

# The Holy Spirit “Artisan of the Eucharist”? A Critical Analysis and Evaluation of the Epicleses in the Eucharistic Prayers of the Roman Rite

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*The current article analyzes and evaluates how the explicit Spirit-epicleses in the new eucharistic prayers of the Roman rite image the Holy Spirit. The author demonstrates that the Holy Spirit is usually described in dependence from the Father or the Son (e.g., “his Spirit”) or as the instrument that the Father sanctifies with or through (e.g., “through the Spirit”), and less frequently as actively sanctifying. As we tend to talk about the Holy Spirit’s epiclesis involvement in a more active way than the epicleses actually do, the author pleads for more accurate language. Further, he wonders what the results of the analysis mean in the light of the Trinity’s dynamic complementarity and Geistvergessenheit. Finally, he argues that talking about the Spirit as “artisan” does not inevitably lead to tritheism, as a healthy Trinitarian theology equally promotes both God’s unity and three-ness.*

**Keywords:** appropriation, epiclesis, Eucharist, *Geistvergessenheit*, Holy Spirit, *lex orandi, lex credendi*, Pneumatology, Trinity

THE significance of the Second Vatican Council for the Roman Catholic Church consists, among other things, of an incipient and unfinished renewal of awareness of the Holy Spirit. The renewal continued after the closure of the council, as the introduction of Spirit-focused invocations or epicleses to the new eucharistic prayers demonstrates. Arguably one of the major examples of postconciliar pneumatological renewal, the introduction of these epicleses is all the more noteworthy as the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* had almost entirely failed to

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mention the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> The epicletic renewal was welcomed by liturgical scholars. For example, in an article on the Eucharist and the Holy Spirit, Jozef Lamberts, who taught liturgy in Leuven (1992–2005), concluded that the Holy Spirit's place had clearly been rediscovered: "The introduction of an explicit epiclesis in the new eucharistic prayers is therefore a clear sign that we have rediscovered the place and function of the Holy Spirit in the Church." The Holy Spirit is "the artisan of the Eucharist."<sup>2</sup>

The epiclesis has been analyzed and discussed from various perspectives, such as its historical forms and traditions, its development, and its place in relation to the consecration.<sup>3</sup> What has been studied less are the epicleses' exact formulations, even though the remarkable diversity in articulating the Spirit's involvement seems to call for such an analysis. This article explores and critically evaluates how exactly the Spirit is involved in the sanctification, unification, and other graces that are being prayed for in the epicleses. After some methodological considerations, I provide an in-depth analysis of how the ten eucharistic prayers officially in use in the Roman Rite conceive the involvement of Holy Spirit.<sup>4</sup> I will then evaluate my findings in the light of Trinitarian theology and the Western tradition of forgetting or marginalizing

<sup>1</sup> For a short, ecumenical history, see Paul F. Bradshaw, "The Rediscovery of the Holy Spirit in Modern Eucharistic Theology and Practice," in *The Spirit in Worship—Worship in the Spirit*, eds. Teresa Berger and Bryan D. Spinks (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009), 79–96. For *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, see Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium Sacred Constitution on the Liturgy*, 1963, §2, 5, 6 (2x), 43, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19631204\\_sacrosanctum-concilium\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html); in fact, only the second reference in no. 6 relates explicitly to liturgy.

<sup>2</sup> Jozef Lamberts, "Eucharistie et Esprit Saint," in *Questions liturgiques* 67 (1986): 33–52, esp. 50. Cf. the original French text: "L'introduction d'une épiclese explicite dans les nouvelles prières eucharistiques est donc un signe évident que l'on a redécouvert la place et la fonction de l'Esprit Saint dans l'Eglise." The title of the section that the quote is taken from reads "Le Saint Esprit, artisan de l'eucharistie," 50.

<sup>3</sup> For two seminal studies with an ecumenical breadth, see Anne McGowan, *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern: Speaking of the Spirit in Eucharistic Prayer* (London: SPCK, 2014); John H. McKenna, *Eucharist and Holy Spirit: The Eucharistic Epiclesis in Twentieth Century Theology (1900–1966)*, Alcuin Club Collections, vol. 57 (Great Woking: Mayhew-MacCrimmon, 1975); a reworked second edition was published in 2009.

<sup>4</sup> The *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia emendata* (2008) contains seven eucharistic prayers: I–IV, two eucharistic prayers "for reconciliation," and four versions of a eucharistic prayer "for various needs"; the new translation into English is based on the 2008 Roman Missal. I will also consider the three Eucharistic Prayers for Children that were removed from the 2008 Roman Missal and issued separately (in the 2002 Roman Missal, they were in Appendix VI).

the Holy Spirit (that is sometimes called *Geistvergessenheit*) and draw some conclusions.

