

Anaphoras without Institution Narrative: Historical and Dogmatic Considerations

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A 2001 LETTER of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, addressed to the Chaldean Catholic bishops, judged that Chaldean Catholics may, if necessary, receive the Eucharist consecrated by (Assyrian) Church of the East clergy using the anaphora of Addai and Mari, stating that this anaphora can be considered valid without the Institution Narrative and its words “This is my Body. . . . This is my Blood,” which are absent from the oldest known manuscripts of the anaphora. The Council indicated that this judgment had received approval from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and from Pope John Paul II, although this decision of the Congregation has never been divulged. The letter of the Pontifical Council caused some degree of surprise and perplexity among Catholics. In 2004 the Roman journal *Divinitas* published a collection of opposing articles on the topic, and 2007 saw the publication in Germany of a volume of studies edited by Uwe Michael Lang. The chapters by Uwe Michael Lang and Ansgar Santogrossi in that volume rebutted arguments of liturgical exegetes who had propounded the original absence of the institution narrative from the anaphora of Addai and Mari, and from the earliest anaphoras in general. Lang and Santogrossi were in turn contradicted by Nicholas Russo in 2010.¹

¹ See *Divinitas*, numero speciale (2004); *Die Anaphora von Addai und Mari: Studien zu Eucharistie und Einsetzungsworten*, ed. U. Michael Lang (Bonn: Nova & Vetera, 2007); “The Validity of the Anaphora of *Addai and Mari*: Critique of the Critiques,” by Nicholas Russo, in *Issues in Eucharistic Praying in East and West*, ed. Maxwell E. Johnson (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010), 21–62. The letter (Guidelines for Admission to the Eucharist between the Chaldean Church and

The debates concerning the history of the anaphora in general and the institution narrative have consisted of warring interpretations of liturgical texts or fragments, along with passages from the New Testament and the Fathers. One side argues for the presence of the words “This is my body . . . This is my blood” (hereinafter “words of consecration” or “words of the Lord”) at the origins of the anaphora of Addai and Mari (hereinafter “Addai/Mari”) and every valid anaphora, and the other side maintains that the institution narrative was in most cases a late addition to the Eucharist (fourth century). Bypassing the debates about the actual history of Addai/Mari, but nevertheless expressing trust in what it took to be the authentic tradition of the Church of the East, the Pontifical Council stated that the words of the Lord *are* present in the known manuscripts of the Addai/Mari, not literally but in a “dispersed” and “euchological” way, thus introducing a perspective different from that of the discussions of theologians and historical-critical liturgists until then, which were judged to be inconclusive. While validating the Assyrian non-recitation of “This is my body . . . This is my blood” by means of this understanding of “words of the Lord,” the Council also restated the Church’s faith that the Eucharist is consecrated by the words of the Lord. It understandably remained silent on a 1902 response of the Holy See’s Congregatio pro Propaganda Fide which referred to Addai/Mari without institution narrative as an “incredible abuse.” That response presupposed the longstanding consensus expressed by the *auctores probati*, the approved theological manuals on the requirements for a valid Eucharistic form.

The present article presupposes the dogmatic Tradition of the Church, which attributes Eucharistic consecration to the words of the Lord, as it revisits the historical arguments treated in the author’s contribution to the 2007 volume mentioned above, taking into account recent criticism. It will then consider the words of consecration from the dogmatic standpoint of the rule of faith and the nature of the Eucharist, articulating the reasons why many Catholics cannot accept, or fully receive, the validity of a Eucharist without the Lord’s words of consecration asserting the identity of “This” and “My body . . . my blood.”²

the Assyrian Church of the East) of the Pontifical Council, and also an unsigned article that appeared in *L’Osservatore Romano* (Provision between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East), are available at www.vatican.va, under Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East.

² Avery Cardinal Dulles expressed himself as follows in a letter (December 19, 2005) to me: “Quite apart from these two issues, your book [*Vers Quelle Unité?*] strikes me as valid in its insistence on rigor and consistency in ecumenical statements.

I

For Robert Taft, S.J., the anaphora of Addai and Mari pronounced without institution narrative must be accepted as *prima facie* valid because it is the traditional anaphora of an apostolic church. For liturgists Enrico Mazza and Cesare Giraudo, S.J., the earliest Eucharistic celebrations in a number of local churches, and not only the East Syrian (or Assyrian) tradition, took place without the institution narrative.³ In addition to the manuscripts of Addai/Mari, the most obvious piece of evidence for their claim is of course the *Didache*.

It is sometimes said that regardless of whether a Eucharist contained the narrative or not, the consensus of the Fathers took the Eucharistic prayer as a whole as consecratory, and had no concept of the necessity of the priest pronouncing “This is my body . . .” for the effecting of the mystery. Taft for his part attempts to prove that in the understanding of certain Fathers it is Christ’s pronunciation of these words at the Last Supper, and not their repetition by an ordained priest, which will have consecrated all bread and wine in all liturgies until the Second Coming.⁴

In the subsections which follow, it will first be shown (I.1–I.3) that these claims overinterpret the historical data cited in their favor; then we will examine both Addai/Mari and the *Didache* in order to argue for the presence of the institution narrative in the Eucharistic sacrifice of these traditions (I.4).

I.1

Defenders of the thesis of valid Eucharists without institution narrative or words of consecration stress the numerous patristic texts which in one way or another attribute the sacramental effect to a “prayer” rather than to the performative affirmation of identity “This is my body, etc.” For example, Ambrose mentions the change in the elements as coming about *per sacrae orationis mysterium*, and Augustine refers to the anaphora simply as *prex mystica*. Justin Martyr had already attributed the Eucharistic change to “the

These qualities seem to be lacking in the Joint Declaration [on Justification] and in the acceptance of a Eucharist without words of consecration.”

³ For these positions, see the respective articles in *Divinitas*, numero speciale (2004): Robert F. Taft, “Messa senza consacrazione? Lo storico accordo sull’Eucaristia tra la Chiesa cattolica e la Chiesa assira d’Oriente promulgata il 26 ottobre 2001,” 75–106; Enrico Mazza, “Che cos’è l’anafora eucaristica?” 37–55, and “Le récent accord entre l’Église Chaldéenne et l’Église Assyrienne d’Orient sur l’Eucharistie,” 125–40; and C. Giraudo, “L’anafora degli apostoli Addai e Mari: la ‘gemma orientale’ della *Lex orandi*,” 107–24.

⁴ Taft, 100. I am happy to acknowledge that Robert Taft denies the accuracy of the oral remarks which I attributed to him from memory in my earlier published work.

word of prayer which is from [Christ].”⁵ Mazza and Giraudo therefore maintain that the Eucharist was originally a prayer of memorial thanksgiving without the narrative of institution; the narrative was added later, in order to commend the gifts to God by linking them to Christ’s own command to give thanks—“do this”—over bread and wine.

These conclusions go beyond the evidence presented. The fact that Ambrose, Justin, and others attribute the Eucharistic change to a “prayer” does not imply that they attributed the sacramental change to the entire Eucharistic prayer as such, for the simple reason that within a Eucharistic prayer the words of consecration and the surrounding narrative are grammatically part of a prayer addressed to God. The narrative is recited to God, and is in that sense prayer, without ceasing to be a narrative culminating in “This is my body, etc.” It is therefore illegitimate to conclude from their references to the role of “prayer” in the Eucharist that the Fathers in question would not have considered “This is my body, etc.” as in itself operative of the mystery, had it occurred to them to raise the question. Indeed with the phrase *per sacrae orationis mysterium*, Ambrose could have been thinking of consecration as the mystery accomplished during the sacred prayer, rather than identifying *mysterium* with *sacra oratio*.

Another passage from Ambrose,⁶ longer than the line quoted above, would seem at first glance to support Giraudo’s thesis of the consecratory efficacy of the entire Eucharistic prayer as such, but only if one overlooks certain details in the passage as well as its character as catechesis of neophytes not yet very familiar with the Eucharistic liturgy. The key detail is that Ambrose does not rhetorically ask, with what words is consecration effected, but rather how, and so one cannot claim that he would have considered all the words he goes on to quote as operative of the sacramental change; he is citing passages surrounding the words of Christ, passages which directly or indirectly signify that the Eucharistic change is effected by God’s power and in answer to the Church’s prayer, which is the response to the rhetorical question he had just asked. This interpretation appears even more reasonable when one remembers that an audience of neophytes would still need to become familiar with the surrounding context of the consecrating words of Christ. Furthermore, the passage includes lines which appear to attribute efficacy to the words of Christ, not to the surrounding

⁵ Ambrose of Milan, *De fide libri V*, Lib. 4, cap. 10; Augustine, *De trinitate*, lib. 3, cap. 4; Justin Martyr, *I Apologia*, 65, 1–66, 4.

