic, or from the Church of Rome as known from its writers» — would be nothing more than a rhetorical device, and a bad one at that. It would be empty words.

If we hold (1) that Christ is actually present in the Eucharistic elements, (2) that Christ is offering himself (as the offering of mankind to God) in the heavenly sanctuary, presenting himself on our behalf, (3) that the Church offers her Eucharistic sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving in and through Christ who is presenting himself on our behalf, (4) that the priest, as he presides in the Eucharistic celebration, is acting *in persona Christi*, (5) that we participate in the

⁷⁰⁰ CCC 1407-1414

⁷⁰¹ Cf. *SysT* III:309

⁷⁰² Kelly 1978:451-452

⁷⁰³ For a comment on the catholicity of CA, see Pannenberg, «The *Confessio Augustana* as a Catholic Confession and a Basis for the Unity of the Church» in *The Role of the Augsburg Confession: Catholic and Lutheran Views* (ed., Joseph A. Burgess. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press 1980), pp.27-45 and Ratzinger, «Elucidations of the Question of a “Recognition” of the *Confessio Augustana* by the Catholic Church» in *Principles* 218-228.

⁷⁰⁴ Schaff/Wace 1995:132, cf. 128-130

‘heavenly liturgy’ through the Eucharistic celebration, and (6) that the *anamnesis*, the Eucharistic prayer, the center of which is the institution narrative, is primarily directed towards God, it follows quite coherently that the Eucharist is a sacrifice, and that Christ is offered unto God in the Eucharistic celebration. Or rather, that Christ offers himself to God in the Eucharist, him being the ‘principal celebrant’ or ‘chief liturgist’ of the Eucharistic celebration, to use the phrase of the Lutheran-Orthodox Joint Commission.⁷⁰⁵

If Lutherans are to reject the belief that Christ is offered up to God in the Eucharistic celebration, it must either reject the idea that the priest (or the Church as a whole) acts *in persona Christi*, or that the liturgy is directed at God, or both. From this kind of rejection it follows that there cannot be any offering of Christ in the Eucharistic celebration. But, as I’ve pointed out above, here we need to do some research into liturgy, and how liturgy *functions*. And this needs to be incorporated into a holistic and systematic theological system.

⁷⁰⁵ See <http://bit.ly/VoFvw7> [retrieved Nov. 21, 2012].

5 Summary and conclusion

In this thesis, I have analyzed and discussed the views of Pannenberg and Ratzinger concerning the sacrificial character of the Eucharist. The problem was stated as follows:

A systematic critical-comparative analysis and discussion of the Eucharistic theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg and Joseph Ratzinger with emphasis on the sacrificial character of the Eucharistic celebration.

In connection to this, I have examined three research questions:

1. What is the high-priestly role of Christ in the Eucharist?
2. What is the role of the Church in the Eucharistic celebration?
3. What is the role of the priest in the Eucharistic celebration?

In this section I will briefly summarize my analysis and discussion of the views of Pannenberg and Ratzinger, and provide some conclusions, based on my discussion.

5.1 Pannenberg on the sacrificial character of the Eucharist

Here I will briefly summarize Pannenberg's answer to my research questions:

a. Pannenberg maintains that Christ offers himself primarily to the Church as an expiatory sacrifice, and secondarily as an offering to God. He is the gift from God to mankind, and his sacrifice is primarily to do the will of God, which is to save his people from their sins. The Church is granted a piece of this salvation through the Eucharist in which Christ is personally present.⁷⁰⁶

b. In the Eucharistic celebration the Church offers her Eucharistic sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to God, through Christ, in faith. This does not represent a new offering but a participation in the offering of Christ, a being taken up into him and partaking of the inner life of God, and in the obedience of Christ.⁷⁰⁷

c. In the Eucharistic celebration the priest acts both *in persona Ecclesiae* and *in persona Christi* when he offers this sacrifice on behalf of the Church, when he offers the sacrament unto the

⁷⁰⁶ SysT II:403-441; SysT III:295.318-319

⁷⁰⁷ SysT III:316-317

Church, and when he offers the anamnesis of the sacrifice of Christ.⁷⁰⁸

In Pannenberg's view, the focus must be on Christ as the 'chief celebrant.' His view of the Eucharist can thus be expressed primarily as *participation in Christ*.

