

“Do this in remembrance of me...” A Lutheran defense of the Sacrifice of the Mass

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Introduction

Whether or not Christ is sacramentally offered to the Father in the Eucharistic celebration, as the Roman Catholic Church teaches,¹ is one of the major points of controversy between Lutheran and Roman Catholic theology.² In this essay I intend to show that a sacrificial view of the Eucharist is compatible with Lutheran theology. The Roman Catholic doctrine can be broken down into five different pieces, of which I will analyse and discuss the second, third and fourth in more detail: (1) the glorified Christ is truly present in the Eucharistic elements; (2) Christ offers himself eternally in the heavenly sanctuary; (3) the Eucharistic celebration is a participation in this ‘heavenly liturgy’; (4) the Church participates in Christ through her offering of thanks and praise and gives herself to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit; and (5) the priest is the main Eucharistic celebrant and operates *in persona Christi* as he offers the Eucharistic prayer. I will not discuss the first and fifth points beyond mentioning that in both Lutheran and Roman Catholic theology, there is an insistence on the real and personal presence of Christ in the Eucharistic elements,³ and a belief that the priest liturgically (as well as pastorally) operates *in persona Christi*,⁴ which is sufficient for my treatment here. Martin Luther opposed this notion of sacrifice, and in 1523, he revised the Mass and introduced his *Formula missæ*.⁵ According to Frank C. Senn, it was a conservative revision, using Latin, allowing the “use of lights, incense, and vestments,” largely following “the traditional Western structure, sequence, and content of the Mass,” and was “characterized not by what Luther added to the traditional Mass, but by what he deleted.”⁶ Luther removed the Offertory and radically revised the Eucharistic prayer or Canon. In his removal of the Offertory, Luther, “urged the replacement of the material offerings with “spiritual sacrifices.” We should, Luther said, offer “ourselves, and all that we have, with constant prayer,” so that God “may make of us what he will, according to his own pleasure,” and we ought to “offer him praise and thanksgiving with our whole heart.”⁷ Senn makes the point that the offering of material things gained traction with Irenaeus and his fight against the Gnostics. Defending the goodness of creation, Irenaeus makes the point that the Lord taught his disciples “to offer God the firstfruits of creation – not as if He Himself had need of

¹ See Walsh, *In Memory of Me*, 25-30; *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (abbreviated CCC), 1348.1356-1372.1407-1419.1548-1551; *Sacrosanctum concilium* (abbreviated SC), 7, 33; Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 20-22.541-557; Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth*, vol. 2, 1-2.76-90.115-138.223-240; Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 191-246.

² For some critical Lutheran perspectives, see Aalen, “Das Abendmahl als Opfermahl im Neuen Testament”; Aalen, “Nattverden som offermåltid i Det nye testamente”; Hahn, “Die Sakramente der Kirche in der Confessio Augustana auf dem Grund der apostolischen Tradition,” esp. 301-307; Pless, “Can We Participate Liturgically in the Atonement?”

³ *Confessio Augustana (CA)* X; CCC 1373-1381. For *CA*, and the rest of the *Book of Concord*, I use the translation in Kolb, Wengert, & Arand, *The Book of Concord*. For the Latin and German texts, see Dingel, ed., *Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche*. See Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 293-304, esp. 305-320; Pannenberg, “Ecumenical Tasks in Relationship to the Roman Catholic Church,” 171; Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 52-56.284-298. For various perspectives on *CA*, see Burgess, ed., *The Role of the Augsburg Confession*; Alfsvåg, “Luthersk spiritualitet”; Ratzinger, “Elucidations of the Question of a “Recognition” of the *Confessio Augustana* by the Catholic Church”; and Dulles, “The Catholicity of the Augsburg Confession.”

⁴ *Apology of Confessio Augustana (Apol.)* VII/VIII.28; CCC 1548-1551, cf. Benedict XVI, *Munus docendi*; Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 106-110; Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 106.388-389; Eberhardt, “The Pastor as In Persona Christi.”

⁵ Pelikan & Lehmann, *Luther’s Works (LW)*, 53:15-40.51-90, including the later *Deutsche Messe*. Also see *LW* 35:62-65.94-102; 36:137-198. For later volumes (56-75), see the Prospectus from Concordia Publishing House, 2007, accessed via the blog *The Rebel God* (<http://goo.gl/i0BA1I>).

⁶ Senn, “Martin Luther’s Revision of the Eucharistic Canon,” 101.