⁶ “Do you wish to know in what manner consecration takes place with the heavenly words?” The beginning of his answer: “Consider what those words are! The priest says . . .” Ambrose, *De sacramentis* IV, 5–6, 21–27, cited by Giraudo, “L’anafora degli apostoli Addai e Mari,” 109.

prayer of the priest: “*Antequam consecretur, panis est; ubi autem verba Christi accesserint, corpus est Christi . . . Et ante verba Christi, calix est vini et aquae plenus; ubi verba Christi operata fuerint, ibi sanguis Christi efficitur.*”⁷

Returning to the famous line from Justin Martyr, “word of prayer that is from Him,” we can say that it focuses attention on *Christ’s* words at the Last Supper repeated in the liturgy, since Justin goes on to report them as justification for the Christians’ belief that the food over which thanks have been said (which have been “eucharistized”) is not “common,” drawing a parallel with handed-down rites and formulas of the pagans:

And this food is called by us “thanksgiving” . . . not as common bread or common drink do we receive these things; . . . we have been taught that the food over which thanks have been given through (a) word of prayer which is from him . . . is both the flesh and blood of that incarnate Jesus. For the apostles in the memoirs composed by them, which are called gospels, have handed down what was commanded them: that Jesus having taken bread, having given thanks, said, “Do this in my remembrance; this is my body”; and similarly having taken the cup and having given thanks, said, “This is my blood” . . . And the evil demons, having imitated this, have handed it down to be done also in the mysteries of Mithras. For as you either know or can learn, bread and a cup of water are used in the rites of initiation with certain formulas.⁸

We can thus argue exegetically that consecration is attributed to the repetition of the words of Christ: Justin would not have referred to presbyters’ largely improvised anaphoras as being “from” the Lord, and if the Last Supper word were not being repeated within the anaphora in his time, he would not have referred to it as “from” the Lord. The transformation of the food, expressed in the line “food which has been eucharistized through the word of prayer which is from him,” is therefore being attributed causally to the repetition of the words of consecration.

This understanding of the apostolic Tradition is confirmed by similar passages in Justin’s near-contemporary, St. Irenaeus:

⁷ “Before it is consecrated, it is bread; but when the words of Christ have been added, it is the body of Christ . . . And before the words of Christ, the chalice is full of wine and water; when the words of Christ have done their work, then it is made the blood of Christ,” Ambrose, *De sacramentis* IV, 5, 23; CSEL 73, 56.

⁸ Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 66, as rendered by Paul F. Bradshaw in *Eucharistic Origins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 62–63. See E. J. Yarnold, “Anaphoras without Institution Narratives?” in *Studia Patristica* 30 (1997): 395–410, at 407, for extended analysis of the passages in Justin Martyr, and see the comments by David Berger in “Forma huius sacramenti sunt verba salvatoris—Die Form des Sakramentes der Eucharistie,” *Divinitas*, numero speciale (2004): 184–85.

Again, giving directions to His disciples to offer God the first-fruits of His own created things . . . He took that created thing, bread, and *gave thanks, saying, 'This is My body.'* . . . And the Church alone offers this pure oblation to the Creator, offering to Him, with giving of thanks, [the things taken] from His creation. . . . But how can they [Gnostic heretics] be consistent with themselves, [when they say] that *the bread over which thanks have been given is the body of their Lord.* . . . But our opinion is in accordance with the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn establishes our opinion. For we offer to Him His own. . . . For as the bread, which is produced from the earth, when it receives the invocation of God, *is no longer* common bread, but the Eucharist . . . wheat . . . serves for the use of men, and having received the Word of God, *becomes* the Eucharist, which is the body . . . of Christ . . .⁹

Thanks are given over the bread, so that the bread itself comes to be called “thanksgiving” (Eucharist) as it becomes the body of Christ, and the invocation which is the word of God is summarized as the saying of the Lord’s words, which identify the bread as his body. Irenaeus is expressing the fact that the Lord’s Last Supper words repeated in the liturgy transform the gifts.

I.2

Once again, before considering the absence of the narrative from actual manuscripts of Addai/Mari and the *Didache* (I.4 below), we are first examining the claims for the original absence of the institution narrative from the anaphora in general, or for its not being necessary.

It is sometimes maintained that in various anaphoral traditions the institution narrative was originally not recited—even though none of the available manuscripts for those traditions lack the narrative. Some liturgists maintain that the grammar, structure, and naming of the parts of certain anaphoras are incoherent and demand explanation, the most likely being a fourth-century addition of the institution narrative to an already finished literary composition. Mazza subjects the Roman Canon and early Iberian anaphoras to reconstruction along these lines, and my refutation of his analysis will not be repeated here.¹⁰ Two witnesses

⁹ Irenaeus, *Against the Heresies* IV, 17, 5; 18, 4–5; V, 2, 3 in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, trans. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Edinburgh: T&T Clark; rpr. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1993), 484–86, 528. Italics added, and translation slightly revised in light of PG 7:1023–29, 1125–26.

¹⁰ For this refutation, see “Anaphoras without Institution Narratives: A Critical Appraisal,” in *Die Anaphora von Addai und Mari*, 178–83. The exegesis I mean to criticize would take the institution narrative of the Roman Canon as a later enrichment of an earlier commendation of the gifts to God, added in order to

should nevertheless be added to the dossier in favor of the original presence of the institution narrative in the Eucharist: the primitive literary style of the institution narrative in the Roman Canon, and the Barcelona papyrus, neglected by the liturgists in question here.

The history of the Roman Church's use of Latin *cursus* practically disproves the speculative claim of modern liturgical exegetes that the Roman Canon may have lacked the institution narrative until some time in the fourth century. From the 1964 study of G. G. Willis we learn that this rhetorical device of arranging and choosing words with a view to repeating certain patterns of accentuation was a standard practice in Roman liturgical composition from roughly A.D. 350 to 650. In the recension of the Roman Canon as it would have been at the time of Gregory the Great (d. 604), we find the *cursus* in those parts which are lacking it in the form quoted by St. Ambrose around 390. These parts are the central core, from *Quam oblationem* to the end of *Supplices te rogamus*, containing only one rhythmic ending in Ambrose's version, and that outside the Institution Narrative. We can conclude with Willis that the *cursus* of the later Gregorian version represents a stylistic addition, and that the central part containing the Institution Narrative did not then show a key feature of the style which began in texts composed in the fourth century. Crucial for our study is the fact that collects composed during the period of the *cursus* are packed with them, whereas the Roman Canon has relatively few for its length, especially in the central and oldest part, and the institution narrative has none at all. This points to the antiquity of the central part of the Canon, and it belies the claim that the institution narrative was added in the fourth century. Given the facts collated by Willis, and the perfect stylistic integration of the institution narrative with the *Quam oblationem* and the immediately following *Unde et memores*, the case for an introduction of the institution narrative in the century when the *cursus* began to be employed on a massive scale collapses.¹¹

The Roman Eucharistic liturgy has often been linked historically with the Egyptian. Be that as it may, the literary evidence supports a pre-fourth-century presence of the institution narrative in Egypt as well. For decades various liturgists have laid enormous stress on the Strasbourg Papyrus, a torn, incomplete fourth- or fifth-century manuscript of probably Egyptian

justify calling the gifts a "figure" of the Lord's body and blood (Ambrose's version of the Canon).

¹¹ Willis wrote, "*Quam oblationem* has two [*cursus*], but the Institution narrative . . . appears to have none at all. This seems to point to its being the earliest part of the Canon." See "'Cursus' in the Roman Canon" in G. G. Willis, *Essays in Early Roman Liturgy* (London: SPCK, 1964), 113–17. The quotation is found on 116.

provenance containing what is either an anaphora fragment, or a complete anaphora lacking the institution narrative. Neglected by these same liturgists is the Barcelona Papyrus, a fourth-century collection of texts of probably Egyptian (Pachomian) origin, which includes a complete anaphora *with* the institution narrative; the anaphora is found with noteworthy frequency in other manuscripts, which points to widespread use. Like the literary style of the institution narrative of the Roman Canon, this fourth-century manuscript presents some archaic features, which lead Michael Zheltov to suggest the third century for its Ur-text. Its only fourth-century additions would be some patristic citations, not the Sanctus, epiclesis, and institution narrative. Indeed, a principal basis other exegetes sometimes have for considering the institution narrative to be generally a fourth-century addition is its mere absence from an obviously fragmentary manuscript, the Strasbourg Papyrus. But if one were to apply the normal criteria of textual criticism to the Strasbourg Papyrus, its anaphoral portion (lacking various parts) would be taken as a fragment of the liturgy of Mark, which it resembles, not as a complete prayer. By contrast, in the Barcelona Papyrus we have a complete anaphora with archaic features indicating an already traditional character for its various parts. It is in fact the oldest known manuscript containing a complete anaphora, and it has the institution narrative.¹² It therefore constitutes a strong defense for those whose sense of the faith takes the institution narrative as essential in the Tradition.

I.3

The original absence of the institution narrative in not one but many early anaphoras would constitute a powerful argument in favor of the general validity of such a Eucharist, but we have now shown the claim to be questionable. Before finally considering Addai/Mari and the *Didache* in particular, we shall examine a view that does grant a consecratory role to the words of the Lord, but only *qua* pronounced once and for all at the Last Supper, with no need for them to be repeated in each Eucharist in order to change the elements. This view also maintains that, with such an understanding of the dominical words, the Fathers attributed efficacy

¹² This paragraph has summarized points in Michael Zheltov's article, "The Anaphora and the Thanksgiving Prayer from the Barcelona Papyrus: An Underestimated Testimony to the Anaphoral History in the Fourth Century," *Vigiliae Christianae* 62 (2008): 467–504, accessible at the author's website, mzh.mrezha.ru/indexe.htm.

We should note that the Greek of Barcelona reads only "Take, drink the blood," but the sixth-century Louvain Coptic fragment of the same anaphora has "Take, drink, for this is my blood," and Barcelona does have "This is my body" over the bread. Perhaps the Greek for the cup is an abbreviation.

to *both* the dominical words and the Church's invocation of the Spirit's power. A wide variety of texts of East and West have been cited in this regard, and they go beyond the issue of Addai/Mari. The purpose of the claim is nevertheless clear: to show that in light of the first millennium communion of diverse traditions of the Fathers, it would be arbitrary for the Catholic Church to insist today that the words of Christ by themselves are necessary and are consecratory by being repeated.