## I. Methodology

This article starts from the presupposition that prayer and liturgy matter for faith and theology and vice versa. What we say or do in our prayer, individually or collectively, in private settings or in liturgical celebrations, articulates as well as guides how we relate to God and whom we believe God to be. Importantly, this holds true not only for words but for all dimensions of prayer and liturgy: clothes, bodily posture, melodies, architecture. Yet faith and theology also articulate and guide the form and content of prayer and liturgy. In fact, there is a dynamic interplay between *lex orandi* and *lex credendi*; they continuously inform, complement, and challenge one another.<sup>5</sup> Alternating between these two poles, I will first explore prayer and then make the transition to theology.

To analyze liturgical texts, one may employ various methods. For example, in her exploration of “The God of Anglican liturgy,” Margaret Elizabeth used psycholinguistics to analyze an Anglican eucharistic prayer.<sup>6</sup> That method led her to draw the unsettling conclusion that “a psycholinguistic reading of the communion texts gives us an almighty, male, patriarchal God who demands obedience.”<sup>7</sup> In my own reading, I will focus on the details of grammar so that my analytical tool may be called a “close reading.” The objective of this analysis is to find out how exactly the Spirit’s involvement in the graces that are being prayed for in the epicleses is conceived.

That objective corresponds with Anne McGowan’s undertaking in her impressive study *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern*. Presupposing that “the theological and liturgical analysis of modern liturgical prayers consider how the Spirit’s presence and activity is given voice in various

<sup>5</sup> For historical, methodological, and theological nuances, see among others: Paul de Clerck, “‘Lex orandi, lex credendi,’ sens original et avatars historiques d’un adage équivoque,” *Questions liturgiques* 59 (1978): 193–212; Catherine M. LaCugna, “Can Liturgy Ever Be a Source for Theology Again?” *Studia Liturgica* 19 (1989): 1–13; Paul V. Marshall, “Reconsidering ‘Liturgical Theology’: Is there a *Lex Orandi* for All Christians?” *Studia Liturgica* 25 (1995): 129–51. Cf. Joris Geldhof, “Liturgy as Theological Norm: Getting Acquainted with ‘Liturgical Theology,’” *Neue Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 52 (2010): 155–76.

<sup>6</sup> See Margaret Elizabeth, “Lex orandi est lex credendi? The God of Anglican Liturgy,” in *New Blackfriars* 97 (2016): 52–73. Elizabeth uses both the smaller textual scope of a single (Anglican) eucharistic prayer and the wider scope of a full prayer; I will discuss all eucharistic prayers yet focus only on the epiclesis.

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth, “Lex orandi est lex credendi? The God of Anglican Liturgy,” 73.

eucharistic prayers," she treated among others the following questions: "What (if anything) is the Spirit asked to do relative to the gifts of bread and wine? What benefits (if any) are requested for the community as a consequence of the Spirit's presence and action?" According to McGowan, "The answers to these questions yield a theological 'typology' of the epiclesis."<sup>8</sup> Echoing these words, my project could be described as a quest for the pneumatological typology (or indeed typologies) of the epicleses, a quest that distinguishes itself from McGowan's by its eye for detail.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, I will use the word "imagination" rather than the word "typology" because I think it better expresses the fact that a given way of presenting the Spirit does not need to be the fruit of extensive theological reflection.

In my analysis I will focus on both the epiclesis that is placed before the institution narrative, a unique feature of the Roman Rite that is related to the gifts, and on the epiclesis that follows after the anamnesis and is related to the community. (Interestingly, only the first epiclesis is accompanied by the epicletic gesture of the celebrant stretching out his hands.) The second epiclesis in a way includes the first, for usually both the Spirit and the partaking of the Eucharist play a role in the unity that is prayed for, so that indeed the "split epiclesis" is to be preferred over the term "double epiclesis." Finally, even though it is not the focus of the current investigation, it is good to note that the specific form and place of the epiclesis is a matter currently under discussion. Eucharistic prayers from the early church period usually contained a single epiclesis over both the gifts and the community that was placed after the institution narrative. Commentators regret, for example, that the split epiclesis weakens the connection between gifts and community that characterized the single epiclesis—a connection that made it clear that the transformation of the gifts is aimed at the transformation of the community—and that it disturbs the sequence of Father, Son, and Spirit.

I recognize that the focus on the textual details of the epiclesis comes with various weaknesses. One could include the Spirit references in other parts of the eucharistic prayer, such as the prefaces, or stretch the investigation by looking for where the Spirit is absent. Moreover, modern liturgical theology prefers a comprehensive approach that explores the eucharistic prayer as a whole, not single sentences, and that indeed should be broadened further to include the whole of the eucharistic liturgy in both its textual expression and its enacted form. Further, from a pneumatological perspective, my project

<sup>8</sup> McGowan, *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern*, 20–21.