⁷ Senn, “Martin Luther’s Revision of the Eucharistic Canon,” 110, see. 110-111.

them, but in order that they be not ungrateful and unfruitful.” And, with reference to the institution narrative, he wrote that the Church “offers Him [Christ] to God, Him who is nourishing us; these are the first-fruits of His gift in the New Covenant.” This is “a marked change in the understanding of the Eucharist as a result of the threat of Gnosticism,” and the following (third) century saw the introduction of the Offertory, and a change in terminology from *eucharistia*, the ‘preferred term’ in the first two centuries of the Church, to *oblatio* and *sacrificium*.⁸ Senn goes on to make the point that Luther, with his limited knowledge of the Early Church and his polemic against the notion of the Mass as a propitiatory sacrifice, removed the Offertory, but that we ought to restore the Offertory in Lutheran churches, maintaining that it is the ‘spiritual sacrifice’ of the people, in part to “combat the ‘gnosticism’ or ‘spiritualism’ which is latent in much Protestant piety.”⁹

According to *Confessio Augustana*, the early Lutherans claimed to be apostolic and catholic: “[T]here is nothing [in art. I-XXI] that varies from the Scriptures, or from the Church Catholic, or from the Church of Rome as known from its writers” (the Church Fathers).¹⁰ The Fathers had a relatively strong ‘consensus’ on the ‘Eucharistic sacrifice.’¹¹ Before Ireneus, in the second century, we find Justin Martyr, talking of “all the sacrifices in this name which Jesus appointed to be performed, viz. in the eucharist of the bread and the cup, and which are celebrated in every place by Christians,” and who identifies the Eucharist with the ‘pure offering’ of the prophet Malachi.¹² Then, in the fourth century, more than a century after Ireneus, we find Cyril of Jerusalem, describing the Eucharist as ‘the spiritual sacrifice,’ ‘the unbloody service,’ ‘the holy and most awful sacrifice’ and ‘the sacrifice of propitiation.’ He even goes on to say 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’.”¹³ This is clearly a development, and in this essay I intend to explore this, from a Lutheran perspective. One of the key characteristics of Lutheran theology is its rootedness in the Incarnation, where, in the terminology of the Chalcedonian Definition, there is both a definite *separation* (“inconfusedly, unchangeably”) and a close *union* (“indivisibly, inseparably”) between God and creation, characterised by God as giver and creation as receiver, but which does no rule out that creation (humans) can, in any way, be involved as a cooperator.¹⁴ I do not intend here to analyse this in and of itself, to analyse Luther’s revisions, or to primarily work with historical theology, but to discuss the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist with these points in mind. This essay is a development of some of the themes in my master’s thesis,¹⁵ with the intent to systematically and critically analyse and discuss this theme from the perspective of (contemporary) Lutheran theology, with its emphasis on God as *giver* and human beings as *receivers*, focusing on Wolfhart Pannenberg, in critical dialogue with Roman Catholic theology, represented by Joseph Ratzinger. Pannenberg notes that “ecumenical discussion has even reached understanding on [the topic of the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist],” which “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.”¹⁶ And Ratzinger notes that Luther’s concern was that we

⁸ Senn, “Martin Luther’s Revision of the Eucharistic Canon,” 111.

⁹ Senn, “Martin Luther’s Revision of the Eucharistic Canon,” 112.

¹⁰ CA XXI

¹¹ Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 110-125.198-207.225-230.238-247.268-275; Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 193-199.449-455; Halliburton, “The Patristic Theology of the Eucharist,” 248-249.

¹² Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 196, cf. Mal. 1:11; Barber, “The New Temple, the New Priesthood and the New Cult in Luke-Acts,” 104-105.

¹³ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 196.

¹⁴ Steiger, “The *communicatio idiomatum* as the Axle and Motor of Luther’s Theology”; Haanes, “Christological Themes in Luther’s Theology,” 30-33; Haga, *Was there a Lutheran Metaphysic?*; Alfsvåg, “Postmodern Epistemology and the Mission of the Church,” 60-68; Alfsvåg, “God’s fellow workers”; Alfsvåg, “On the Unexpectedness of Salvation”; Alfsvåg, “*Explicatio* and *Complicatio*.”

¹⁵ Cf. Kringlebotten, “*Do this in remembrance of me...*”.

¹⁶ Pannenberg, “Ecumenical Tasks in Relationship to the Roman Catholic Church,” 171, cf. Pannenberg, “The Confessio Augustana as a Catholic Confession and a Basis for the Unity of the Church,” in Burgess, ed., *The Role of*

ought to say that Christ's saving deed is "the once for all sufficient sacrifice in which God gives us, instead of the futility of our worship, the true, propitiatory sacrifice," and that Christian worship can therefore "no longer consist in the offering of one's own gifts," but is rather "the reception of [this saving deed]," characterized by thanksgiving, *Eucharistia*.¹⁷ Lutheran theologian John T. Pless disagrees, noting that "Christ crucified is not a work we offer to God," that modern talk of *representation* "still leaves the traffic moving in the wrong direction, from earth to heaven," and that "[t]he mingling of the once-and-for-all sacrifice of Christ and the ongoing sacrifices of the Christian individually and corporately is to confuse law and gospel, sanctification and justification."¹⁸ In this essay I intend to show that Pless is mistaken, primarily by discussing the Church's sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and the Sacrifice of Christ. It is my thesis that, focusing on the Church's sacrifice of thanks and praise, understood as *participation in Christ*, there is a clear connection, in both Lutheran and Roman Catholic theology, between *eucharistia*, *oblatio*, and *sacrificium*, and that this can be defended while respecting the integrity of the Lutheran faith (and the Church Catholic as a whole). With this in mind, let's return to the main point, starting with the Church's sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