Since I have already criticized the claim that even the West in or near the first millennium considered both the dominical words *and* the surrounding prayers of the Canon as consecratory,¹³ we will limit consideration here to the most important and relevant texts from the East.¹⁴ In accord with Catholic dogmaticians of the past, we will first show that these texts are not nearly as probative as they are usually thought to be. Then (I.3.2 below) we will criticize the claim that Christ's pronouncing of his words once and for all at the Last Supper consecrates every Eucharist throughout history, independently of their repetition by a priest.

¹³ Texts from Peter Lombard and others are studied, and the literary structure of the Roman Canon is interpreted, in Santogrossi, "Anaphoras without Institution Narratives: A Critical Appraisal," in *Die Anaphora von Addai und Mari*, 184–89. Lombard (*Sententiae* IV d.13 c.2) does indeed assert the necessity of the angel coming to consecrate the oblation by taking it to the heavenly altar. But he does not say that consecration takes place *when* the priest says the *Supplices te rogamus*. Furthermore, he is using a pseudo-Augustinian source as one of several arguments for his unusual position, which denies that a schismatic priest can consecrate: the angels would not be present at a schismatic's Mass. When Lombard treats *ex professo* of the form of the Eucharist, he identifies the dominical words and nothing else as the form, so the following words of Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet would probably describe Lombard's experience of the Canon: "It is in order to make more vivid what is being accomplished that the Church speaks at every moment as if the entire action were being accomplished here and now, without wondering if the action has already been accomplished or is yet to be accomplished." (*Explications de quelques difficultés sur les prières de la messe à un nouveau catholique*, *Oeuvres* 17 [Paris, 1864], 74–75). Furthermore, several early medieval authors quoted in Jungmann consider the words of the Lord as consecratory with no reference to the entirety of the Canon; see *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, trans. Francis A. Brunner (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1986), vol. 2, 231–34.

¹⁴ Frequently discussed in the literature are passages from Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzen, John Chrysostom, and Cyril of Jerusalem. It has been held that the anaphora known to the great bishop of Jerusalem lacked the institution narrative. However, E. J. Yarnold and others have shown the probability that the Jerusalem anaphora in Cyril's time had the epiclesis immediately before the institution narrative, which means that Cyril's references to it and to the "completion of the sacrifice" are perfectly compatible with consecration by the words of the Lord in the narrative. See Edward Yarnold's introduction and commentary on texts included in his *Cyril of Jerusalem* (London: Routledge, 2000), 41–42, 204–5.

I.3.1

The famous passage from St. John Damascene's *De fide orthodoxa* IV, 13 runs as follows:

If then the Word of God is quick and energising, and the Lord did all that He willed; if He said, Let there be light and there was light, let there be a firmament and there was a firmament; if the heavens were established by the Word of the Lord and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth; if the heaven and the earth, water and fire and air and the whole glory of these, and, in sooth, this most noble creature, man, were perfected by the Word of the Lord; if God the Word of His own will became man and the pure and undefiled blood of the holy and ever-virginal One made His flesh without the aid of seed, can He not then make the bread His body and the wine and water His blood? He said in the beginning, *Let the earth bring forth grass*, and even until this present day, when the rain comes it brings forth its proper fruits, urged on and strengthened by the divine command. God said, *This is My body*, and *This is My blood*, and *this do ye in remembrance of Me*. And so it is at His omnipotent command until He come: for it was in this sense that He said *until He come*: and the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit becomes through the invocation the rain to this new tillage. For just as God made all that He made by the energy of the Holy Spirit, so also now the energy of the Spirit performs those things that are supernatural and which it is not possible to comprehend unless by faith alone. *How shall this be*, said the holy Virgin, *seeing I know not a man*? And the archangel Gabriel answered her: *The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee*. And now you ask, how the bread became Christ's body and the wine and water Christ's blood. And I say unto thee, "The Holy Spirit is present and does those things which surpass reason and thought." . . . The body which is born of the holy Virgin is in truth body united with divinity, not that the body which was received up into the heavens descends, but that the bread itself and the wine are changed into God's body and blood. But if you enquire how this happens, it is enough for you to learn that it was through the Holy Spirit, just as the Lord took on Himself flesh that subsisted in Him and was born of the holy Mother of God through the Spirit. And we know nothing further save that the Word of God is true and energises and is omnipotent, but the manner of this cannot be searched out. . . . [T]he bread of the table and the wine and water are supernaturally changed by the invocation and presence of the Holy Spirit into the body and blood of Christ, and are not two but one and the same. . . . The bread and the wine are not merely figures of the body and blood of Christ (God forbid!) but the deified body of the Lord itself: for the Lord has said, "This is My body," not, this is a figure of My body: and "My blood," not, a figure of My blood. . . . But

if some persons called the bread and the wine antitypes of the body and blood of the Lord, as did the divinely inspired Basil, they said so not after the consecration but before the consecration, so calling the offering itself.¹⁵

We first ask whether the text implies that Christ's once and for all pronouncing of the words "This is my body, etc." at the Last Supper has consecrated every Eucharist regardless of whether the priest repeats them. This does not seem to be the case: in the already established context of the Eucharist in the present, St. John Damascene first refers to the Word of God in the present tense; next he lists a number of divine words from creation and redemption, with their effects, in the past tense; then when he returns to Eucharistic making of the Lord's body and blood, he reverts to the present tense. One does not have the impression that Christ's act of speaking in the past would be efficacious without the repetition of his words.

Next comes a passage often regarded as asserting the necessity and sacramental efficacy of the epiclesis: as the rain brought forth the plants commanded into being by God's Word, so "the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit becomes through the invocation the rain to this new tillage" of the making of the Lord's body and blood. But does Damascene indeed attribute efficacy to "the invocation" considered as a word proffered by the priest? It should be noted that the passage continues with three consecutive references to the Holy Spirit himself, and not to the invocation, as cause of the Eucharistic change, and there quickly follows an exclusively worded attribution of the change to the energizing power of the Word, answer to the question of how the change takes place. Clearly Damascene's focus is on the mysterious power of God's Word and Spirit considered precisely as divine, not the invocation. I am not claiming that Damascene attributed instrumental-sacramental efficacy to the words of Christ alone, nor that he even distinguished this kind of causality as such, for the Tradition needed more accumulated inductions from apostolic faith and practices to eventually recognize sacramental form as such, or what it is for a liturgical word to be efficacious *ex opere operato*, rather than by impetration. But it can be said that when Tradition at a later stage registers this distinction clearly in identifying the dominical words as the sole form of the Eucharist, the passages from John Damascene do not speak against the later development. Rather, given the whole context of these passages, it is a defensible

¹⁵ *Expositio fidei*, 86 (IV, 13), trans. S. D. F. Salmond, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, vol. 9 (reprinted Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 82–84.

hypothesis that Damascene need not have understood consecration to occur “through” the invocation of the Holy Spirit in the same sense that it occurs “through” the repetition of Christ’s words. He may have understood “through the invocation” in the sense of impetratory, not sacramentally instrumental, causality: God grants the consecration through the Holy Spirit in response to his beloved Church’s prayer and not only in fulfillment of Christ’s having invested his sacramental words with authority. And this is all that need be said by one who holds to the words of Christ as the sole form of the Eucharist when debating with proponents of the opposite thesis.

Damascene goes on to argue, against objectors generally presumed to have been iconoclasts, that the Eucharist is Christ’s true body and blood, not merely their figure or antitype. He is probably referring to the epiclesis in the liturgy of St. Basil when he says that the word “antitype” refers to the offerings of bread and wine before they are consecrated. Taken as a precisely worded interpretation of the post-institution narrative epiclesis, which asks the Holy Spirit to change the “antitypes,” the passage implies that the offerings are not yet consecrated in the time between the institution narrative and the epiclesis. But it must be remembered that the sentence is not ultimately intended to answer the question, when are the offerings bread and wine, and when are they changed? It is responding to the implied question, if the Eucharist is not a mere antitype of Christ’s body and blood, why did Basil say it is? Given Damascene’s concern simply to affirm the reality and presence of Christ’s body and blood at some point in the celebration of the Eucharist, as opposed to their presence merely through a symbol, it is possible to understand him as meaning the following (clarification in brackets): “But if some persons called the bread and the wine antitypes of the body and blood of the Lord, as did the divinely inspired Basil, they said so [in reference to them] not [as they are] after the consecration but before the consecration, so calling the offering itself.” If this is the real meaning of the passage, there would of course still be a problem with timing, in that the epiclesis would ask for the change of “bread and wine” which have already been changed. For this reason the great Catholic scholar of Oriental theology Martin Jugie was willing to concede that in this particular passage, dominated by the needs of an extraneous doctrinal debate, Damascene’s thought did not square with Catholic doctrine. But as we shall also see below, there is evidence of Byzantine liturgical consciousness praying the epiclesis after the dominical words *without* attaching instrumental efficacy to the epiclesis, much like Bossuet’s commentary on the Canon cited above.

S. Salaville's exhaustive study saw John Damascene's words as having played a major role in hardening much of the East into the position that the *epiclesis* to the Holy Spirit is necessary for consecration, in contrast to what Salaville saw as the original Eastern theology, which attributed consecration to the words of Christ and the *power* of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶ His article presented a number of Byzantine and other Eastern witnesses, both before and after Damascene, to the efficacy of the institution narrative. Also summarized in this classic article are the discussions and final resolution of the issue in favor of the "Latin" position at the Council of Florence: with the apparently unique exception of Mark of Ephesus, who of course rejected the entire work of the Council, the Greek bishops publicly agreed that the sole cause of the consecration is the word of Christ repeated by the priest. The reason for not including this point in the dogmatic bull of union was to avoid giving the impression that the doctrine had ever been in doubt.¹⁷ Although not himself ascribing sacramental efficacy to the dominical words exclusively, Orthodox liturgical scholar Michael Zheltov has demonstrated that consecration by the dominical words was a widespread position in the East before the polemic with the West solidified. Even an important ally of Mark Eugenikos, George Scholarios, agreed with the Latins on this point, and a passage in the most famous Byzantine liturgical commentary, ascribed to Germanus of Constantinople, seems to presuppose consecration by the words of the Lord.¹⁸ In view of the internal variety of the Eastern tradition which

¹⁶ S. Salaville, "Épiclesse eucharistique," in *Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique*, vol. 5 (1913), 247–65.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 258–59.