5.2 Ratzinger on the sacrificial character of the Eucharist

Here I will briefly summarize Ratzinger's answer to my research questions:

a. Ratzinger confirms the Catholic teaching of transubstantiation, though formulated differently from the Scholastics. Seen in light of the *Todah* sacrifice, and with focus on Christ the person, Ratzinger sees Christ as offering himself as *one* expiatory and propitiatory sacrifice of adoration, of praise and thanksgiving, both at the Last Supper, where he gives himself to God, consecrates himself as a sacrifice and institutes the Eucharist, on the cross, where he offers up his life as a sacrifice, and in the heavenly sanctuary, where he stands before God, perpetually offering (presenting) himself as the great high priest.⁷⁰⁹

b. In the Eucharistic celebration the Church offers her Eucharistic sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to God, through Christ. This is not a offering the Church offers from herself, but a participation in (and a worship of God through) the representative self-sacrifice of Christ.⁷¹⁰

c. In the Eucharistic celebration the self-offering of Christ in heaven is made present, and is offered unto God by the priest who acts *in persona Christi*.⁷¹¹

In Ratzinger's view, the roles of Christ, the Church and the priest in the Eucharistic celebration are all part of one, integral whole. His view of the Eucharist can best be defined as a sacramental and sacrificial participation in Christ.

5.3 Conclusion

In the beginning of the preceding section, I point out that my goal in analyzing and discussing the views of Pannenberg and Ratzinger is to try to answer this question: Is the Eucharist a sacrifice, and if so, in what sense? I maintain that many of the differences between Lutheran and Catholic

⁷⁰⁸ *SysT* III:108.388-389; Pannenberg 2006:171

⁷⁰⁹ *Feast* 50-60; *Jesus* II:1-2.76-90.115-138.223-240; *DCE* 12-13; *SofL* 37-50.53-61, cf. Heb. 8:1-3; 9:11-12

⁷¹⁰ *SofL* 38; *Feast* 51-60; *Jesus* II:127-129, cf. Rom. 12:1; 1Pet 2:5.

⁷¹¹ *MD*; *SofL* 171-177

teaching concerning the sacrificial character of the Eucharist is based upon misunderstanding, though not all. What we need to do, is to ask the questions I have asked above, to see the answers in light of the other parts of theology, and to try to assemble this in a coherent manner. The following is my conclusion. First, some preliminary points.

a. Sacramental theology needs to be understood as an integral part of theology. Although differentiation in fields of study is a good thing, the insights of these different fields need to be evaluated comparatively and synthesized into a coherent whole. We must not see systematic theology, and especially systematic treatments of sacraments, in isolation from liturgical studies. This separation is typical of western theology, and it needs to be reevaluated. The rule of faith is the rule of prayer, and the rule of prayer is the rule of faith. Here, as in every other field, we need to emphasize coherence. Coherence dictates that there needs to be a connection between the 'form' of an action and its 'content,' that which it aims at or tries to express.⁷¹²

b. Christ is really, substantially present under the species of bread and wine. This is a presence of the whole person of Christ. This presence, I maintain, is not due to the 'ubiquity' of Christ,⁷¹³ since this, it seems to me, is self-contradictory. Even if the body of Christ has «personal union with the omnipresent God,» it is still a body, and cannot be omnipresent. I haven't yet 'concluded' where I stand in the debate on transubstantiation or consubstantiation, but it seems that the latter is hard to explain in light of the Aristotelian-Thomistic framework on which both of these rely, or towards both of them is at least related. The main point, however, is that Christ is really present with all the he is.

Now to my research questions.

a. Christ is himself both priest and sacrifice. His sacrifice is complete, but not in the sense of being 'over and done with,' but in the sense of being perpetual, everlasting. He is priest forever, and he is now, perpetually, offering this same sacrifice, himself, by presenting it to God, in heaven, on our behalf.⁷¹⁴ He is our *representative*, but not our 'replacement.' Many differences between Lutheran and Catholic theology on this subject could be avoided if we remembered that the sacrifice is *Christ himself*. When we use the term 'the sacrifice of Christ' we ought pri-

⁷¹² Cf. Alexander Schmemmann, *Liturgy and Tradition: Theological Reflections of Alexander Schmemmann* (ed., Thomas Fisch. New York, NY: SVS Press 1990), pp.38-39 (38-47); Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World* (New York, NY: SVS Press 1973), pp.135-151.