The Church's sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving

According to Benedictine theologian Cyprian Vagaggini, the main pattern of worship within Christianity is *from* the Father, *through* Christ, *in* the Holy Spirit, *to* the Father.¹⁹ The divine persons have, or are given, specific tasks.²⁰ "[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," expressed in Latin by Vagaggini: *A Patre, per Filium eius, Iesum Christum, in Spiritu Sancto, ad Patrem*. This gives us four prepositions: *a*, *per*, *in*, *ad* (from, by, in, to). Vagaggini points out that this scheme is found in different places throughout the New Testament, but his focus is on the liturgy and, specifically, the Eucharist.²¹ Writing within Roman Catholic tradition, Vagaggini points 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." This "can be seen from the essential form of its central part, called the anaphora, canon, or Eucharistic prayer."²² Here the Father is shown "as the *principium a quo* and the *terminus ad quem* of the Eucharistic action."²³ He is thus the one *from whom the action originates* and the one *to whom the action aims*. Christ is "the High Priest *through whom we perform the same priestly action*," and the Holy Spirit "appears there as the *in quo* ['in whom']."²⁴ The point of Vagaggini is that the Church's offering of anamnesis, of thanks and praise

the Augsburg Confession, 27-45 (esp. 33-35); Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 283-434, esp. 305-320.

¹⁷ Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 207-208 (see 207-217, "Is the Eucharist a Sacrifice?"), cf. 1-150.249-318.396-417; Ratzinger, *Behold The Pierced One*, 13-46; Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth*, vol. 2, 125-144. For a treatment of Ratzinger's Eucharistic theology (which emphasises Ratzinger's view of human beings as receivers), see Dalzell, "Eucharist, Communion, and Orthopraxis in the Theology of Joseph Ratzinger."

¹⁸ Pless, "Can We Participate Liturgically in the Atonement?," 45, 47.

¹⁹ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 191-246. Also see Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 243-255; Holter, *Kom, tilbe med fryd*, 90-91.

²⁰ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 198.

²¹ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 198-206.207-246, see 223-230.

²² Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 223-230 focuses on the Roman Canon. It should be noted that Luther's removal of the Offertory from (and his alteration of the Canon in) his masses is in tension with the ecumenical approach of *CA*, and its claim to follow the Church Fathers (art. XXI, see Pannenberg, "The Confessio Augustana as a Catholic Confession and a Basis for the Unity of the Church," 27-45; Alfsvåg, "Luthersk spiritualitet," 42-56). The fact remains that the various Offertory settings and the Roman Canon aren't only explicitly sacrificial, they also predate the High Middle Ages by centuries, and are thus part of the age of the Church Fathers to whom *CA* appeal. See Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 169-171; Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, vol. 1, 44-167 (esp. 60-66); Aquilina, *The Mass of the Early Christians*, 20-24.43-45.

²³ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 223.

²⁴ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 223-224, cf. Heb. 9:13-14. If not otherwise noted, all Scripture

for what God has done, originates in the Father and is aimed back to him, *through* the Son, *in* the Holy Spirit.²⁵

This largely reflects the position of both Pannenberg and Ratzinger, and especially the position made by (fairly) contemporary Lutheran theology, with emphasis on our liturgical actions as God's (received) actions.²⁶ Pannenberg emphasises our participation in Christ, where the Church's offering *back* of praise and thanks is "a letting oneself be taken up into the actual sacrifice of Jesus Christ, not an additional offering to God," since that would constitute "an additional work."²⁷ The Church's thank offering is a *participation* in Christ, as he offers himself to the Father. It is not our offering "to God on the altar, by the hands of the human priest, of a holy gift different from ourselves," but a participation in "the self-giving of Christ." For, writes Pannenberg, "nothing effects participation in the body and blood of Christ but entering into *that which we receive*."²⁸ The major focus is thus on *reception* and *participation*. Pannenberg represents a middle ground between Trent and the reformers, noting that Trent "rightly opposed restricting the eucharistic gift to forgiveness of sins (DS, 1655)," and 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," although Luther also wrote of "the nourishing and strenghtening of the new man as the power and usefulness of this sacrament."²⁹ Pannenberg's notion of sacrifice focuses primarily on Christ's giving of himself *to us*, and only secondarily and derivately to God. The sacrifice was his obedience to his mission, his performance of the Father's will, and he focuses on the meal, while Ratzinger makes the point that the form of the Eucharistic celebration is the *eucharistia*, "the prayer of anamnesis in the shape of a thanksgiving," and that this is "more prominent than the meal aspect."³⁰ Both Pannenberg and Ratzinger maintains the importance of both the meal and the thanksgiving, while Ratzinger stresses the latter more, an approach I agree with, although there need not be any contradiction.³¹ Citing German Lutheran theologian Hartmut Gese, Ratzinger focuses on Christ's heavenly priesthood (to which I will return), and has made the point that the Last Supper is actually a thanksgiving sacrifice in the Old Testament tradition (a *todah* or *tōda*), in which Christ offers praise and thanks to God in the context of a meal. Our sacrifice is a participation in this, "the *tōda* of the risen One," where we give ourselves to God.³² This approach, writes Ratzinger presents us with "new possibilities" for ecumenical dialogue, since 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."³³ Ratzinger has since moved somewhat away from this approach, without abandoning it, combining the Passover and the thanksgiving sacrifice and still holding onto the *eucharistia* as the decisive form which 'in-forms' the Eucharist.³⁴

citations and quotations are from the *Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition (RSV-CE)*, found in *The Ignatius Bible*. When I comment on the Greek of the New Testament, I use Nestle & Aland, eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece*.