¹⁸ Michael Zheltov, "The Moment of Eucharistic Consecration in Byzantine Thought," in *Issues in Eucharistic Praying in East and West*, 263–306. Zheltov's article is a groundbreaking one for our own time. Although he does not always agree with the Catholic scholars Salaville and Jugie, much of what Fr. Zheltov brings forward was already known to Jugie, who documented frequent Byzantine affirmations of consecration by the words of the Lord, as well as alterations the Greek Orthodox made to their own traditional rubrics, after the failure of the union of Florence, alterations which ritually deemphasized the words of the Lord and rather emphasized the *epiclesis*. For this and other findings by Jugie, see his *Theologia Dogmatica Christianorum Orientalium Ab Ecclesia Catholica Dissidentium*, III (Paris, 1930), 258–84, and *De forma eucharistiae: De epiclesibus eucharisticis* (Rome, 1943). The words of the Lord have always remained chanted aloud in the Byzantine anaphora, while the *epiclesis* has traditionally been said quietly, as most of the anaphora came to be; regarding the contemporary practice in some Orthodox parishes of the people chanting "Amen" at the *epiclesis*, Zheltov says it is "a pure innovation, which has nothing to do with the Byzantine tradition" (Zheltov, "The Moment of Eucharistic Consecration in Byzantine Thought," 291, n. 92).

Salaville, Jugie, and Zheltov have shown to be not as monolithically focused on the epiclesis as popularly believed, we wish to suggest a different approach to those Eastern anaphoras in which the epiclesis follows the institution narrative.

If the standard history of the development of the dogma of the Holy Spirit's divinity in the fourth century is correct, then the motive for adding a grammatically distinct invocation "to the Holy Spirit" to various anaphoras was primarily to accentuate the divinity of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity, a truth of faith then being highlighted explicitly by the orthodox because of the spread of heresies denying the full divinity of the Spirit. At this time various already traditional prayers saw the addition of references to the Holy Spirit as divine sanctifier: in the context of prayer, faith in the Spirit's divinity was naturally expressed now by praying to him as the one who effects the sacramental action, not only in the anaphora but in some baptismal rites as well. What is attributed to the Holy Spirit in the Eucharistic epiclesis by Damascene's answer to the question of how transubstantiation takes place—omnipotence, supernatural power, presence, energy—is the *divinity shared in common* with the Father invoked from the beginning of the anaphora and with the Word whose words are invoked over the bread and wine in the institution narrative. His fundamental point is the divine power of the Word and the Spirit, not the personal distinction of the Spirit. True, he speaks of the sacramental change "through" the invocation of the Holy Spirit, but he also says "[W]e know *nothing further* save that the *Word* of God is true and energizes and is omnipotent . . .," so his fundamental insistence in *De fide orthodoxa* is on the transcendence and incomprehensibility of *divine* power. The Spirit changes the bread and wine because he is God, not simply because he is the Spirit.

Chrysostom's and Damascene's descriptions of the Word of God speaking words that transform the gifts are such as to make the institution narrative itself an invocation: the priest recites a narrative to God and in the same act he proffers divinely powerful words over bread and wine.¹⁹ The narrative of the institution is itself a type of epiclesis, although not in the form of a petition; it is an invocation to God the Father with the words of God the Word, for a divine benefit. The Fathers of the fourth century did no such thing as *add* the epiclesis to the Holy

¹⁹ John Chrysostom: "The priest is the representative when he pronounces those words, but the power and the grace are those of the Lord. 'This is My Body,' [h]e says. This word changes the things that lie before us . . ." English translation of First Homily on the Betrayal of Judas, 1, 6 (PG 49, 380), modified from Zheltov, "The Moment of Eucharistic Consecration in Byzantine Thought," 283. We will return to the context and translation of this passage.

Spirit: having always known implicitly that the Holy Spirit is co-adored and co-glorified, they also knew that he is co-invoked when God the Word's omnipotent words are called out to God over bread and wine. They added a *mention* of the Holy Spirit in order to explicate the third addressee of the invocation begun with the institution narrative. To cite Bossuet again, "It is in order to make more vivid what is being accomplished that the Church speaks at every moment as if the entire action were being accomplished here and now, without wondering if the action has already been accomplished or is yet to be accomplished." The anamnesis, offering, and epiclesis form a single *verbal reprise* of what later dogmatic development will confirm to have taken place at the words of consecration. The epiclesis refers to bread and wine as being changed by the Holy Spirit because at the beginning of the Lord's action narrated and again accomplished, now verbally *recapitulated*, the gifts were bread and wine about to be changed as they were "taken." Since the epiclesis was added immediately after the anamnesis and offering, it could be experienced as the completion of the *recapitulation*. Therefore it did not *necessarily* imply that the gifts had not yet been consecrated, although in practice it did for many; nevertheless, there were Byzantine authors who indeed affirmed that the epiclesis manifests what has already taken place.

I.3.2

As was mentioned at the beginning of the previous section, another of Taft's reasons for the non-necessity of repeating "This is my Body, etc." is the Fathers' teaching that these words *as* spoken once by Christ at the Last Supper are perpetually efficacious. The argument would be that, since Christ has already consecrated the elements of all Eucharists past, present, and future, there is no need for "This is my body, etc." to be repeated; at most it would be necessary for them to be recalled by allusion, in a "dispersed" and "euchological way," to use the Pontifical Council's terms.

Although the Fathers did indeed preach that the power of Christ's words spoken at the Last Supper extends through time, the texts cited say no more than that. It does not follow that the words are efficacious *without* sacramental repetition, according to the same Fathers. In fact, a passage from St. John Chrysostom's Second Homily on the Second Epistle to Timothy suggests that it is through the repetition of the words that their power is applied in each Eucharist:

The things God grants are not such that they could be accomplished through priestly power: everything is from grace; and his is only to open his mouth, but God does everything; he only completes the

symbol. . . . This [offering] is in no way less than that one [at the Last Supper], because men do not sanctify this one, but he himself who sanctified that one. For just as the words which God spoke are the same as what the priest says now, thus the offering is the very same, like the baptism which he also gave.²⁰

In this text we note first that the action of sanctifying the current Eucharist is attributed to Christ in the present, not the past, tense. More important, the priest is said to open his mouth, repeat the same words, and complete the symbol—what could this signify except that his repetition of the words completes the symbol? If that is the case, then there is no symbol without repetition of the words, and without the symbol there is no sacrament. Likewise Nicholas Russo²¹ does not sufficiently examine the subject and tense of “he says” in the key passage of the First Homily on the Betrayal of Judas 6:

It is not man who causes what is present to become the Body and Blood of Christ, but Christ Himself Who was crucified for us. The priest is the representative when he pronounces those words, but the power and the grace are those of the Lord. “This is My Body,” [h]e says. This word changes the things that lie before us; and as that sentence “Increase and multiply,” once spoken, extends through all time and gives to our nature the power to reproduce itself; even so that saying “This is My Body,” once uttered, does at every altar in the Churches from that time to the present day, and even till Christ’s coming, make the sacrifice complete.²²

Obviously for Chrysostom the words pronounced once and for all by Christ in the past are perpetually efficacious, but this in no way excludes a certain efficacy of their repetition now by the priest. “‘This is My Body,’ he [the priest] says. This word changes the things before us . . .”. Because of the preceding line, the subject of “says” is most likely the ordained priest, not Christ as personally distinct from his minister. The perpetual efficacy of Christ’s saying the words is a distinct idea in the passage overall, and does not cancel the first idea of the priest now pronouncing a word that changes the Eucharistic elements.

I.4

Thus many of the historical sources considered as directly or indirectly favorable to the validity of anaphoras without the words of consecration are unclear, or call for a different interpretation. We can now move on to

²⁰ PG 62:612.

²¹ Russo, “The Validity of the Anaphora of Addai and Mari,” 35–37.

²² PG 49, 380.

the most important traditions from the ancient Church whose manuscripts incontestably lack the institution narrative: the anaphora of Addai and Mari, and the *Didache*, which dates from at least the sub-apostolic age.

I.4.1

The quasi-official commentary on the Pontifical Council's letter recognizes that the question of whether the anaphora of Addai and Mari ever contained an institution narrative cannot be resolved by historical science, and so it appeals to the faith of the Assyrian Church of the East as an apostolic church. Robert Taft for his part reminds us that the Roman Church has always respected in principle the traditional practices of oriental churches in communion with her.²³ Since he is convinced that the Church of the East celebrated the Eucharist without the institution narrative before the fifth-century schism occasioned by the Council of Ephesus the logical implication is that Rome has no choice but to recognize the validity of Addai/Mari celebrated without the institution narrative. Could such a claim be sustained?

Certainly there are noteworthy differences in the celebration of the sacraments between Rome and various Eastern Churches, differences long recognized by Rome as not affecting validity. For example, the form of absolution is deprecatory rather than sentential in the Byzantine Churches. But the case of the anaphora of Addai and Mari is somewhat different, so that a convergence of data surrounding Addai/Mari raises questions about the authentic and original character of the absence of the institution narrative from this anaphora.