<sup>9</sup> McKenna's (ecumenical) exploration remains valuable too; see John H. McKenna, "The Epiclesis Revisited: A Look at Modern Eucharistic Prayers," *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 99 (1985): 314–36; republished in the second edition of his book *Eucharist and the Holy Spirit* (see note 3). McKenna's analysis has a broader, less specific focus than mine.

risks being alarmingly reductive, as if the Spirit's action depends on how we articulate our prayers. I shall discuss these points somewhat more extensively later in the article, where I will also argue for the merits of my approach.

My analysis is based on the Latin text. Although it is perhaps more meaningful to analyze the English text because this is the text that is more commonly used in liturgy, there are risks associated with using an English translation. For in praising or criticizing a given phrase, evaluative comments would need to take into account the Latin *editio typica*, the authoritative basis for that translation, in order to give praise or criticism where it is due (to the *editio typica* or to the translation). Unavoidably, I would need to discuss translation methodology and the contested issue of formal correspondence versus dynamic equivalence. Addressing the translation issues risks obscuring the clarity of the point I am trying to make concerning the significance of the details of our epiclesis prayers.

The detail that I am looking for is the imagination of the Spirit's involvement in the sanctification that is being prayed for in the epicleses over the gifts and the community. As we will see shortly, three types of pneumatological imaginations may be distinguished. In some cases, the Spirit's involvement is articulated in a passive manner, as sent or poured out by the Father or belonging to the Son, or in an active manner, as doing something. The Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs in fact combines these in the prayer "We ask you, Father most merciful, to send the Holy Spirit so that He may sanctify these gifts of bread and wine." In other cases, the Holy Spirit is presented as the instrument that the Father sanctifies with, for example in the prayer (that is addressed to the Father) to "sanctify these gifts (of bread and wine) with the dew of the Holy Spirit" (Eucharistic Prayer II). These terms "instrumental" and "passive" are meant as analytical terms, not theological evaluations. Passive does not equal "negative," nor does active mean "positive." In the next section, I will simply observe how the epicleses articulate the Spirit's involvement.

## II. The Holy Spirit and the Epiclesis

How exactly is the Holy Spirit's involvement imagined in the epicleses of the Roman Rite's ten official eucharistic prayers? The First Eucharistic Prayer has no explicit Spirit epiclesis. Some scholars argue that certain phrases could be interpreted as epiclesis, yet ironically this only confirms the observation that the Holy Spirit is not actually mentioned.

### *Eucharistic Prayer II*

The Second Eucharistic Prayer, known for its concise nature, is inspired by the anaphora from the *Traditio Apostolica*, commonly attributed

to Hippolytus of Rome. This anaphora was essentially a prayer of thanksgiving, with the institution narrative as the final element of thanksgiving. So that its structure and themes would correspond with the other eucharistic prayers, the new eucharistic prayer underwent substantial adaptations that included the insertion of a *Sanctus*, a *Post-Sanctus*, a first epiclesis, and intercessions.<sup>10</sup>

After the *Sanctus* follows a short phrase that links holiness to the Father and thereby guides us toward the epiclesis: “You are truly holy, Lord, the source of all holiness” (*Vere sanctus es, Domine, fons omnis sanctitatis*).<sup>11</sup> Epiclesis I follows immediately, linking up with the previous sentence by means of the adverb “therefore” (*ergo*): “Sanctify therefore these gifts, we ask, with [or: through] the dew of your Spirit, so that they become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ” (*Haec ergo dona, quaesumus, Spiritus tui rore sanctifica, ut nobis Corpus et Sanguis fiant Domini nostri Iesu Christi*).

What is the pneumatological *lex credendi* of this epiclesis? What is the Spirit’s involvement in what is being prayed for? As McGowan correctly noted, “The Spirit does not act directly as the agent of sanctification for the gifts; rather, the petition is addressed to the Father, who is asked to sanctify the gifts through the dew of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>12</sup> Yet what then is the Spirit’s role? How can we describe this role in positive terms, instead of “not the agent of sanctification”? In this first epiclesis, the Spirit is primarily imagined in an instrumental way. The Spirit is described as the dew that the Father, who is the source of holiness and to whom the prayer is addressed, sanctifies with or through; *rore* is an instrumental ablative. Further, the possessive pronoun

<sup>10</sup> The *Traditio Apostolica* inspired various eucharistic prayers. See the overview of four different Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Anglican versions in McGowan, *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern*, 136, cf. 134–37. For an overview of the development of Eucharistic Prayers II–IV, see, for example, McGowan, *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern*, 146–54, with ample references to Cipriano Vagaggini, *The Canon of the Mass and Liturgical Reform* (London: Chapman, 1967), originally Italian in 1966, and Annibale Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy, 1948–1975* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1990). For a (sometimes) detailed historical and textual analysis of all eucharistic prayers discussed in this article, see Enrico Mazza, *The Eucharistic Prayers of the Roman Rite* (New York: Pueblo, 1986), originally published in Italian in 1984.