²⁵ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 224-226.

²⁶ See n.14 above. Also see Prenter, *Skabelse og genløsning*, 529-556; Prenter, "A Lutheran Doctrine of Eucharistic Sacrifice?"; Russell, "Pannenberg on Eucharist and Unity"; Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 215-220.266-267; Norheim, *Practicing Baptism*, esp. 65-71.91-109.140-152.171-174.

²⁷ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 316, cf. 237-239.305-311.320-324.

²⁸ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 316-317, cf. 315-320.

²⁹ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 319, n.702.

³⁰ Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 301 (cf. 20-30.260-270.299-318). For a different, Lutheran view, see Aalen, "Das Abendmahl als Opfermahl im Neuen Testament"; Aalen, "Nattverden som offermåltid i Det nye testamente."

³¹ See Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 299-318, and his references. Also see Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 48-50.78-102.230-237 (cf. 103-140).

³² Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 316 (311-318), cf. Hartmut Gese, "The Origin of the Lord's Supper," 136. See also Lindsay, "Todah and Eucharist"; Barber, "The New Temple, the New Priesthood and the New Cult in Luke-Acts," 104-105.119-14, cf. Lev. 7:12-15; Ps. 22; 40:1-12; 51; 69, etc.

³³ Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 317.

³⁴ See Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum caritatis*, esp. §§10, 48, 52, 92; and his Pontifical Homily for the Mass of the Lord's Supper, Holy Thursday, April 5, 2007. For a critical assessment of Gese's point, with reference to Ratzinger's developments, see Custer, "The Eucharist as Thanksgiving Sacrifice."

My discussion doesn't present us with an 'additional sacrifice' on the part of the Church, but acknowledges that we participate in the thanksgiving of Christ, in his giving up of himself to the Father, which is marked in the institution of the Eucharist, finds its peak in the passion and crucifixion, and is offered, continuously, in heaven.³⁵ What we partake of is Christ himself, and we ought not overemphasise the Cross to the exclusion of the Incarnation and earthly life of Christ.³⁶ The Eucharistic celebration is a sacrifice in the form of thanksgiving. It is a participation in God's self-giving, where we give ourselves back to God not as 'striving,' but as a giving back of what God has already given, as Ratzinger notes: "God gives that we may give. This is the essence of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ; from the earliest times, the Roman Canon has expressed it thus: "De tuis donis ac datis offerimus tibi"—from your gifts and offerings we offer you."³⁷ Even when talking of *active participation*, Ratzinger makes the point that this isn't primarily external but the an action "in which everyone has a "part", i.e. the Eucharistic prayer, which is "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."³⁸ Here we find a link to the Lutheran insistence on God as giver and human beings as receivers, communicated through Christ.³⁹ Our actions, then, are really God's, as St. Paul also notes (Phil. 2:12-13). With this we turn to Christ's sacrifice as such.

The Sacrifice of Christ

Citing Norwegian Lutheran theologian Carl Fr. Wisløff, Frank C. Senn points out that the difference between the Roman Catholic Church and Luther, is that the former "defined sacrifice in an active sense as a yielding or resignation, whereas Luther defined sacrifice in a passive sense as essentially the death of the victim." For the Catholic Church, the sacrifice of Christ was 'compensation,' while for Luther it was "Christ's substitutionary suffering of the punishment for that sin for which no one could render a satisfactory compensation."⁴⁰ We see in the New Testament the claim that Christ bore our punishment, that he gave himself *for us*, as a sin offering.⁴¹ But Luther and Calvin, seeing themselves in the tradition of Anselm of Canterbury, saw this as a 'transfer of penalty,' as a 'swap' between Christ (who is *punished* in our place) and us (who are acquitted).⁴² According to Anselm, however, sin is atoned *either* through punishment (of the guilty party) *or* through reparation or satisfaction (by the guilty party or a representative), never through both.⁴³ A person can thus atone for your punishment by some kind of satisfaction (e.g. paying your fine), but he cannot be punished as if *he* is guilty. According to Anselm, Christ *satisfied* God by offering something which was *worth more* than the punishment for our sins. He gave himself as a

³⁵ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 443-444 (cf. 440-449), vol. 3, 315-320; Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 20-36.299-318; Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth*, vol. 2, 1-2.76-90.115-138.223-240, cf. Heb. 7:24-24; 8:1.3. See Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 395. For a discussion on this (from a Pre-Nicene perspective), see Lied, *Participation in Heavenly Worship*.

³⁶ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 297-324.416-454; Ratzinger, *Behold The Pierced One*, 103-128, in contrast to Pless, "Can We Participate Liturgically in the Atonement?," 44-47.

³⁷ Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 264 (cf. 20-30.260-270), cf. Baldovin, *Reforming the Liturgy*, 69-73.