Enormous amounts of research, together with probable and hypothetical reasoning, have been devoted to the study of this anaphora on the basis of its earliest known manuscripts. No one can contest what is clearly written or not written on a parchment, but there are anomalies in the grammatical and thematic flow of the prayer in those same manuscripts, anomalies which, on the basis of the wider Christian tradition, practically beg to be explained, either as traces of an institution narrative in an earlier manuscript, or as possible places for the celebrant to insert the narrative in an *ad libitum* form.²⁴ Furthermore, everyone would accept

²³ Taft, "Messa senza consacrazione?" 78.

²⁴ For an exposition of Bernard Botte's textual argument that the incoherencies of the manuscripts signal possible places for the institution narrative, see Louis Bouyer, *The Eucharist*, trans. Charles Underhill Quinn (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), 146–58. A standard source today for the text of Addai/Mari is A. Gelston, *The Eucharistic Prayer of Addai and Mari* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1992). The articles by A. Raes, "Les paroles de la consecration dans les anaphores syriennes," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 3 (1937): 486–504,

the possibility that not everything done or said in a liturgy was also written down, and in the case of the Eucharist in the East Syrian sources there is evidence, outside the manuscripts of the liturgy itself, of a traditional recitation of the institution narrative. The most direct evidence of this consists in the nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century reports by Assyrian priests to Anglican missionaries that they did in fact add the institution narrative in actual celebration of Addai/Mari. We need not conclude on this basis alone that the institution narrative was considered normative by the clergy as a whole, but the reports do show that the absence of a liturgical form from a manuscript does not necessarily prove its absence from actual celebration.²⁵

One should also consider the East Syrian liturgical commentaries, which clearly mention the recitation of the Lord's words as a part of the Eucharistic offering.²⁶ This is what one would expect if the institution narrative was normative or at least generally used. It is true that the anaphoras of Theodore and Nestorius had the institution narrative, and the commentaries do not say which anaphora is being referred to. Therefore if the commentators were thinking of the anaphoras of Theodore and Nestorius, no conclusions could be drawn about how Addai/Mari was prayed in practice. However, at least one apparent citation in these commentaries corresponds to a line of Addai/Mari that is absent from Theodore and Nestorius. And it is significant that, at the time the commentaries were written, the anaphora of Addai and Mari was the most frequently used. Finally, the commentaries speak of the Eucharistic offering in general terms, in the way one would expect if they were expounding what they considered to be uniform and necessary in the liturgy per se. It is improbable that they would present the institution narrative as simply part of the liturgy if it was used only less frequently, in the anaphoras of Theodore and Nestorius only.

The testimony of Assyrian priests to Anglican missionaries, the ancient Christian practice of not consigning everything to writing, and the East Syrian liturgical commentaries constitute a convergence of probabilities

and "Le recit de l'institution eucharistique dans l'anaphore chaldéenne et malabare des Apôtres," *OCP* 10 (1944): 216–26; and the article by Botte, "L'anaphore chaldéenne des Apôtres," *OCP* 15 (1949): 259–76, include plausible explanations of a material order for anomalies in manuscripts, for example, the scarcity of available parchment space.

²⁵ U. M. Lang cites the Anglican missionaries in "Eucharist Without Institution Narrative? *The Anaphora of Addai and Mari* Revisited," *Divinitas*, numero speciale (2004): 231.

²⁶ See Lang, *ibid.*, 244–51, and "Zum Einsetzungsbericht bei ostsyrischen Liturgiekommentatoren," *Oriens Christianus* 89 (2005): 63–76.

allowing us to say that the recitation of the institution narrative is part of the tradition of the Church of the East in its integrity and authenticity.²⁷ At the very least these testimonies and signs make it improbable that the non-recitation of the institution narrative is an authentic tradition going back to the apostles of East Syria.

How then to explain the absence of the institution narrative from the earliest known manuscripts of the anaphora of Addai and Mari, dated to the tenth or eleventh century? Raes and Botte offered various suggestions, but we will offer a new one based on a confluence of facts and parallels that suggest it.

First the relevant background facts and parallels: in West Syria, Theodore of Mopsuestia and later Severus of Antioch clearly attest the institution narrative and an understanding of the priest acting *in persona Christi*, but in later centuries (corresponding to the Latin Middle Ages) it often failed to appear in new anaphoras composed in West Syria.²⁸ The Roman Holy Office in 1843 was aware of not only occasional omission but also variation in the form.²⁹ As for East Syria, there are at least two

²⁷ Another possible explanation for the absence of the words of consecration in Addai/Mari, on the basis of its presumed great antiquity, would be the ancient Christian practice of sometimes not consigning the most sacred things to writing, for fear of their falling into the hands of persecutors and unbelievers. The earliest manuscripts of Addai/Mari may have lacked the institution narrative for this reason, and later copyists could have been conforming themselves to what they had before them, while all along the institution narrative was being added in actual celebration. Lang, "The *Anaphora of Addai and Mari* Revisited," 251–56. An edition and translation of their missal published by Chaldean Catholics in 1982 gives this explanation: *Missel chaldéen*, ed. and trans. F. Y. Alichoran (Paris: Église catholique chaldéenne, 1982), 17.

²⁸ For the liturgical commentaries of Theodore of Mopsuestia, see Edward Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation* (Slough, England: St. Paul Publications, 1971); for Severus of Antioch, see the passage translated by Ernest Walter Brooks in *The Sixth Book of the Select Letters of Severus, Patriarch of Antioch, in the Syriac Version of Athanasius of Nisibis*, vol. 2 (London: William and Norgate, 1904), 238 (cited by Zheltov in "The Moment of Eucharistic Consecration in Byzantine Thought," 284). On the late Syrian anaphoras and the important Jacobite commentator Denis Bar-Salibi, see A. Raes, "Les paroles de la consécration dans les anaphores syriennes," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 3 (1937): 486–504. Bar-Salibi uses the phrase "in the person" of Christ.

²⁹ The reply from the Holy Office is in an incomplete state as a response, but clear enough for our purpose: "Sicuti facere nequit *Episcopus Jacobitarum nuper ad fidem catholicam conversus*, quod abstineant *Presbyteri* ab usu suarum hostium *oleo unctarum*, et quod peius est, a mutandis verbis consecrationis—quandoque omnino ea tacent—nec valet illos cogere sine praeiudicio electionis suae personae et persecutionis populi sibi bene affecti.—Negative (sic!)." "Since a Jacobite bishop recently converted to the Catholic faith cannot make his priests abstain from using their

places in the tenth- or eleventh-century manuscripts of Addai/Mari where an institution narrative can be harmoniously recited with preceding and following material, possibly indicating the copyists' presumption that the celebrant would add the narrative where he chose, for which reason it was simply not written down. This is significant when considered together with the codification of the East Syrian liturgy by the catholicos Isho'yabh III in the seventh century, for the tenth-century manuscripts would have depended on his reforms, and he could have been aware of a traditional variability in the location of the institution narrative in the most venerable anaphora of the Church, a variability in contrast with the fixed ordering of the more recent anaphoras of Theodore and Nestorius.³⁰

The hypothesis suggested by the facts: Isho'yabh inherited a chaotic situation: from time immemorial, the place of the institution narrative within Addai/Mari was variable, *ad libitum celebrantis*. He would have recognized Addai/Mari as the original prayer of the Orient, and he would have known that the place of the institution narrative was variable. Precisely for this reason, he left a manuscript which did not contain the institution narrative, anticipating that celebrants would continue to supply it in one or another possible location, depending on their choice. Because of the authority of Isho'yabh, this version became a sort of *editio princeps*, and this explains why the earliest known manuscripts lack the institution narrative. It is easy to imagine an older East Syrian priest training the new priest in the village, and saying "This is where you say . . ."—and priests in different villages having different preferences. Nevertheless it was generally recited, so that centuries later Assyrian priests were able to tell Anglican missionaries that the words were recited from memory, despite the absence from liturgical codices. At the same time, variability in location of the words of consecration, together with their absence from the written versions, opened the way to the abuse of their complete omission by ignorant or careless priests, reports of which reached Rome

hosts anointed with oil, and what is worse, changing the words of consecration—sometimes they leave them entirely unsaid—nor constrain them without the disadvantage of expulsion of his person and persecution of the people well-disposed to him.—Negative (sic)!" Sanctum Officium, 1658, n. 3 in *Codificazione Canonica Orientale Fonti Fascicolo I* (Rome: Sacra C. Orientale, 1930), 191. Perhaps an already-existing practice of making changes in the institution words was the reason for medieval copyists not writing them down, although at least the *sanior pars* of the clergy would have recited them in some form in every celebration.

³⁰ W. Macomber discusses Isho'yabh's reform in "A History of the Chaldean Mass," *Worship* 51 (1977): 107–20, cited by Lang, "The *Anaphora of Addai and Mari* Revisited," 47.

via Catholic missionaries, and thus we have the 1843 and 1902 condemnations of the omission by the Holy See.³¹

I.4.2

We now pass to a consideration of the *Didache*; we will show that it too need not imply the non-necessity of the words of consecration for the Eucharistic sacrifice.