<sup>11</sup> The translations are my own and aim to be literal yet readable. In this case, for example, the Missal translates *vere* as “indeed”; this is correct, but “truly” is more literal (for *verus* means true). Similarly, *fons* simply means “source” and does not need to be translated solemnly as “fount,” as in the official translation. The first epiclesis illustrates that a purely literal translation does not make sense in English: “These therefore gifts, we ask, with the dew of your Spirit sanctify ...”

<sup>12</sup> McGowan, *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern*, 158. However, she fails to take the next step and specify what role the Spirit does have, namely an instrumental one.

*tui* points to a passive pneumatological imagination: the Spirit belongs to the Father.<sup>13</sup> Finally, the *ut* phrase connects the epiclesis with the consecration and thereby hints at a further, implicit and unspecified, imagination. The Spirit-dew may play an instrumental or active role in the consecration that is being prayed for.<sup>14</sup>

Epiclesis II follows after the *anamnesis*, before the intercessions for the church, her leaders, and the deceased. It prays for unity: "And begging [read: humbly] we pray that we, sharing in the Body and Blood of Christ, may be brought together into one by the Holy Spirit" (*Et supplices deprecamur ut Corporis et Sanguinis Christi participes a Spiritu Sancto congregemur in unum*). Epiclesis II unambiguously imagines the Spirit in an active manner: the Spirit brings the community together as one.<sup>15</sup> The Father's active role in the background is presumed, for the prayer is addressed to the Father. It is not specified what the Father's involvement consists of. Is He sending the Spirit? Is his role to encourage the Spirit? Moreover, the sentence illustrates the point that I made earlier, namely that the second epiclesis implies or takes up the first. For in addition to the Spirit's work for unity and the silent involvement of the Father, the sharing in Eucharist seems to play a role too. By describing the people that the Spirit gathers into one as "sharing in the Body and Blood of Christ," the text suggests that this is significant for the unity that is being prayed for, yet without explicitly stating so and without explaining how.

### *Eucharistic Prayer III*

Eucharistic Prayer III was designed as a simpler alternative for Eucharistic Prayer I and is in large part based on the "Project of a Second Roman Canon with Movable Preface (Canon B)" by the Italian Benedictine monk and liturgical scholar Cipriano Vagaggini.<sup>16</sup> In explaining his proposal, Vagaggini expressly stated that he wished to highlight the role of the Holy Spirit at three moments in the eucharistic prayer: in the sentence that

<sup>13</sup> The official English translation stretches this passive imagination beyond what the Latin text states: the Father is prayed to make holy "by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall." As I noted in the methodological section, discussing both the authoritative Latin text and the translation would make this article too complex.

<sup>14</sup> On the basis of the function of dew, Mazza speaks of an "efficacious dew" and specifies that it "penetrates" and "transforms" the gifts. This active pneumatological view is based on his interpretation of dew, not on the grammar of the text. See Mazza, *The Eucharistic Prayers of the Roman Rite*, 109–10.

<sup>15</sup> This time Mazza is correct, cf. his comment: "Two themes of the [second] epiclesis are ... utterly clear; the unity of those who receive the sacrament, and the cause of this unity, the Holy Spirit." See Mazza, *The Eucharistic Prayers of the Roman Rite*, 99.

<sup>16</sup> For this proposal, see Vagaggini, *The Canon of the Mass and Liturgical Reform*, 124–29, cf. various notes and comments on 139–82.

makes the transition from the *Sanctus* to Epiclesis I and that starts with *Vere sanctus*, and in the two epicleses themselves.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, the *Vere sanctus* sentence—which is much more elaborate than in Eucharistic Prayer II, where it counted no more than seven words<sup>18</sup>—refers already to the Spirit. In a markedly Trinitarian sentence, the Spirit is mentioned as part of God’s vivifying, sanctifying, and unifying work: “You are truly holy, Lord, and each creature created by you praises you deservedly, for through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, while the Holy Spirit’s power is at work, you vivify and sanctify everything, and you do not cease to gather a people to yourself, so that from the rising of the sun to its setting a pure offering may be offered to your name” (... *per Filium tuum, Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, Spiritus Sancti operante virtute, vivificas et sanctificas universa* ...).