³⁸ Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 106, 107, cf. 106-110; *SC* 14, 30, 48, 50, 114.

³⁹ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 199.286-292.315-320, cf. n.14 above.

⁴⁰ Senn, "Martin Luther's Revision of the Eucharistic Canon," 104 (cf. 104-105), cf. Wisløff, *The Gift of Communion*, 41.113. For the original, see Wisløff, *Nattverd og messe*. See Pless, "Can We Participate Liturgically in the Atonement?," pp.44-47.

⁴¹ Cf. Isa. 53; Rom. 8:3; 1Pet 2:21-25.

⁴² Fiddes, *Past Event and Present Salvation*, 89-104, cf. 83-111 ("The demands of justice"). For a positive take on the traditional Reformed view atonement, see Hood, "The Cross in the New Testament," 89-104. For a more critical take, see Brondos, "Did Paul Get Luther Right?," 25-26.

⁴³ *Aut poena aut satisfactio*, "either punishment or satisfaction." See LaChance, "Understanding Christ's Satisfaction Today," 61. Also see Burns, "The Concept of Satisfaction in Medieval Redemption Theory," 286-289; Hannah, "Anselm on the Doctrine of Atonement"; Modalsli, *Korsets gåte*, 100-102.198-200.

perfect offering, in obedience, thanks and praise. He was not talking about some ‘transfer of penalty.’ Anselm’s doctrine is characterised by its Feudal connections, but his principles state, in essence, that sin is that we do not offer that which we ought to offer to God (cf. sin as ‘missing the target’), and that Christ offered satisfaction, offered that which we do not. As N.T. Wright notes, Christ (the Messiah) is the *substitute* or *representative* of the people (Israel), but not their ‘replacement.’⁴⁴ Christ is the representative of Israel, offering, in the words of Jeremy Begbie, “nonidolatrous worship ... in the midst of creation, making possible the song of the church evoked in Revelation 5.”⁴⁵ The point is thus not that God is a ‘bloodthirsty torturer’ out for his pound of flesh, but that he is *just*, and that Christ atones our sin and punishment. God “condemned *sin*,” not Christ himself.⁴⁶ We ought to distinguish between *being punished* and (voluntarily) *atoning for someone else’s punishment*. The punishment Christ carried was the consequences of sin, carried voluntarily, and in love of God.

Furthermore, it would make little sense to say, with Paul, that “I have been crucified with Christ” if the point was that Christ were to ‘switch places’ with me. The point is not that Christ ‘replaced us,’ but that he was, and is, our *representative* in which we can participate and through whom we can offer ourselves to God.⁴⁷ Pannenberg makes the point 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.”⁴⁸ The key lies in the partly ‘deconstructed’ Anselmian view. For Pannenberg, Christ is our *representative* who atoned for our sins through obedience.⁴⁹ He maintains the perfect nature of the sacrifice of Christ, but makes the point that this goes beyond the death of Christ and extends into eternity, into heaven.⁵⁰

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.

The sacrifice of Christ, while complete, is everlasting, perpetual, and it’s continually being presented in heaven by Christ. Since Christ is personally present in the eucharistic elements, and his sacrifice is *himself*, this heavenly liturgy of Christ is made present in the Eucharistic celebration when *he* is made present. Pannenberg can talk of “penal suffering,”⁵¹ but for him that means Christ shares our ‘plight and condition,’ that he became incarnate as a real man, and that we partake of him, that we are crucified with him. This, and the idea that we are ‘in Christ,’ makes little sense if we maintain that we ‘switch places’ with Christ. This overlaps with Ratzinger’s view, which focuses on the critique of the Temple. Through an analysis of the late Jewish (and partly Hellenised) idea of Sacrifice, Ratzinger shows that Israel was gradually

⁴⁴ Wright, “Jesus, Israel and the Cross”; Wright, “The meaning of *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* in Romans 8.3,” For more (and diverse) perspectives on this, and on the distinction between *representation* and *replacement*, see Modalsli, *Korsets g ate*, 103-107; Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 20-22.27.29.34-36; Hahn, “Covenant, Cult, and the Curse-of-Death.”

⁴⁵ Begbie, “The Shape of Things to Come?,” 195, cf. Wright, *The Meal Jesus Gave Us*; Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, 285-288; Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 27-36.

⁴⁶ Rom. 8:3, cf. Wright’s commentary in Keck, ed., *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 10, 578.

⁴⁷ Gal 2:19-20, cf. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 7-12.100-104.315-320 and 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 Vainio, *Justification and Participation in Christ*. Also see Bartling, “The New Creation in Christ”; Wedderburn, “Some Observations on Paul’s Use of the Phrases ‘in Christ’ and ‘with Christ’.”

⁴⁸ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 316.

⁴⁹ Rom. 12:1; 1Pet. 2:5; 1John 2:1-2; Phil. 2:8, cf. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 25-416 (esp. 389-396), 435-449, vol. 3, pp.315-320; Kringlebotten, “*Do this in remembrance of me...*”, 18-23. Pannenberg avoids (deliberately?) any reference to the term *propitiation*, including its derivatives, and consistently uses *expiation*. See Grenz, *Reason for Hope*, 225-226.