For someone who accepts in faith the living Tradition at the stage of clarity it has attained after many centuries, it is not necessary to prove by purely rational historical methods that the *Didache* churches shared the same faith in all particulars, which only gradually came to be clarified in the Catholic Church. Rather it is sufficient to show that this apparently apostolic or subapostolic text can be read in harmony with that faith, and therefore does not legitimate a Eucharist without the institution narrative and words of consecration. After recalling the passages directly relevant to the Eucharist and its celebrants, we will fill in the background in light of the New Testament and some of the most recent scholarship on the *Didache*, maintaining that our historical reconstruction is defensible and does not contradict any of the data.³²

³¹ No Latin prejudice against the East is implied by formulating such a scenario, for in the West we are familiar with the story of St. Vincent de Paul re-evangelizing the French countryside and discovering a priest so ignorant as to say the Hail Mary for absolution. Despite the scattered reports of omission of the words of consecration in both East and West Syrian rites in the nineteenth century, it seems that in the early twentieth century, non-Catholic East Syrian (Assyrian) clergy became more uniform in using it: some missals published by the Assyrians themselves insert the institution narrative in Addai/Mari, on an added slip of paper, or even into the text itself. W. Macomber stated in 1977 that at all liturgies he had attended in recent years at which the anaphora of Addai and Mari was used, the institution narrative was included: "A History of the Chaldean Mass," *Worship* 51 (1977): 119.

³² Recent historical-critical scholarship sometimes includes data that lend partial support to the historical reconstructions offered here. See André Tuilier, "Les charismatiques itinérants dans la Didaché et dans l'Évangile de Mathieu," in *Matthew and the Didache*, ed. Huub van de Sandt (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press: 2005), 157–72. K. Stevenson, in *Eucharist and Offering* (New York: Pueblo, 1986), cited by Lang (234–35), summarizes the obstacles encountered in efforts to reconstruct early liturgical forms with fragmented and scant manuscript evidence. In recent years liturgists have begun to abandon a number of long-held positions that relativized Roman Catholic teaching or were cited as precedent for some of the changes of the 1960s. For example, mainstream scholarship can now be found denying that the *Didache* reveals an original charismatic style of Church opposed to the hierarchical or institutional; fewer scholars now hold to a Roman origin for the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus.

Chapter 9: As for thanksgiving, give thanks this way. First, with regard to the cup: We thank you, our Father, for the holy vine of David your servant which you made known to us through Jesus your servant. To you be glory forever. And with regard to the fragment: We thank you, our Father, for the life and knowledge which you made known to us through Jesus your servant. To you be glory forever. As this fragment lay scattered upon the mountains and became a single [fragment] when it had been gathered, May your church be gathered into your kingdom from the ends of the earth. For glory and power are yours, through Jesus Christ, forever. Let no one eat or drink of your thanksgiving [Eucharist] save those who have been baptized in the name of the Lord, since the Lord has said, "Do not give to dogs what is holy."

Chapter 10: When you have had your fill, give thanks this way: We thank you, holy Father, for your holy name, which you made dwell in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality, which you made known to us through Jesus your servant. To you be glory forever. You, almighty Lord, created all things for the sake of your name, and you gave food and drink to human beings for enjoyment, so that they would thank you; But you graced us with spiritual food and drink and eternal life through Jesus your servant. . . . Allow the prophets, though, to give thanks as much as they like.

Chapter 14: Assembling on every Lord's day of the Lord, break bread and give thanks, confessing your faults besides so that your sacrifice may be clean. . . . This is [the sacrifice] of which the Lord has said: "'to offer me a clean sacrifice in every place and time, because I am a great king,' says the Lord, 'and my name is held in wonder among the nations.'"

Chapter 15: Select, then, for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, mild tempered men who are not greedy, who are honest and have proved themselves, for they too perform the functions of prophets and teachers for you. So do not disregard them, for they are the persons who hold a place of honor among you, together with the prophets and teachers.³³

Jesus appointed the Twelve, augmented by many more apostles sent out with spiritual power by the Pentecost event, the Damascus road appearance, and with the laying on of hands in the churches. In every place, the apostles' ministry of preaching, baptism, and laying hands on the new converts produced further outpourings of the spirit of prophecy, inspired teaching and witness to the truth of God in Christ. Those most richly endowed with the gifts of revealing and systematically teaching the

³³ *Didache*; translation by Aelred Cody (slightly modified here) in *The Didache in Context: Essays on Its Text, History and Transmission*, ed. Clayton N. Jefford (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 9–13.

mysteries of God were natural candidates for an apostle's further laying on of hands for diaconal, presbyteral, and episcopal ministry in stable communities, while the apostle would be off to evangelize another village or town. Because of the striking character of their charismatic revelations and penetrating insight into the Scriptures and the words of Jesus, these ordained ministers often continued to be *called* "prophets" and "teachers" even as they celebrated various types of formal liturgy on a regular basis and were recognized as stable authorities over the community through the laying on of hands.³⁴ A precedent for the picture in Acts 13 is found in 1 Chronicles, which refers to the instituted liturgical singers of the Psalms in the Temple as prophets.³⁵

The title of the *Didache* renders plausible the hypothesis that its earliest layer was written by a teacher for teachers. Hierarchically subordinate to that prophet who was also a bishop by the laying on of hands of an apostle, teachers could baptize, teach, and preside at the daily meal which was also a primitive liturgy of the pre-sanctified, concerning which we have numerous testimonies to the practice of reservation of fragments of the Eucharistic bread in private homes, and consequent communion on days between the Sunday celebrations of the liturgy by the bishop who consecrated the oblations. Since weekday communion was communal in monasteries, and since the *Didache's* emphasis on obedience to the prophets who teach the Way is analogous to the role of an abbot in a monastery, which role comprises both "charismatic" and "institutional" aspects, it is natural to take *Didache* 9 as referring to the weekday communion of the reserved consecrated bread at the communal meal, taken with a formula of thanksgiving and preceded by thanksgiving for a fresh cup which recalled the cup (naturally not conserved) of Sunday.³⁶ Thus the *Didache* churches celebrated what is essential to the later liturgies of the "pre-sanctified": a liturgy which by certain actions and words closely resembled the liturgy properly so called of Sunday, but which

³⁴ Acts 13:1–3, 1 Tm 4:14, 2 Tm 1:6–7, and 1 Cor 12:28–29 manifest a close association of liturgy and presbyteral/episcopal authority, which the living Tradition of the Church knows as the first beginnings of the ordained sacred ministry. The hierarchical ranking of "prophets" in 1 Cor may indicate bishops or presbyters who continued to be called prophets.

³⁵ See John W. Kleinig, *The Lord's Song: The Basis, Function and Significance of Choral Music in Chronicles*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series, 156 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).

³⁶ On the reservation of the Eucharistic bread and communion between Sundays in the early Church, see Stefanos Alexopoulos, *The Presanctified Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite: A Comparative Analysis of Its Origins, Evolution, and Structural Components* (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 10–31.

comprised communion of previously consecrated bread and non-consecrated wine. Thus *Didache* 9–10 witnesses to the mysterious presence of Christ’s true body in the Eucharist, while not undermining the necessity of the words of the Lord for a valid consecration.

This reading is further strengthened by the fact that in the *Didache* only the Sunday celebration, associated with the bishop, is called a sacrifice. The bishop who celebrates the Eucharistic sacrifice on the Lord’s Day is said to perform the liturgy of the prophets, because prophets were so visibly and audibly prominent in the daily gatherings of the Church which in part resembled what came to be seen as the divine liturgy in the proper sense, celebrated on Sunday. The bishop was specifically and formally an overseer, particularly in the management of Church temporal goods, and he celebrated Sunday Mass, giving thanks like prophets, but also offering the sacrifice, for which the *Didache* gives no instructions for the bishop, since the author of the *Didache* is only a teacher. Therefore, nothing in the *Didache* prevents us from presuming that the Eucharist known to the author or authors was consecrated by the words of the Lord pronounced by an ordained minister.³⁷

II

Having completed our historical and patristic survey, we proceed to the rule of faith and the *sensus fidei* as they relate to the question of anaphoras without institution narrative, Addai/Mari in particular.

II.1

Referring to the Pontifical Council’s letter to the Chaldean bishops as an epoch-making “decree” and the most important magisterial document since Vatican II, Taft presents not only the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity but also the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and Pope John Paul II as the authorities who have approved the “audacious accord” between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian

³⁷ A few words should be said about ministries: If men already known to be filled with the Spirit received laying on of hands for the service of charity, it is reasonable to presume, in harmony with the wider Tradition, that a “prophet” could become a bishop by the laying on of hands for supreme oversight and the plenitude of liturgical service in the Church. The primitive picture of the Church in the earliest sources is frequently characterized by a material overlapping of the charismatic and the institutional, together with a formal distinction between the two. The distinction came to be more visible with the disappearance of prophecy: the churches eventually had to choose “non-charismatic” men as bishops, presbyters, and deacons, so they ceased to be called “prophets” and “teachers” as they often had been in the first generation.

Church of the East. Taft finds the letter to be audacious and courageous because it breaks with centuries of teaching and clichés fostered by the theological manuals. Taft acknowledges papal judgments of the past, which seem to contradict the recent decision, and so he offers suggestions for how to “interpret” them, since, he says, an authentic magisterium cannot contradict itself.

Nevertheless it is not common for theologians to refer to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity as “supreme magisterium” without nuance. The bishop of Rome himself and the unanimous universal episcopate are normally considered supreme magisterium, and the faculty to protect Catholic doctrine has been delegated to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith as a subordinate instrument of the pope’s magisterium. The 2001 letter to the Chaldean bishops from the Pontifical Council, which has never been published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, was an official act of the Pontifical Council, not of the Pope or the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Even though the Congregation and the Pope gave their approval to the letter as the culmination of inter-dicasterial consultation, this approval has never been published as an act of magisterium to the universal Church. “Supreme magisterium” is usually associated with acts promulgated to the universal Church, but the Pontifical Council’s letter of 2001 was specifically addressed to a single *sui juris* particular Church, not to the universal Church. The other well-known promoter of Addai/Mari without institution narrative, Cesare Giraudo, points out that the clearest papal declarations favoring the words of the Lord, rather than the epiclesis, as the form of the Eucharist are found in letters addressed only to a portion of the Church;³⁸ although this allows him to qualify their status as minor, he fails to point out that the Pontifical Council’s 2001 letter was likewise addressed only to a restricted portion of the Church, and is canonically not even an act of the pope himself.