Epiclesis I establishes a link to this sentence and its Spirit reference by speaking of “the same Spirit”: “Begging [read: humbly] therefore, Lord, we pray [to] you that by [or: with] the same Spirit you may deign to sanctify these gifts, that we have brought to you to be consecrated, so that they may become the Body and Blood of your Son, at whose command we celebrate these mysteries” (*Supplices ergo te, Domine, deprecamur, ut haec munera, quae tibi sacrandae detulimus, eodem Spiritu sanctificare digneris, ut Corpus et Sanguis fiant Filii tui, cuius mandato haec mysteria celebramus*). What is the pneumatological *lex credendi* of this text? In Epiclesis I, the Spirit is imagined in an instrumental manner; the Father is prayed to “deign to sanctify” with or through the Holy Spirit. That is remarkably different from the earlier reference to the Spirit in the *Vere sanctus* that Epiclesis I linked up with. For even though the phrase *Spiritus Sancti operante virtute* is an *ablatus absolutus*, which means a detached, somewhat independent phrase that typically leaves open its concrete argumentative meaning, it features an active pneumatology.<sup>19</sup> The phrase *ut ... fiant* hints at the Spirit’s (probably) active or (possibly) instrumental involvement.

<sup>17</sup> Describing “some general aspects of a theological nature in projects B and C,” the very first of the three aspects that Vagaggini mentioned, is the Holy Spirit. Vagaggini wrote, “The emphasis is given to the parts played by the Holy Spirit in the work of salvation and, in particular, in the eucharistic mystery. This part is shown in the conclusion of the *Vere sanctus*; in the epiclesis; in the *Supplices* where we pray for a fruitful communion [viz., Epiclesis II, jm/sg].” See Vagaggini, *The Canon of the Mass and Liturgical Reform*, 145. Vagaggini accounts with some detail for the material he used in each of these cases, see 156–57, 158–60, and 176–78.

<sup>18</sup> Namely, *Vere sanctus es, Domine, fons omnis sanctitatis*.

<sup>19</sup> Full text: *Vere Sanctus es, Domine, et merito te laudat omnis a te condita creatura, quia per Filium tuum, Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, Spiritus Sancti operante virtute, vivificas et sanctificas universa, et populum tibi congregare non desinis, ut a solis ortu usque ad occasum oblatio munda offeratur nomini tuo*. Interestingly, the *ablatus*



Epiclesis II is found in the second half of a long sentence with various requests: “Consider, we ask, the offering of your church and, recognizing the sacrificial victim, by whose sacrifice you wished to be reconciled, grant that we, who are restored by the Body and Blood of your Son—filled with his Holy Spirit—may be found [to be] one body and one spirit in Christ” (*Respice, quaesumus, in oblationem Ecclesiae tuae et, agnoscens Hostiam, cuius voluiste immolatione placari, concede, ut qui Corpore et Sanguine Filii tui reficimur, Spiritu eius Sancto repleti, unum corpus et unus spiritus inveniamur in Christo*). The sentence does not only contain requests; indeed, in the epicletic second half of the sentence the faithful are confessed to be “filled with his Holy Spirit.” That brief reference to the Spirit is part of a sentence in which we pray for their unity, yet without the actor of that unity being specified. Although the prayer is addressed to the Father, unity is not explicitly asked from Him; instead, we pray “that we may be found [to be] one body and one spirit in Christ.” The Eucharist and the Holy Spirit are also suggested as playing a role, for two adjectival subclauses specify that those whom the epiclesis prays to be found united are being restored by the Eucharist (*qui corpore et sanguine Filii tui reficimur*) and have been filled with or by his Holy Spirit (*Spiritu eius Sancto repleti*). This seems to mean that the Eucharist and the Spirit both help to grow toward unity, which once more illustrates the point that the second epiclesis includes the first; in both cases, the connection with unity is allusive rather than explicit. The meaning of the phrase *Spiritu Sancto repleti* itself remains unclear too; it could have an active or instrumental meaning, namely filled with the Spirit or by the Spirit. The only explicit pneumatological information is that the Spirit is linked to Christ (cf. *eius*),<sup>20</sup> and, remarkably, that the “filling” has happened some time earlier, for *repleti* is a *perfectum* participle. Finally, it is interesting to note that the *ut qui corpore* phrase in which the Eucharist and the Spirit are mentioned is an adjectival subclause (in which *Spiritus ... repleti* is itself another adjectival subclause) given a sentence’s main point is usually stated in the main clause, not the subclause.

*absolutus* clause situates itself exactly in between the sentence’s subject, God the Father (cf. *Domine*), and the Father’s activities (cf. *vivificas etc.*). This adds further weight to the question: How does the Spirit’s *operare* relate to the Father’s *vivificare*? Interestingly, too, *operare* is a somewhat vague verb; it means that the Spirit works, but does not specify what that work consists of.