⁵⁰ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 444 (cf. 440-449), cf. Heb. 7:27; 9:26ff.

⁵¹ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 421-429.

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*.⁵²

According to Ratzinger, Israel recognised gradually that the sacrifice pleasing to God is *our (living) selves*, not *our (dead) animals*, the latter of which cannot ever be anything more than a shadow, a 'replacement.'⁵³ Christ gave himself, but this cannot be reduced to the Cross. His death (and resurrection) is essentially connected to the institution of the Eucharist:⁵⁴ "[In his eucharistic words, Christ] undergoes a spiritual death, or, to put it more accurately, *in these words 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." Christ gave himself, and this self-sacrifice is, gracefully, made present to us. Ratzinger points out that the *eucharistic words* of Christ connects the Cross and the Eucharist. By these words of institution, "what is irrational is transformed and made rational and articulate." By these words we see "how Jesus himself intended his death to be understood, how he accepted it, what it means." Ratzinger points out elsewhere⁵⁵ that "the true *semel* ("once") bears within itself the *semper* ("always")," that "[the] *ephapax* ("Once For All") is bound up with the *aiōnios* ("everlasting")," and that we, in the Eucharist, 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."

A major point here is that Christ still *is* an expiatory or propitiatory sacrifice.⁵⁶ He bore the consequences of our sins, but he, who is without sin, gave himself in love and obedience, and this atoned for our sins, cf. Prov. 16:6a: "By loyalty and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for."⁵⁷ But it is crucial here to make a distinction, as we find in the Old Testament, between the *consecration* (the offering up of the sacrifice on the altar) and the *presentation* of the consecrated gift, which can (and do) continue, something we see in Christ's self-presentation in the heavenly sanctuary.⁵⁸ These two concepts are represented, in the *Septuagint*, by two respective verbs; *anaphērō* and *prosphērō*. Just like the High Priest of the Old Covenant didn't offer another sacrifice when he entered the inner sanctum to present the consecrated gift of atonement, the two concepts are part of the same eternal sacrifice. "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."⁵⁹ When Heb. 7:27 states that Christ sacrificed himself "once for all," the verb is *anaphērō*, indicating *the one consecration* which cannot be repeated. In Heb. 8:3, however, we find *prosphērō*, indicating Christ's heavenly, continuous and eternal self-presentation. This is part of the one and same sacrifice, which according to Paul Ellingworth, is "continuous rather than repeated."⁶⁰ Christ remains our High Priest and is thus our continual mediator.

⁵² Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 265 (cf. 20-30.32-33.260-270). See Lafferty, *The Prophetic Critique of the Priority of the Cult*, 1-23.

⁵³ Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 20-22, cf. Heb. 10:4.11.

⁵⁴ Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 251-252, cf. 260-270, 318, n.23. See also Ratzinger, *Behold The Pierced One*, 22-32; Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth*, vol. 2, 38-41.76-102.186-188.229-240.251-253.

⁵⁵ Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 33.

⁵⁶ 1. John 2:2a.

⁵⁷ Cf. Begbie, "The Shape of Things to Come?," 189-190, including. n.11-14. For some patristic reflections on atonement, see Flood, "Substitutionary atonement and the Church Fathers."

⁵⁸ See Kringlebotten, "*Do this in remembrance of me...*", 78-81, cf. Heb. 8:1-3; 9:11-12.24. See Rahlfs & Hanhart, eds., *Septuaginta*. For some examples of the use of *anaphērō*, see Lev 2:16, 3:5.11.14-16; 7:5. For some examples of the use of *prosphērō*, see Lev 1:2-3; 2:1; 2:8; 2:14. For lexical entries for the respective verbs, see Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 75.886.

⁵⁹ Heb. 9:24, cf. Lev. 16:15.

⁶⁰ Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 395. He also makes the point there, that "there is no question, here or elsewhere in Hebrews, of the sacrifice of Christ itself taking place continuously in heaven."

In regards to the distinction between *consecration* and *presentation*, we can thus maintain a partly ‘deconstructed’ Anselmian view where the sacrifice of Christ is first and foremost a sacrifice of thanks and praise which ‘satisfies’ God and which, consequently, atones for our sins. This sacrifice is complete, yet it is also perpetual and presented in heaven by Christ. He is personally present, and his sacrifice is *himself*. This heavenly liturgy of Christ is made present in the Eucharistic celebration. It is the “tōda of the risen One,” the ongoing offering of thanks and praise, cf. Heb. 8:1-3 (emphasis added):⁶¹

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.