⁷¹³ Cf. LW 37:222-224, cf. 295-303. See Alexander Balmain Bruce, *The Humiliation of Christ in its Physical, Ethical, and Official Aspects* (Second ed. revised and enlarged. New York, NY: A.C. Armstrong & Son 1889), p.91, n.2

⁷¹⁴ Heb. 7:24-27; 8:1-3; 9:24, cf. *SysT* II:443; *SofL* 56-57; *Jesus* II:1-2

marily to mean by this the sacrificial *matter* (Christ himself), and not the sacrificial *event* (of, say, Calvary). This is true also of the Old Covenant, where the sacrifice refers primarily to the *thing being offered*, and not the *process of offering the thing*.

b. The Church is offering herself to God as a living, reasonable and spiritual sacrifice in and through Christ,⁷¹⁵ and in this process she is also ‘utilizing’ the sacrifice of Christ before God. As the people of the Old Covenant worshipped, praised, thanked and pleaded with God through the animal sacrifices which cannot «take away sins,»⁷¹⁶ we worship, praise, thank and plead with God through Christ, who is our *representative* who gave himself «once for all when he offered himself.»⁷¹⁷

c. In the Eucharistic celebration, the priest acts *in persona Christi* as he offers the Eucharistic sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving on behalf of the Church, and pleads on her behalf, as he offers the *anamnesis* of Christ and when he, as part of this *anamnesis* utters the words of institution.⁷¹⁸ In this, in being an ‘icon’ of Christ, he is both distinct from the congregation, representing the one who offered what we could (or would) not offer, and deeply connected to the congregation, representing the one who offered himself as the representative of mankind. The priest is thus acting both *in persona Christi* and *in persona Ecclesiae*.

We see that there are important similarities between Pannenberg and Ratzinger, as well as important differences. When it comes to asking who is most coherent, I must maintain that I find that Ratzinger is slightly more coherent than Pannenberg in this field. The reasons for this is twofold. First, he manages better to synthesise both the trinitarian aspect of the Father’s sending of the Son, and the Son’s (representative) self-sacrifice to the Father. When Pannenberg asks who is the subject of salvation, of «the giving up,»⁷¹⁹ he sees the Father is the primary subject. I would say that the answer is *both*. The Father sent the Son out to gather his lost sheep, and the Son gave himself back to the Father, and took his sheep with him. This is best summarized, I think, by Cipriano Vagaggini:

[Every] good thing comes to us from the Father, through the mediation of Jesus Christ His incarnate Son, by means of the presence in us of the Holy Spirit; and likewise, it is by means of the presence of the Holy Spirit, through the mediation of the incarnate Son, Jesus Christ,

⁷¹⁵ Rom. 12:1; 1Pet 2:5, cf. *SysT* III:316-317; *SofL* 38; *Feast* 51-60

⁷¹⁶ Heb. 10:4, cf. v.11

⁷¹⁷ Heb. 7:27

⁷¹⁸ Cf. *SysT* III:106.388-389; *SofL* 171-177

⁷¹⁹ *SysT* II:439

that everything returns to the Father.⁷²⁰

Second, Ratzinger's approach is more coherent when it comes to the direction of the liturgy. The evidence points in the direction of a 'Godward' direction when it comes to the Eucharistic prayer, and to the institution narrative. I am convinced that what needs to be done in the Lutheran-Catholic debate is to ask some a few complex questions that might first appear simple: What is the *function* of the liturgy? When the priest, as part of the *anamnesis* of Christ, utters the words of institution, to whom is he uttering them? It is out of the scope of my thesis to explore this, but I'm convinced that it needs to be asked, and answered. And this will help us on our way of theological coherence. It also needs to be maintained, in light of historical Lutheran-Catholic controversy, that neither Lutheran nor Catholic teaching constitute a 'breach' of justification by faith. Both theological traditions maintain that it is Christ who is the primary subject, the principal celebrant, of the Eucharistic action, and that we are only partakers of Christ in this regard. This is important to point out in a Lutheran-Catholic debate.

One thing that needs to be said in relation to this is that in *Confessio Augustana*, we read in the conclusion of the first (doctrinal) part (parts I-XXI):

This is about the Sum of our Doctrine, in which, as can be seen, there is nothing that varies from the Scriptures, or from the Church Catholic, or from the Church of Rome as known from its writers.