To Taft’s claim that the letter in question is a “decree” of the “supreme magisterium,” one can ask how the ecumenical dicastery would have authority to obligate all the baptized to believe new developments of doctrine, for to say that the words of Christ validly consecrate the

³⁸ Giraudo, “L’anafora degli apostoli Addai e Mari,” 111. The strongest statement is by Benedict XIII writing to the Melkite Patriarch: “. . . non per invocationem Spiritus Sancti, sed per verba consecrationis fieri transsubstantiationem . . .”; “. . . not through invocation of the Holy Spirit, but through the words of consecration transubstantiation happens . . .”; see *Collectio Lacensis*, Bd. II (Freiburg/Breisgau, 1876), 440. This passage is cited by more than one author in the special issue of *Divinitas*, but I do not have access to its full text.

Eucharist when they are found only in a dispersed and euchological way is to give a previously unheard of interpretation of the Catholic doctrine that the words of Christ consecrate the Eucharist.

Fr. Taft further states that Addai/Mari has never been condemned by anybody. However, an event of restored ecclesiastical communion during the Council of Trent, together with statements of the Roman Congregatio pro Propaganda Fide and the Holy Office require us to nuance this sweeping statement.

A bishop from the Church of the East arrived in Rome in the sixteenth century; he asked for and obtained ecclesiastical communion from the Pope, who recognized him as Patriarch. This was the return of a part of the Church of the East to full communion with the See of Peter; it would come to be called the Chaldean Church, inheritor of the catholicity of the pre-Council of Ephesus Church of the East. One Cardinal Amulius made a report to the Council of Trent about the “Chaldeans’” faith and sacraments, and his outline of their Mass specifically mentions the narrative of the institution and the words of consecration as a part of their Eucharistic liturgy. This indicates the cardinal’s presumption that, at least from the time of the patriarch’s request for communion with Rome, he and the clergy in union with him would henceforth recite the institution narrative. Even though no condemnation was issued against the anaphora of Addai and Mari without institution narrative, it is significant that when Rome received a portion of the Church of the East into her communion, it was presumed by Cardinal Amulius that their Eucharist would be celebrated *with* the institution narrative.³⁹

By the late nineteenth century it was becoming known in the Christian West that some liturgical manuscripts from the Assyrian Church lacked the institution narrative. It was at this time that an instruction of the Holy See’s Congregatio pro Propaganda Fide to Catholic missionaries in the Near East instructed them to uproot the “incredible abuse” of Mass without the words of consecration and to instruct about the true form of the sacrament of the Eucharist.⁴⁰ Like the letter of the Pontifical Council, this instruction of Propaganda Fide also emanated from an authoritative dicastery of the Holy See. At the very least we must say, pace Fr. Taft, that Addai/Mari without institution narrative was once presumed

³⁹ See Placid J. Podipara, *The Thomas Christians* (London and Bombay: Darton, Longman & Todd and St. Paul Publications, 1970), 61–62.

⁴⁰ “Togliere l’incredibile abuso di non pronunciare le parole sacramentali alla consecrazione della messa detta *degli Apostoli*, che è la più frequente. Instruire sulla vera formola della consecrazione.” Letter dated July 31, 1902, in *Codex Iuris Canonici Fontes*, ed. P. Gasparri and J. Suredi, vol. 5, Rome, 1935, p. 546.

worthy of condemnation. As mentioned earlier, we also have the Holy Office reply of 1843, which strongly implies that the omission of the words of consecration is an intolerable abuse.

According to the scheme of the *loci theologici*, these letters of dicasteries of the Holy See are just as much “monuments to Tradition” as the famous tenth- and eleventh-century manuscripts of the anaphora of Addai and Mari. The Holy See’s critical examination of the practices of Eastern churches returning to full communion is not so different from condemnations of errors committed in Western true churches, never out of communion, who occasionally lost or distorted elements of the Tradition. A few Italian dioceses were apparently ordaining women in the fifth century or preparing to, but this was condemned by Pope Gelasius. Somewhere in the medieval Western Church, when a lacuna occurred in the conferring of baptism, namely an omission similar to the non-recitation of the words of consecration, baptisms were declared invalid by Pope Alexander III.⁴¹ And in the course of reforming abuses in his diocese, in the tenth century, Bishop Atto of Vercelli conceded that some women had to be ordained priests in the primitive Church because of the insufficient numbers of men.⁴²

Thus the impossibility of female priesthood, taught by the ordinary and universal magisterium, but still needing to be declared as “definitively to be held” in 1994 by John Paul II, shows that being an historic Church with a bishop in the apostolic succession is not sufficient to guarantee the orthodoxy of sacramental practices. If fifth-century Italian bishops could confer invalid ordinations and be corrected by Pope Gelasius, and if Bishop Atto could mention ordaining women in cases of necessity, without in any way condemning such an exception, then it seems a priori possible that Assyrian clergy could celebrate invalid Eucharists due to defect of form, just as anyone else could err in sacramental matters.

⁴¹ The verb “baptizo” was not said during the immersion: “Quod si quis puerum ter in aquam immerserit in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen. Et non dixerit ‘*Ego baptizo te*,’ in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, non est puer baptizatus.” Cap. de Baptismo, ap. Van Espen, Jus. Eccl. Univ. p. II tit. II cap. I, n. 14, as cited in Wilfrid Raynal, *The Ordinal of King Edward VI* (London, 1871), 104. The Holy Office decree of December 7, 1690 (see Denzinger, various editions) confirmed this judgment by censuring a Louvain theologian’s opinion in favor of validity. Consider the question: when a priest forgets or mangles the consecration in the Roman rite, would Fr. Taft and others say that such a “Mass without the consecration” is nevertheless valid because “Body, Blood, Christ etc.” are present in a dispersed and euchological way in the epiclesis, anamnesis, and oblation of the Eucharistic prayer?

⁴² Atto of Vercelli, *Epist.* 8; PL 134, 114.

II.2

The sense of the faithful regarding Christ's institution of the Eucharist was recently expressed by Joseph Ratzinger/Pope Benedict as follows: "What exactly did the Lord instruct them to repeat? . . . The instruction to repeat refers simply to what was new in Jesus' actions that evening: the breaking of bread, the prayer of blessing and thanksgiving accompanied by the words of consecration of bread and wine."⁴³ Filling in the gaps of Scripture in light of Tradition, we offer the following reconstruction of the Eucharist as celebrated by the Apostles and handed on to the Church (cf. 1 Cor 11).

Christ had not only said, "This is my body . . . my blood" at the Last Supper; he had also said to the crowds, " . . . the bread I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." He had left an indelible memory in the minds of the apostles of his presiding at meals, pronouncing the thanksgivings and blessings, and this memory culminated in the Emmaus appearance. After the descent of Holy Spirit and the baptism of the first converts, the apostles found themselves in the position of having to preside for the first time at the meal of renewed Israel, and so they recalled Emmaus and especially the Last Supper command, "Do this in memory of me." Presiding and taking up the bread, St. Peter realizes he is standing in the place of his Lord, having to pronounce Jesus' new and eternal thanksgiving and blessing heard at the Last Supper. Holding the bread in his hands he also recalls the words, "The bread I will give is my flesh for the life of the world," and he becomes aware that this is only bread. This in turn causes the sudden insight that, as in His miracles, Jesus' words "This is my body . . . my blood" were *sermo operatorius*⁴⁴ and Peter understands that the object of the command "Do this in memory of Me" includes repeating the *sermo operatorius* of the Lord. Realizing that as a mere disciple of the Lord he both stands in His place and cannot stand in His place at the table of the Kingdom, and that it is His body, not his referred to by the words, Peter "catechetically"⁴⁵ prefaces the words of the Lord with their narrated context (" . . . he took bread . . . saying . . ."). The narrative surrounding the words of the Lord in the first person singular is

⁴³ Joseph Ratzinger/Pope Benedict, *Jesus of Nazareth, Part Two: Holy Week*, trans. Philip J. Whitmore (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 139.

⁴⁴ Cf. St. Ambrose, *De sacramentis* IV.4.14–15: " . . . non suis sermonibus utitur sacerdos, sed utitur sermonibus Christi. Ergo sermo Christi hoc conficit sacramentum. Quis est sermo Christi?" Ambrose proceeds to recount the creation of the world through the divine sermo, and concludes, "Vides ergo, quam operatorius sermo sit Christi."

⁴⁵ Cf. Bradshaw, *Eucharistic Origins*, 14, for this idea, although I see it quite differently from Bradshaw.

thus inseparably catechetical and liturgical, for it expresses the historical context necessary for the proper meaning of the words of consecration. This is the type or model received ultimately from the Lord that St. Paul will solemnly remind the Corinthians of—one standing in the place of Christ as head of the celebrating community “fulfills the figure” of Christ (John Chrysostom) by an identical doing and saying; at the same time, by narrating Christ’s having done and said, he shows that he *merely* fulfills the figure. The broad stream of Tradition in the Latin, Greek, and Syrian traditions will go on to speak of the bishop offering the Church’s oblations as a figure of Christ, and of the priest acting in the person of Christ, who as God consecrates by the power of the Holy Spirit.