Conclusion

Pannenberg asks: “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?”⁶² To answer that, we need to consider the question of the atonement. If one follows Luther and Calvin strictly, saying, on the one hand, that you ‘switch places’ with Christ and, on the other hand, that the sacrifice is reducible to his death on the Cross, the Roman Catholic view makes little sense. Luther’s view, which were written polemically,⁶³ maintains that any kind of ‘eucharistic sacrifice’ involving Christ would constitute another work on our part. He reduced the sacrifice of Christ to his death, and only accepted a ‘eucharistic sacrifice’ if this was, as Senn points out, a “sacrifice of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving” which we might apply to Christ, “our only Mediator and Advocate,” so that he “may present it to the Father.” He “intercedes for us in heaven and makes our sacrifice acceptable to the Father. In this sense, however, we do not offer Christ; He offers us.”⁶⁴ And, as noted in the introduction, we also find a critique of the Eucharistic sacrifice in John T. Pless, who disagrees with the idea discussed in this essay, saying that “Christ crucified is not a work we offer to God,” that modern talk of *representation* “still leaves the traffic moving in the wrong direction, from earth to heaven,” and that “[t]he mingling of the once-and-for-all sacrifice of Christ and the ongoing sacrifices of the Christian individually and corporately is to confuse law and gospel, sanctification and justification.”⁶⁵

These points however, are based on a misunderstanding of Roman Catholic teaching,⁶⁶ though it may have been a proper reaction to certain theological theories at the time of the Reformation, and on a problematic view of the atonement which doesn’t acknowledge that sacrifice of Christ, in its atoning character, *is* a “sacrifice of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.”⁶⁷ The sacrifice of Christ *is* the sacrifice of humanity (which we wouldn’t, and couldn’t, offer ourselves, hence God becoming a human being). The whole of Christ’s life is sacrificial, and Christ *is* a sacrifice. When we partake of Christ, we also partake of the sacrifice, for he *is* presently and perpetually the sacrifice, and he

⁶¹ Gese, “The Origin of the Lord’s Supper,” 136; Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 316. See Ratzinger, *Behold The Pierced One*, 22-32, Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 443-444 (cf. 440-449); Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 349-411 and Johnson, *Hebrews*, 190-203 (for Heb. 7:20-8:6).

⁶² Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 317, cf. 315-320.

⁶³ Senn, “Martin Luther’s Revision of the Eucharistic Canon,” 102-109.

⁶⁴ Senn, “Martin Luther’s Revision of the Eucharistic Canon,” 104-105, cf. Pless, “Can We Participate Liturgically in the Atonement?,” 44-47.

⁶⁵ Pless, “Can We Participate Liturgically in the Atonement?,” 45, 47.

⁶⁶ Pannenberg, “The Confessio Augustana as a Catholic Confession and a Basis for the Unity of the Church,” 33-35; Pannenberg, “Ecumenical Tasks in Relationship to the Roman Catholic Church,” 171, cf. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 308: “When Trent stressed the once-for-allness of Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross..., it set aside even the appearance of symbolic repetition on the plane of of sacramental offering by treating anamnesis as an appropriating rather than a repeating of the sacrifice of the cross.”

⁶⁷ Cf. Pless, “Can We Participate Liturgically in the Atonement?,” 44-47.

presents himself continually in the heavenly sanctuary. And when the Roman Catholic Church claims that Christ is offered in the Eucharistic celebration, they say that the celebration is a participation in this ‘heavenly liturgy.’⁶⁸ This is perfectly compatible with Lutheran theology if we recognise that we participate, and see ourselves as receivers.⁶⁹ Both Lutherans and Roman Catholics correlate here, in that they see the Eucharistic anamnesis not merely as a ‘recollection’ of a past event, but as a genuine making present of Christ, i.e. of his sacrifice, in the context of a meal. This sacrifice isn’t merely a past event, but a continuous reality, made present for us. As noted above, Pannenberg writes that “ecumenical discussion has even reached understanding on [the topic of the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist],” which “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.”⁷⁰ When the Church offers herself, she praisefully and thankfully participates in this sacrifice, and the presiding priest offers this in the name of the Church, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit,⁷¹ which is compatible with the Lutheran emphasis on God as giver and human beings as receivers, where, in Christ, the divinity and humanity are united “inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably.”⁷² Our own sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, which can take the form of gifts of bread and wine, lest we fall into a kind of Gnosticism,⁷³ is nothing outside of Christ (cf. John 15:5), and would constitute a work on our part it removed from this.⁷⁴ When Christ offers himself, he offers himself as both divine and human, and in the Eucharist we are also made partakers of this. We do not merely partake in the sacrifice of the Cross, or its fruit, through a sacrificial meal, but we partake in “its enactment.”⁷⁵ It seems that Pless forgets that Christ is the principal celebrant of the liturgy,⁷⁶ and that our sacrifices are taken up into, and offered through, him (cf. 1Pet. 2:5). They may be ‘heavenward’ but so is any of our works. And none of them is of our own, “for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his own pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

If the Eucharistic celebration is a participation in the heavenly, ongoing and perpetual self-offering of Christ (cf. Heb. 8:1-3), then it follows that the Eucharistic celebration involves an actual offering of Christ, but not “an additional offering.”⁷⁷ The Eucharistic celebration is both a sacrifice of thanks and praise, a participation in the self-offering of Christ, and a ‘spiritual meal of nourishment,’ where we receive *communion*, fellowship, with God. “*Eucharistia*,” writes Ratzinger, “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.”⁷⁸

To put this in an ecumenical perspective, we ought again to point out that the early Lutherans saw themselves as part of the universal Church, *Ecclesia Catholica*, expressing that “that faith which has

⁶⁸ Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 32-33.251-252; Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth*, vol. 2, 38-41.76-102.186-188.229-240.251-253, cf. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 443-444 (cf. 441-454); 1John 2:1-2; Heb, 7:24-25, 8:1-3; Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 395.