The churches who stood behind *Confessio Augustana* thus understood themselves as part of the catholic tradition. In his *Commonitory*, Vincent of Lerin defined 'catholic' as «that faith which has been believed everywhere, always, by all.»⁷²¹ If this 'catholic principle' is to be more than rhetoric, we need to use it not only to critique Catholics, but also ourselves, and our Lutheran heritage. Therefore, if we were to conclude, from exegesis and/or liturgical research, that the institution narrative is primarily directed at the Father in the Eucharistic celebration, the coherent choice, given the validity of my preceding analysis and discussion, would be to embrace a Catholic view of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist.⁷²²

⁷²⁰ Vagaggini 1976:198

⁷²¹ Schaff/Wace 1995:132, cf. 128-130

⁷²² For a critical assesment of the Catholic view of the Eucharistic sacrifice, written from a Norwegian Lutheran perspective, see Carl Fr. Wisløff, *Nattverd og messe: En studie i Luthers teologi* (Doctoral thesis. Oslo: Luthers-tiftelsen 1957). This also exist in an english translation: *The Gift of Communion: Luther's controversy with Rom on Eucharistic Sacrifice* (Translated by Joseph M. Shaw. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House 1964).

If we hold (1) that Christ is actually present in the Eucharistic elements, (2) that Christ is offering himself in the heavenly sanctuary, presenting himself on our behalf, (3) that the Church offers her Eucharistic sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving in and through Christ who is presenting himself on our behalf, (4) that the priest, as he presides in the Eucharistic celebration, is acting *in persona Christi*, (5) that we participate in the ‘heavenly liturgy’ through the Eucharistic celebration, and (6) that the *anamnesis*, the Eucharistic prayer, the center of which is the institution narrative, is primarily directed towards God, it follows quite coherently that the Eucharist is a sacrifice that is offered unto God in the Eucharistic celebration.

As we see in the *Apology*, Lutherans have traditionally held that the priest acts *in persona Christi*.⁷²³ If we are to reject the belief that Christ is offered up to God in the Eucharistic celebration, we must therefore reject the idea that the liturgy, and in particular the institution narrative, is directed at God. In most Lutheran bodies, the institution narrative is primarily directed at the Church.⁷²⁴ From this it follows that there cannot be any offering of Christ in the Eucharistic celebration. But, as I’ve pointed out above, we need to do some research into liturgy, and how liturgy *functions*. But it’s important to note that an agreement with the Catholic view of the Eucharist wouldn’t in and of itself entail a Lutheran-Catholic unity, nor the necessity of a conversion to the Catholic Church. The Eucharist is one of the most important parts of theology, but so are the differences concerning authority, Papal primacy, Purgatory, Mary, etc. Coherence is the key point. If we want doctrinal unity, we must have it in every significant area, not just some of them. In this regard we must model ourselves on the first Christians, as we read about them in Acts 2:42: «And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.»chryschrys

With these points allow me to conclude this by quoting a lengthy passage from *The Great Exemplar* by Jeremy Taylor, one of the Anglican Divines of the 17th century:

[Whatever] Christ did at the institution, the same he commanded the Church to do, in remembrance and repeated rites; and himself also does the same thing in heaven for us, making perpetual intercession for his church, the body of his redeemed ones, by representing to his Father his death and sacrifice. There he sits, a High Priest continually, and offers still the same one perfect sacrifice; that is, still represents it as having been once finished and consummate, in order to perpetual and never-failing events. And this, also, his ministers do on earth; they offer up the same sacrifice to God, the sacrifice of the cross, by prayers,

⁷²³ *Apol.* VII/VIII (28), cf. Rev. Rodney L. Eberhardt, «The Pastor as *In Persona Christi*.» Lecture at the Society of the Holy Trinity General Retreat, Sept. 29, 2009. <http://bit.ly/S1ZUoN> [retrieved Nov. 21, 2012].