<sup>20</sup> Strangely, the French translation of Eucharistic Prayer III continues after Epiclesis II with a prayer that is addressed to the Spirit: “Que l’Esprit fasse de nous une éternelle offrande à ta gloire”; this is a translation of *Ipse nos tibi perficiat munus aeternum*. As the Latin text had ended with *in Christo*, the word *Ipse* should be understood in relation to Christ rather than the Holy Spirit.

### *Eucharistic Prayer IV*

The fourth eucharistic prayer is inspired by (one of the versions of) an ancient anaphora called “of Basil.”<sup>21</sup> It stands out for its long thanksgiving for and commemoration of salvation history, which is spread over the preface and the very substantial *Post-Sanctus*. In the latter we move from the Father’s creation and sending of the Son (first section) to the Son’s incarnation and his mission of charity, death, resurrection, and finally his sending of the Holy Spirit (second section). The Spirit is first mentioned in relation to the Incarnation: “Who, incarnate of the Holy Spirit and born from Virgin Mary” (*Qui, incarnatus de Spiritu Sancto et natus ex Maria virgine*). The Spirit is also mentioned at the end of the *Post-Sanctus*, just before Epiclesis I: “And so that we might live no longer for ourselves but for him who for us has died and has risen again, He [Christ] has sent from you, Father, as first fruits for the faithful the Holy Spirit, who, bringing his [Christ’s] work in the world to perfection, would complete all sanctification” (*Et, ut non amplius nobismetipsis viveremus, sed sibi qui pro nobis mortuus est atque surrexit, a te, Pater, misit Spiritum Sanctum primitias credentibus, qui, opus suum in mundo perficiens, omnem sanctificationem completeret*).

After this, Epiclesis I immediately continues with the prayer that “the same Spirit” may sanctify the gifts of bread and wine: “We ask therefore, Lord, that the same Holy Spirit may deign to sanctify these gifts, so that they become the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, to celebrate this great mystery which he has left us as an eternal covenant” (*Quaesumus igitur, Domine, ut idem Spiritus Sanctus haec munera sanctificare dignetur, ut Corpus et Sanguis fiant Domini nostri Iesu Christi ad hoc magnum mysterium celebrandum, quod ipse nobis reliquit in foedus aeternum*). In this epiclesis, the concrete sanctifying action is attributed to the Spirit, with the Father (*Dominus*)<sup>22</sup> having a role in the background. In this way, Epiclesis I echoes the active pneumatological imagination of the second Spirit-reference in the *Post-Sanctus* where the Spirit was described with the verbs “*perficiens*” and “*completeret*.” Here, too, the phrase *ut ... fiant* points at a possible, yet unspecified and implicit active or instrumental role.

<sup>21</sup> Here, too, McGowan gives an overview of how Basil’s anaphora inspired three different Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, and Anglican versions; see McGowan, *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern*, 138, cf. 137–40.

<sup>22</sup> The word is used here for the first time; until that moment, the *Post-Sanctus* had spoken about Father, creator, and savior; probably, *Dominus* means the Father, as the Father is the deepest origin of the Spirit, both according to trinitarian theology and—more importantly here—according to the last phrase of the *Post-Sanctus*. In what follows, however, *Dominus* also refers to Christ, cf. *Mortem tuam annuntiamus, Domine*.

After the *anamnesis* follows Epiclesis II, which prays for unity and Christian perfection: “Grant kindly to all who shared from this one bread and the chalice that, gathered into one body by the Holy Spirit, they may in Christ be brought to perfection as living sacrifices, to the glory of your name” (*Concede benignus omnibus qui ex hoc uno pane participabunt et calice, ut, in unum corpus a Sancto Spiritu congregati, in Christo hostia viva perficiantur, ad laudem gloriae tuae*). The pneumatological imagination of this epiclesis is complex. The Father is asked to grant that we may be brought to perfection, which suggests that the Father has an active role, but it remains unclear if indeed the Father is the actor or somebody/something else. The Spirit’s role is explicitly active and very specific: He gathers. Once again, as in Eucharistic Prayer III, the Spirit’s role is formulated with a perfect tense, *congregati*; we do not know at what moment the Spirit has carried out his work of *congregare*. By using an adjectival subclause, the sentence implies that the unity that the Spirit has brought—and possibly the Spirit himself—plays a role in the perfection into praise that is being prayed for, alongside the Eucharist that is mentioned in another adjectival clause (cf. *qui ex hoc uno pane participabunt et calice*), yet what that role is remains unspecified; it could be instrumental as well as active. The phrases seem not only descriptive but also explanatory, although that is not stated explicitly. Moreover, as I stated earlier, from the perspective of grammar, adjectival subclauses usually do not contain the sentence’s main conviction.