⁶⁹ See n.14 above, cf. Gal 2:19-20; Eph. 2:8-10; Phil. 2:12-13.

⁷⁰ Pannenberg, “The Confessio Augustana as a Catholic Confession and a Basis for the Unity of the Church,” 33-35; Pannenberg, “Ecumenical Tasks in Relationship to the Roman Catholic Church,” 171.

⁷¹ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 441-454, vol. 3, 106.293-324.388-389; Pannenberg, “Ecumenical Tasks in Relationship to the Roman Catholic Church,” 171; Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2, 215-220.266-267; Gese, “The Origin of the Lord’s Supper,” 117-140; Begbie, “The Shape of Things to Come?,” 189-197; Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 191-246; Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 243-255.

⁷² See n.14 above.

⁷³ Cf. Senn, “Martin Luther’s Revision of the Eucharistic Canon,” 111-112.

⁷⁴ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 316, cf. 237-239.305-311.320-324.

⁷⁵ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 316, in contrast to Aalen, “Das Abendmahl als Opfermahl im Neuen Testament,” 128-152:137-138.142; Aalen, “Nattverden som offermåltid i Det nye testamente,” 201.205.

⁷⁶ Heb. 8:1-3; Rev. 5. See Hieromonk Gregorios of Mt. Athos, *The Divine Liturgy*, 14.

⁷⁷ Cf. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, 316.

⁷⁸ Ratzinger, *Collected Works*, vol. 11, 308-311, cf. 311-318; Gese, “The Origin of the Lord’s Supper,” 117-140.

been believed everywhere, always, by all.”⁷⁹ We see, furthermore, that *Confessio Augustana* utilises explicitly sacrificial language as it calls priests and pastors *sacerdos* and *Priester*.⁸⁰ It is my claim that (certain views of) the Sacrifice of the Mass can be defended theologically and historically, within Lutheranism. If we cannot accept this, we need to argue against the Roman Catholic (or Eastern Orthodox) view *adequately* and *coherently*. We must not make the catholic principle of *Confessio Augustana* an empty rhetorical device, and we cannot reject something just because it is ‘too Roman.’ We must also have in mind the fact that certain Lutherans, such as members of the Church of Norway, as I am, share communion with the Church of England, and thus with the wider Anglican communion. The 1979 *Elucidation* on ministry from the Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue (ARCIC) state that “the ordained ministry is called priestly principally because it has a particular sacramental relationship with Christ as High Priest,” and that we are united “sacramentally with himself in his self-offering.”⁸¹ And the American Anglican–Roman Catholic dialogue affirms that “only a validly ordained priest can be the minister who, in the person of Christ, brings into being the sacrament of the Eucharist and *offers sacramentally the redemptive sacrifice of Christ which God offers us*.”⁸² The documents concludes that “in the light of these five affirmations [the American Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue] records its conclusions that the eucharist as sacrifice is not an issue that divides our two Churches.”

This might be controversial but that is not a reason to reject it. This doesn’t constitute a ‘re-offering’ or ‘re-consecration’ of Christ, but a participation in him, and thus *consequently* in his self-offering. The High Priest of the Old Covenant was the main celebrant of Israel, the one through whom the priests and Levites derived their service and the one through whom the people offered their gifts. Christ is High Priest of the New and Everlasting Covenant, and *he* is our main celebrant. He is the one who consecrated himself to God “once for all”, the one who eternally presents his perfect offering in the heavenly sanctuary, and the one from whom every Christian, including priests and bishops, derive their calling to participate in *his* mission; to offer humanity back to God.

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⁷⁹ CA XXI. See Schaff & Wace, eds., *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 11, 132, cf. 128-130. This was written in the period of the Church Fathers to whom the early Lutherans appealed, and in this period we find, in almost universal usage, the explicitly sacrificial divine liturgies of Basil the Great and the John Chrysostom, as well as the Roman Canon. See Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, vol. 1, 44-167 (esp. 60-66); Aquilina, *The Mass of the Early Christians*, 20-24.43-45. On catholicity, see Pannenberg, “The Confessio Augustana as a Catholic Confession and a Basis for the Unity of the Church”; Alfsvåg, “Luthersk spiritualitet.”

⁸⁰ CA XXIII. *Sacerdos* is the Latin equivalent of the Hebrew *kohen* or Greek *hierevs*, ‘sacrificial priest.’ *Priester* is derived from *presbyteros*, ‘elder,’ but had explicitly sacrificial connotations at the time (of the Reformation). See Ratzinger, *Called to Communion*, 126-128, connecting *kohen*, *hierevs*, and *leitourgós*.

⁸¹ See *Eucharistic Doctrine – Elucidation*. See Baker, ed., *Consecrated Women?*, 56-57 (cf. 48-58). For an overview of the dialogue, see the Vatican website, <http://goo.gl/ROGmyx>, accessed December 3, 2016.

⁸² See *Five Affirmations on the Eucharist as Sacrifice* (emphasis added).

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