⁷²⁴ *LSB* 217; *Gudstenestebok for Den norske kyrkje*, part 2 (Oslo: Verbum 1996), pp.66-81.283-286.290-297.301-307; *Gudstjeneste for Den norske kirke* (Bergen: Eide 2011), pp.2.15-2.18, 2.71-2.81.

and a commemorating rite and representment, according to his holy institution. And as all the effects of grace and the titles of glory were purchased for us on the cross, and the actual mysteries of redemption perfected on earth, but are applied to us, and made effectual to single persons and communities of men, by Christ's intercession in heaven; so also they are promoted by acts of duty and religion here on earth, that we may be 'workers together with God', (as St Paul expresses it, 2 Cor. 6: 1) and, in virtue of the eternal and all-sufficient sacrifice, may offer up our prayers and our duty; and by representing that sacrifice, may send up, together with our prayers, an instrument of their graciousness and acceptance. ... we 'celebrate and exhibit the Lord's death', in sacrament and symbol; and this is that great express, which, when the church offers to God the Father, it obtains all those blessings which that sacrifice purchased. ... As Christ is a priest in heaven for ever, and yet does not sacrifice himself afresh, nor yet without a sacrifice could he be a priest; but, by a daily ministration and intercession, represents his sacrifice to God, and offers himself as sacrificed: so he does upon earth, by the ministry of his servants; he is offered to God, that is, he is, by prayers and the sacrament, represented or 'offered up to God, as sacrificed'; which, in effect, is a celebration of his death, and the applying it to present and future necessities of the church, as we are capable, by a ministry like to his in heaven. It follows, then, that the celebration of this sacrifice be, in its proportion, an instrument of applying the proper sacrifice to all the purposes which it first designed. It is ministerially, and by application, an instrument propitiatory; it is eucharistical, it is an homage, and an act of adoration; and it is impetratory, and obtains for us, and for the whole church, all the benefits of the sacrifice, which is now celebrated and applied; that is, as this rite is the remembrance and ministerial celebration of Christ's sacrifice, so it is destined to do honour to God, to express the homage and duty of his servants, to acknowledge his supreme dominion, to give him thanks and worship, to beg pardon, blessings, and supply of all our needs.⁷²⁵

⁷²⁵ *The Whole Works of the Right Rev. Jeremy Taylor, Lord Bishop of Down, Connor and Dromore*, vol. I of III (London: Bohn 1844), p.308

6 Bibliography and attachements

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- PG:** *Patrologia Graeca*, ed., J. Migne. See <http://bit.ly/9DZaiX>. See <http://graeca.patristica.net> for the entire volume with a list of content.
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6.3 Attachement

In the following pages you'll find my attachement. In the text I refer to it as A1.

- A1:** Kringlebotten, Kjetil (2012). «Some methodological reflections in relation to my master's thesis.» My term paper in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the course KMA306.2: *Masteravhandlingen – plan, etikk og metode*. NLA University College, Bergen, spring 2012. (9 pages.)

*Some methodological reflections
in relation to my master's thesis*

*Term paper in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the course KMA306.2*

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1 Introduction

In this paper I will reflect upon the importance of methodology when writing a thesis. When writing a thesis, you must start out by posing a problem that needs to be faced. In addition to this, you can pose different research questions.¹ The problem needs to be identifiable, it needs to be falsifiable and possible to solve. In connection to this, it needs to be contextually realistic, i.e. possible to be solved within the defined timeframe and with the available resources. And last, but not least, the different parts of the problem and the research questions needs to be related to one another, and needs to be coherent and consistent.

When the problem is stated, you need to reflect upon how to solve it, i.e. what method you should to utilize.² Some may find the insistence on method a bit awkward, maybe unimportant, but this insistence on ‘method’ just means that you are making explicit what we ought to do whenever we write a paper, and that you furthermore reflect more on how and why that method is to be used. The main reason to use methods, then, is to solve a problem and to solve it in a way that solves the problems and answers the questions. In the following section I will reflect on my particular approach, which emphasizes *coherence*.

2 Coherence as a key in research methodologies

In this paper I will reflect on the coherentist methodological approach I intend to use in my master’s thesis. Simply put, by this method I will (1) gather data from my figurants under analysis and from other sources; and (2) analyze my individual figurants (based on my data, with emphasis on ‘detecting’ their level of coherence). I will largely follow German-American philosopher Nicholas Rescher, who gives (amongst other things) two important advices: when interpreting a text (1) strive for coherence; and (2) do it exegetically. In the following, I will focus these two points.