### *Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation I*

The Eucharistic Prayers for Reconciliation were written for the Holy Year of 1975 and prepared under the leadership of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments by an international group of experts including, for example, Jacques Berthier, a French composer best known for his work with the Taizé community, and Didier Rimaud, a French Jesuit poet who was responsible for a first draft of one of these prayers.<sup>23</sup> Both have a remarkably Trinitarian preface.

<sup>23</sup> For detailed background information, see Annibale Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy (1948–1975)*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1990), 476–87, and Heinrich Rennings, “Votivhochgebet Versöhnung II,” in *Gratias agamus. Studien zum eucharistischen Hochgebet: für Balthasar Fischer*, eds. Andreas Heinz and Heinrich Rennings (Freiburg: Herder, 1992), 407–26. (Note that Fischer was the secretary to the international group of experts.) The first of these prayers had a French origin and the second one was written in German. Cf. Irmgard Pahl, “Das erste Versöhnungsgebet,” in *Gratias agamus. Studien zum eucharistischen Hochgebet*, 355–68.

After a brief *Post-Sanctus* in which God's holiness and his work for holiness are being recalled, Epiclesis I makes a double request, namely to consider the gifts favorably and to send the Holy Spirit in view of them becoming the Body and Blood of Christ: "Consider, we ask, the gifts of your people, and pour out over them the power of your Spirit, so that they may become the Body and Blood of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, in whom we, too, are your sons [read: children]" (*Respice, quaesumus, munera populi tui, et super ea Spiritus tui virtutem effunde ut Corpus et Sanguis fiant dilecti Filii tui, Iesu Christi, in quo et nos filii tui sumus*). The Father's role is prominent; the double and parallel Father-focused requests *respice* and *effunde* make out the structure of the epiclesis. The Holy Spirit is imagined passively as belonging to the Father (cf. *tui*) and being poured out over the gifts. Once again, *ut ... fiant* points at a possible active or instrumental imagination that, however, remains both implicit and unspecified. Strikingly, the verb "sanctify" that was used in Eucharistic Prayers II, III, and IV is absent here; the focus seems to be on the Spirit's power and what it works out in the gifts.

The second epiclesis is part of a long and remarkably Trinitarian sentence with a similar twofold structure: "Consider kindly, most merciful Father, those whom you join to yourself by the sacrifice of your Son and give that they, by the power of the Holy Spirit, sharing from this one bread and the chalice, may be gathered into one body in Christ, by whom all division is removed" (*Respice, benignus, clementissime Pater, quos tibi coniungis Filii tui sacrificio, ac praesta ut, Spiritus Sancti virtute, ex hoc uno pane et calice participes, in unum corpus congregentur in Christo, a quo omnis auferatur divisio*).<sup>24</sup> The Holy Spirit is part of the second request, which prays to the Father for unity. Five elements are mentioned in relation to this unity: the Father, to whom the prayer is addressed and who is supposed to give (*praesta*); the power of the Holy Spirit (that Epiclesis I also spoke of); those sharing in the Eucharist; being gathered; and Christ who takes away division. The exact role of each of these elements in relation to one another and to unity remains unclear. The Spirit is referred to in an adverbial clause that betrays an instrumental pneumatological imagination; it remains, however, unclear whose instrument the Spirit is because *congregentur* does not have a specified subject. The reference to sharing in the Eucharist is an adjectival clause (*participes* is a participle in the plural form) that seems to be more than descriptive, yet more remains unclear as the clause is loosely connected with the other elements. The passively formulated verb "*congregentur*" leaves open who is supposed to gather. Finally, "in Christ" is an adverbial detail, although

<sup>24</sup> The comma after *respice* seems to be superfluous (the nominative *benignus* cannot be linked with the vocative *clementissime Pater*).

the concluding phrase that follows suggests that Christ's contribution to unity is very significant, for He takes away division.

### *Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation II*

After the *Post-Sanctus* praises the Father at some length for the redemption and reconciliation that He has brought through his Son Jesus, it makes the transition to the first epiclesis: "And now celebrating the reconciliation that Christ has brought us, we pray: sanctify these gifts by the outpouring of your Spirit so that they may become the Body and Blood of your Son, whose command we fulfill [in] celebrating these mysteries" (*Et nunc reconciliationem a Christo nobis allatam celebrantes, te deprecamur: Spiritus tui effusione haec dona sanctifica, ut fiant Corpus et Sanguis Filii tui, cuius mandatum implemus haec mysteria celebrantes*). Here the Spirit is primarily imagined as the instrument that the Father sanctifies with. The passive way in which the Spirit is presented as belonging to the Father (cf. *tui*) and as poured out (cf. *effusione*) is part of that instrumental imagination. Further, here too *ut fiant* hints at an active or instrumental involvement.