When the Tradition reaches St. Thomas Aquinas, he understands the form and minister of the Eucharist as requiring that the priest represent Christ by speaking Christ’s own words *in the first person singular*, and in the framework of the Last Supper narrative (so that the minister does not signify his own body). St. Thomas sees the rationale for this necessary mimetic representation in the surpassing dignity of the Eucharist, a dignity greater than that of the other sacraments, inasmuch as the consecration of its matter consists in a miraculous conversion of substance itself. After pointing out this substantial conversion, the Angelic Doctor continues:

And since the form must be fitting to the thing, for this reason the form of this sacrament differs from the forms of the other sacraments. . . . [T]he forms of the other sacraments are pronounced in the person of the minister; either in the mode of one who performs the act, as when it is said, “I baptize you” or “I confirm you” or in the mode of one who is commanding, as it is said in the sacrament of order: “Receive the power,” etc. or in the mode of one who is praying, as when it is said in the sacrament of extreme unction: “Through this anointing and our intercession,” etc. But the form of this sacrament is pronounced in the person of Christ himself speaking, that it may be understood that the minister in the accomplishing of this sacrament does nothing, except that he pronounces the words of Christ. (*ST* III, q. 78, a. 1)

Out of honor for Christ, the form of the Eucharist is such that Christ’s own words are heard from the lips of a minister who does not speak of Christ in his own voice, that is in the third person, but in Christ’s voice, “This is *my* body, etc.”

The Eucharist is the greatest sacrament because it effects the greatest of all miracles, the change in the substantial being of a creature to God incarnate—its form should be spoken in the grammatical Person of the one whose power accomplishes it. The priest speaking in the person of

Christ does a performative and not merely indicative speech act; the words “This is my body” signify the change of substance as instantaneously complete from the viewpoint of the terminus ad quem, which terminus is, “this” being Christ’s body.⁴⁶ By saying what Christ said, the priest with his spiritual character does, sacramentally, what Christ did.

Thomas Marschler has presented an extensive survey of Latin theological teaching in the Thomist tradition on the words of consecration and finds a universal consensus which has entered deeply into the spiritual consciousness of the priesthood in the Catholic Church.⁴⁷ In this consciousness the priest is essentially a man somehow identified with Christ the priest; as such he repeats Christ’s own assertion of identity over “this” and “my body etc.” Marschler finds that the approval of the anaphora of Addai and Mari constitutes a kind of distancing from the traditional Catholic priestly identity and spirituality of “in persona Christi.”⁴⁸ This spirituality was vividly expressed in the Apostolic Exhortation on priestly formation by John Paul II:

The priest’s relation to the Church is inscribed in the very relation which the priest has to Christ, such that the “sacramental representation” of Christ serves as the basis and inspiration for the relation of the priest to the Church. . . . The apostles and their successors, inasmuch as they exercise an authority which comes to them from Christ, the head and shepherd, are placed—with their ministry—in the forefront of the Church as a visible continuation and sacramental sign of Christ in his own position before the Church and the world, as the enduring and ever new source of salvation. . . .⁴⁹

The priest’s quasi-sacramental representation of Christ in the liturgy is greater if he speaks Christ’s own words of self-sacrifice than if he merely refers to the body of Christ, as in the anaphora of Addai and Mari.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *ST* III, q. 78, a.2.

⁴⁷ Thomas Marschler, “Neues und Altes zur Eucharistischen Sakramentenform,” *Divinitas*, numero speciale (2004): 201–26.

⁴⁸ See *ibid.*, 223.

⁴⁹ John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 16. English translation from the Vatican website, with one correction in light of the Latin text available at the same site.

⁵⁰ The priest *in persona Christi* is not a purely Latin idea: as mentioned above, the West Syrian commentator Denis Bar-Salibi saw the priest as speaking in the person of Christ. Likewise, although not referred to the words of consecration, the general principle of the sacred ministers as themselves symbols of Christ during the liturgy is clearly expressed by Theodore of Mopsuestia in his catechetical homilies: see Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 211, 223, 226. Benedict XVI reads the words of consecration as expressing Christ’s offering and laying down his life in *Jesus of Nazareth, Part Two: Holy Week*, 130ff.

Marschler's survey of Second Scholasticism Thomists shows many theologians who prolonged St. Thomas's insistence on the necessity to signify transubstantiation in the first person singular of Christ himself. To them we can add St. Alphonsus Liguori and others who imagined a number of invalid formulas characterized by their lack of *assertion* of identity between "this" and "my body."⁵¹ For this wide-ranging consensus of *auctores probati*, the stupendous reality of the Eucharist is a miraculous change of substance, which must be signified by an assertion of identity and being, through use of the first person singular possessive pronoun for Christ.

When we turn to the anaphora of Addai and Mari without institution narrative, the closest thing we find to a predicative-performative assertion of identity between "this" and "my body" is the priest calling on the Holy Spirit to make the offerings into Christ's body and blood. The epiclesis can thus be seen as a "euchological" reformulation of Christ's words; as we mentioned above, the determination that Christ's words *also* consecrate when used "euchologically" is the development of doctrine that the Pontifical Council has proposed. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the epiclesis does not exemplify the other sign of the surpassing dignity of the Eucharist according to St. Thomas, namely the priest's speaking in the first-person singular voice of Christ. And none of the "dispersed" references to the body and blood of Christ in Addai/Mari ("the body and blood of Christ on the holy altar" etc.) include a grammatical subject for the identity between "this" and Christ's body or blood, the identity which is the terminus ad quem of a change. It is not being itself or identity, terminus of a change from "this" bread and wine, which is explicitly asserted in the anaphora of Addai and Mari, but presence on the altar.

Thus the words "This is my body" as spoken by Christ at the Last Supper are a divine word of power that makes something be what it is said to be. For critics of the Pontifical Council decision, the very essence of the Eucharist instituted by Christ and handed on to the Church is found in the divine first person singular as well as in the explicit performative assertion of being, which is redolent of the miracles in the Gospel. For these theologians and for the bishop who asked Fr. Taft how there can be a Mass without the words of consecration, this would be nothing more than the sense of the Scriptural passages which present the institution: Christ took bread and gave thanks saying, This is my body, and told

⁵¹ St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis*, vol. 6, ed. M. Heilig (Malines, 1852), 52–55; Felice Cappello, *Tractatus canonico-moralis de sacramentis*, vol. 1, 5th ed. (Turin & Rome: Marietti, 1945), 254; Matthaeus Coronata, *Institutiones juris canonici ad usum utriusque cleri et scholarum: de sacramentis tractatus canonicus*, vol. 1 (Turin & Rome: Marietti, 1943), 170.

the apostles to do what he did. All he did was give thanks, *saying*, among other things, “This is my body.” Therefore we cannot do what he did without saying what he said. And his saying was indeed a doing if it was a performative assertion of being and identity. The priest’s doing must also consist in saying the performative assertion of “this” as being the body or blood of Christ. All other senses of invoking divine blessing on things by offering prayer to God over them—in other words, epiclesis and anaphora in general—pale in comparison with the performative, efficacious words of the Word speaking here and now (by the mouth of the priest) in the first person singular. The anaphora as a whole exists only around the narrative of the institution and the words of consecration.

To conclude: this study presupposes the doctrine of the Catholic Church that the Eucharist is consecrated by the words of the Lord, and that we know this because it has been received from the continuous Tradition of the Church going back to the Lord himself. That Tradition comprises more than a few scattered, randomly rediscovered manuscripts from earlier stages in comparison with our own time; it is primarily oral and continuous, often proceeding by induction from a synthesis of scriptural passages. To defend the Catholic *sensus fidei* that the words of consecration have been received from the Lord and as such must be repeated by the celebrant, one need only show that there is not a preponderance of signs of their absence from the earlier stages of the Tradition of the liturgy, and that clear witnesses and indirect signs support their universal presence from the beginning, even if those signs are not strict proofs for a purely rational historical criticism. Examination of the data has yielded such a result, and there are even signs that the authentic tradition of the Church of the East itself is to add the institution narrative to the anaphora of Addai and Mari from memory. Analogously, there was more Byzantine support for the dominical words as consecratory than is generally recognized.

Furthermore, we showed the historical plausibility of the apostles’ sensing the necessity of the words of consecration, basing our demonstration on the Tradition of the Church and a synthesis of Scriptural passages. From those scriptural passages, passing through the clearest statements of the Fathers of both East and West, and on to the precision of St. Thomas and the *auctores probati*, the line of organic development of doctrine is clear, despite occasional inconsistencies or ambiguities, which it is the function of the first See to rectify if they lead to error.⁵²

Grounding the validity of the Eucharist without institution narrative on the present belief of the schismatic Assyrian Church does not take account

⁵² As in the vehement 1910 letter of St. Pius X “Ex quo” (Denzinger, various editions) to the apostolic delegates in Greece, the Near East, and India affirming

of the fact that particular Churches can err with respect to the sacraments, despite their possessing a valid episcopate, and all the more so when they are cut off from the universal Church in communion with the bishop of Rome. Furthermore, on at least two occasions prior to the letter of 2001, authoritative organs of the Holy See treated the celebration of the Eucharist without the institution narrative in Syrian Christianity as intolerable, or as an “incredible abuse.” The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, following the unpublished conclusions of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, has proposed a new understanding of the words of consecration, namely that the presence of the words with which Christ instituted the sacrament is “euchological” and “dispersed” but nevertheless real and efficacious in the anaphora of Addai and Mari celebrated without institution narrative. As a single act of the ecumenical dicastery addressed to one *sui juris* ritual Church, this way of understanding what is meant by the presence of the Lord’s Eucharistic words has a relatively low weight of formal authority for Christ’s faithful. N-V

the sufficiency of the words of consecration, as against the supposed need to invoke the Holy Spirit. In a footnote, Denzinger gives references to four other papal interventions on this topic.