2.1 Coherence

In *Philosophical reasoning*, Rescher points out that systematization is essential to our understanding of truth.³ And according to him, there are basically two models of systematization:

¹ Everett/Furseth 2012:112-126

² Everett/Furseth 2012:127-144

³ Rescher 2001:151-196; Rescher 1998:123-125

*foundationalism*⁴ and *coherentism*.⁵

Rescher points out that the mainstream Western model of systematization is *foundationalism*, an Euclidean model of deductive reasoning in which systematization is basically «to proceed in the manner characteristic of axiomatic systems.»⁶ This view holds that there exists a certain assymetry or hierarchy between different beliefs. Some beliefs, this theory holds, are *basic*, while others are *nonbasic*, resting upon the foundation of basic beliefs and reached by deduction. According to a foundationalist, there really is no alternative between foundationalism and radical skepticism. «Without noninferentially justified beliefs,» Richard Fumerton claims, «it would seem that we would need to complete an infinite number of infinitely long chains of reasoning in order to be justified in believing anything!»⁷ Rescher points out that essential to *foundationalism* is the belief that «truth is a structure that must have foundations.»⁸ He writes:

Foundationalism might be caricatured as an essentially feudalistic view of truth: Truths as such are not equal; there are certain dominant “master” truths on which the other subordinate “client” truths are totally dependent.⁹

In contrast to foundationalism Rescher posits *coherentism*.¹⁰ While foundationalism is ‘feudalistic’ to a certain degree, coherentism is more ‘democratic.’ Coherentism, Rescher points out, is a network model in which there exists no assymetry or hierarchy between different beliefs, but that a certain belief is justified on the basis of how well it *coheres* with other beliefs. Each belief might be weak in itself, but all beliefs are tied together in a ‘network’ such as a Spider’s web.¹¹ Coherentists also reject the foundationalist assumption that epistemic justification is linear, and substitutes a holistic approach.¹² According to Rescher the coherentist *inverts* the foundationalist approach:

Foundationalists begin their epistemological labors with a very small initial collection of absolutely certain truths from which they proceed to work *outwards* by suitably *additive* procedures of supplementation to arrive at a wider domain of truth. By contrast, coherentists begin with a very large initial collection of insecure pretenders to truth from which

⁴ Rescher 2001:171-173, cf. Fumerton 2010; Moreland/Craig 2003:112-121

⁵ Rescher 2001:173-196, cf. Gravem 2004:343-365; Kvanvig 2011; Moreland/Craig 2003:121-127

⁶ Rescher 2001:171, cf. pp.171-173; Fumerton 2010; Moreland/Craig 2003:112-121

⁷ Fumerton 2010:I

⁸ Rescher 2001:178

⁹ Rescher 2001:178

¹⁰ Rescher 2001:173-194

¹¹ Rescher 2001:173

¹² Rescher 2001:151-169

they proceed to work inwards by suitably *reductive* procedures of elimination to arrive at a narrower domain of truth.¹³

But one important question comes to mind: What is the relationship between coherence and truth in itself? In classic western philosophy, the most common notion of truth is the ‘Correspondence Theory of Truth,’ i.e. that an idea is true if it corresponds with reality.¹⁴ In *The Coherence Theory of Truth* Rescher made a distinction between *coherence* (between different data) as a *criterion of truth* and *truth* as a concept, i.e. correspondence with reality.¹⁵ Later, after being criticized by Lorenz B. Puntel, he has reformed his view, and defines *truth* as ‘ideal coherence.’¹⁶ Rescher starts by asking if the link between truth and coherence is «too loose.»¹⁷ Something might appear coherent, but still be false. But coherence is an *essential part of truth*. Rescher holds that truth is «*optimal coherence with a perfected data base.*»¹⁸ This has two important characteristics: *completeness* and *adequacy*.¹⁹

To achieve the fullness of truth is practically impossible for us «in actual practice,» and what we need to do is to arrive at «our best available *estimate* of the real truth.»²⁰ Rescher therefore distinguishes between *idealized coherence* (that which is *both* altogether coherent *and* which corresponds completely with reality) and *manifest coherence* (that which we *accept as true*).²¹ The difference between this view of truth, and the former correspondence theory is that the correspondence theory focuses on the relationship between ideas (and people) on the one hand, and outside reality on the other. What Puntel has pointed out, and Rescher has acknowledged, is that we cannot transcend reality. Our ideas are also part of the ‘outer’ reality to which they should correspond.²² This doesn’t mean that every idea we have is true, but that we must be critical not just of ourselves, but also of what we observe. The focus is, as always, on how well the different pieces (both our ideas and the things we observe) fit together.

But it is important to note that there can be truths with a higher level of certainty in a coherentist theory. Some (for example Christian philosophers J.P. Moreland and William Lane Craig)

¹³ Rescher 2001:178-179. For Rescher’s arguments for coherentism contra foundationalism, see pp.179-184.

¹⁴ David 2009

¹⁵ Rescher 1973:5-9.23-24.154-155.161-167; Gravem 2004:352-353

¹⁶ Rescher 1985 (esp. fn.3); Puntel 1978:200-204; Gravem 2004:352-365; Pannenberg 1991:24.52-53

¹⁷ Rescher 1985:795

¹⁸ Rescher 1985:796, cf. 795-802

¹⁹ Rescher 1985:799, cf. Gravem 2004:352-354

²⁰ Rescher 1985:795, cf. 800-806

²¹ Rescher 1985:804, cf. Gravem 2004:353-365, which criticizes Rescher through Puntel.

²² Pannenberg 1991:53

hold that a coherentist view (necessarily) ends up with vicious circularity.²³ But this assumes that on a coherentist view, no beliefs are certain and are only considered in relation to other beliefs. But that is not necessarily the case. Rescher points out that all beliefs aren't necessarily equal, and some beliefs may be more 'foundational' or certain than others.²⁴ The difference between foundationalism and coherentism is not that the former starts with a few truths, and coherentism starts with none, but that the truths under consideration is systematized very differently. In *foundationalism*, basic truths are thought of as foundations upon which other truths can be built. In *coherentism*, all truths are considered equal, placed *within a certain system of beliefs*. That does not mean that some truth aren't more certain than others, but that the relationship between (more or less certain) truths is not like the relationship between 'foundation' and 'structure,' but more like the relationship between individual threads of a web or individual strings in a braided rope. Some strings may be stronger than others, but they fit together in an even stronger structure. So while some truths are more certain, they are on the same level as other beliefs *within a certain system of beliefs*. Rescher points out that while the different truth candidates fit together somewhat 'democratically,' they aren't necessarily equal, but they are «all more or less plausible.»²⁵

The ideas I will analyze in my thesis (most of which are in need of justification and argumentation) need to be incorporated into a coherent system, especially since this is a thesis in systematic theology. In the case of the Eucharistic Sacrifice (which I intend to write about), you could (methodically) start with certain beliefs, and work from there: the Trinity; the real presence (however construed) of Christ in the consecrated elements; the absolute uniqueness and non-repeatableness of the sacrifice on Calvary, etc. But even though these are (for methodical reasons) established and are used in a thesis as keys of analysis, they (often) need to be justified. They are all part of a large network of different threads. The real presence of Christ is based upon exegesis, which is again connected to the authority and divinity of Christ, which is of course connected to the question of God's existence, etc. In this regard, coherentism is a good approach. It manages to focus not only on particular truths or beliefs, but also on how they 'fit' together with other truths or beliefs.

As I've pointed out above, Rescher contrasts a foundationalist from a coherentist by pointing out that the former starts with a «very small initial collection of absolutely certain truths» and

²³ Moreland/Craig 2003:123-127

²⁴ Rescher 2001:178

²⁵ Rescher 2001:178

employs an ‘outwards’ and ‘additive’ approach until he arrives «at a wider domain of truth.» The latter, however, starts with a «very large initial collection of insecure pretenders to truth» and employs an ‘inwards’ and ‘reductive’ approach until he arrives «at a narrower domain of truth.»²⁶

2.2 Exegetical interpretation

In the following I will reflect on how I intend to read my figurants, utilizing my coherentist method. In chapter 5 of *Philosophical reasoning*, Rescher argues that the best way to interpret a text is by what he calls an ‘exegetical interpretation.’²⁷ Rescher first contrasts *exegesis* with *deconstruction*. He rejects the former as inviable,²⁸ claiming that it basically «denies any prospect of impersonal appropriateness or objectivity in [the interpretation of texts].»²⁹ He also points out that it isn’t actually an *interpretational attitude* but rather a *doctrine*, «based on a group of hermeneutical views or contentions.»³⁰ These are (1) *omnitextuality*, that everything is text in hermeneutics; (2) *plasticity*, that there exists a wide variety of interpretations; and (3) *equivallency*, that every interpretation is essentially as good (or bad or neutral) as any other. In contrast to this, Rescher presents his idea of exegetical interpretation with emphasis on *reconstruction* and *contextuality*.³¹ He posits here four ‘laws’ of textual interpretation:³²

1. **Contextual Coherence.** By this approach, Rescher seeks to shift focus from a «survey of *possible* interpretations» to an assesment of those interpretations which are actually *plausible*, and futhermore to «endeavor to decide which (if any) among them is *optimal*.»³³ Rescher articulates what he calls the *Principle of Normativity*: «The better (the more smoothly and coherently) an interpretation fits a text into its wider context, the better it is as an interpretation.»³⁴ Rescher points out that our «claims or contentions fits better or coheres better with others if they can be coordinated with the least difficulty.»³⁵ Simply put, this theory says that «simpler is better,»³⁶ and the «optimal interpretation» is that which works «with a minimum of cognitive friction.»³⁷

²⁶ Rescher 2001:178-179

²⁷ Rescher 2001:57-76

²⁸ Rescher 2001:57-60

²⁹ Rescher 2001:57

³⁰ Rescher 2001:58

³¹ Rescher 2001:60-71

³² Rescher 2001:71-76, cf. Rescher 1998:122-128

³³ Rescher 2001:71

³⁴ Rescher 2001:69; Rescher 1998:123

³⁵ Rescher 2001:72

³⁶ Rescher 2001:72

³⁷ Rescher 2001:72

I will focus on one part of the web (my topic), and interpret what my figurants write in that immediate context. But context is wide, and I will have to acknowledge that my topic is part of a whole web of ideas.

2. *Comprehensiveness*. What Rescher means by this is that *comprehensiveness* helps us decide between plausible interpretations. «The larger we spread the net of context – the more inclusive and extensive our reference to context – the smaller and more definite the range of really plausible interpretational alternatives becomes.»³⁸ As the amount of data that needs to be included increases, the narrower we find the range of plausible, coherent interpretations.

3. *Sophistication*. Sophistication, Rescher points out, is a result of the 1st and 2nd law. «The more substantial an interpretation – the more extensively attuned to a larger manifold of contexts – the more elaborate and internally ramified it becomes.»³⁹ Even though a single interpretation is simple, the system may be complex, since context is wide. Truth, as Rescher holds, is *ideal coherence*,⁴⁰ and it encompasses, or should encompass, (all of) reality.

4. *Imperfectability*. Here Rescher is simply urging us to be cautious by pointing out that any interpretive act is limited by our ability to process information. We achieve this, and must acknowledge that what we can achieve is *factual coherence* (that which we *accept as true*).⁴¹ But that doesn't mean that we shouldn't strive towards *ideal coherence*.

2.3 Procedure

But this needs to be applied practically. In *Structure and Being*, Puntel fleshes out what he calls the *Idealized Four-Stage Philosophical Method*, which is partly inspired by Rescher.⁴² Inspired by this, with the four 'laws' in mind, and with a focus on Puntel's first and fourth stage, I will utilize a three part comparative coherentist method:

1. Gathering of data from relevant works, and from the specific figurants.
2. Systematize the relevant works of my figurants, hopefully managing to read them in relation to their whole corpus.
3. Evaluate the respective coherence of the figurants, focusing not only on how well they coher with themselves, but also on how well they coher with each other, and their field at large with focus on adequacy and truth.

³⁸ Rescher 2001:73; Rescher 1998:126

³⁹ Rescher 2001:74; Rescher 1998:126

⁴⁰ Rescher 1985; Gravem 2004:352-365; Pannenberg 1991:53

⁴¹ Rescher 1985; Gravem 2004:353-365

⁴² Puntel 2008:41-52

When it comes to my field of study, I believe that clarifications in this area are of major epistemological importance. But we need to be careful. Coherence is a criterion of truth. What is true is coherent. But we must always strive to be more coherent. What appears coherent isn't necessarily true. And truth should be our goal.

3 Summary

My approach, simply put, will be to read and systematize works on my topic and on my figurants, always reading them contextually. Through an exegetical reading I will try to find what my figurants believe, how (if at all) their beliefs relate, and how well they fit into the larger intersubjective context of their field. When encountering an idea in my analysis, I must ask: How coherent is the idea I read now, how well does it fit with the overall picture? This does not only apply to my figurants, but equally much to myself. I must always ask myself if my interpretation is coherent, if it «fits a text into its wider context» and is «coordinated with the least difficulty.»⁴³ This must be a humble enterprise, as we cannot reach the full truth ourselves. But that does not mean that we ought not strive for a larger level of *ideal coherence*.

⁴³ Rescher 2001:69; Rescher 1998:123

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