The second epiclesis consists of two sentences. After the first sentence prays to the Father for the Spirit, the second elaborates what the Spirit may accomplish: "Holy Father, begging [read: humbly] we pray that, with your Son, you may accept us too, and that you may in this salutary banquet deign to give us his Spirit, who takes away all the things that alienate us from one another. May He make your Church among humankind a sign of unity and an instrument of your peace, and may He preserve us in communion with our Pope N. and our Bishop N. and all the Bishops and your entire people" (*Pater sancte, supplices deprecamur, ut nos quoque acceptos habeas cum Filio tuo et in hoc salutari convivio eiusdem Spiritum nobis praestare digneris, qui omnia auferat quae nos invicem alienant. Ipse Ecclesiam tuam inter homines signum efficiat unitatis pacisque tuae instrumentum, et nos in communionem conservet cum Papa nostro N. et Antistite nostro N. et cunctis Episcopis et universo populo tuo*). Different from Epiclesis I, the second epiclesis moves from a passive imagination of the Spirit as belonging to Christ and being given by the Father (cf. *eiusdem Spiritum praestare*) to an active one in which the Spirit is credited with three types of activities: taking away alienation, making the church a sign and instrument of peace and unity, and maintaining communion. This epiclesis is remarkable for featuring the most extensive active pneumatology among the epicleses in the Roman Missal. As with the other Epicleses II, so this one connects the Spirit with the Eucharist by specifying that the gift of the Spirit is asked for "in this salutary banquet." Finally, it is intriguing that, in crediting the Spirit with taking away

division, this epiclesis contrasts with Epiclesis II in the First Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation, which credited Christ with that task.<sup>25</sup>

### *Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs I-IV*

The origins of the Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs lie in Switzerland. Approved in Rome in 1974 and first used in the same year, it was originally available in German, French, and Italian.<sup>26</sup> Subsequently it was used in other countries, after which an *editio typica* was published (1991); it then came into use in the church worldwide. It has been designed as one eucharistic prayer in four versions, each of which is relevant for specific occasions.<sup>27</sup> The differences among these versions lie in the preface and the part that follows Epiclesis II; they have an identical *Post-Sanctus*, Epiclesis I, consecration formula, *Memoriale*, and Epiclesis II.

After a *Post-Sanctus* that praises the Father's holiness and recalls Christ opening the Scriptures and breaking the bread, the first epiclesis prays: "We therefore ask you, most merciful Father, that you would send forth your Holy Spirit, who may sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ" (*Rogamus ergo te, Pater clementissime, ut Spiritum Sanctum tuum emittas, qui haec dona panis et vini sanctificet, ut nobis Corpus et Sanguis fiant Domini nostri Iesu Christi*). The first epiclesis combines explicitly passive and explicitly active imaginations. The Spirit is described as "your Holy

<sup>25</sup> Compare ... *Christo, a quo omnis omnis auferatur divisio* ... (Reconciliation I, Epiclesis II) with ... *Spiritum ... qui omnia auferat quae nos invicem alienant* (Reconciliation II, Epiclesis II). Note that Reconciliation II's preface had spoken about the Holy Spirit's role in instrumental terms: *Per Spiritum namque tuum permoves hominum corda, ut inimici iterum in colloquia veniant, adversarii manus coniungant, populi sibi obviam quaerant venire*. For a "historical-critical" explanation of this seeming contradiction, note that the drafts of both prayers were developed separately.

<sup>26</sup> It was originally prepared in German; the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments approved a French translation. For this and other details, see the article on the genesis of this prayer by Walter von Arx, who was the secretary to the Liturgical Commission of Switzerland, in Walter von Arx, "Das Hochgebet für die Kirche in der Schweiz. Ein liturgiegeschichtliches Ereignis," *Zeitschrift für schweizerische Kirchengeschichte* 71 (1977): 279–93, esp. 286.

<sup>27</sup> The prayer's title is in the singular: *Prex eucharistica quae in missis pro variis necessitatibus adhiberi potest*; cf. also the fact that the introduction to each of the four versions—each with its own title—all start with the following introduction that uses the singular noun *forma*: *Sequens forma huius precis eucharisticae conventienter adhibetur...* The numbers in the *Missale Romanum* are different from those in Von Arx's overview, "Das Hochgebet für die Kirche in der Schweiz," 287. Version IV *Die Kirche auf dem Weg zur Einheit* in Von Arx' list has become in the Roman Missal Version I, *Ecclesia in viam unitatis progrediens*.

Spirit” and as sent by the Father, but He is also said to sanctify (cf. *sanctificet*); another active (or instrumental) involvement is possibly implied in the *ut ... fiant* phrase.

Epiclesis II is a complex prayer with various clauses and subclauses: “Consider favorably your church’s offering, in which we show forth Christ’s pascal sacrifice handed on to us, and grant that, by the power of the Spirit of your love, we may be counted now and until the day of eternity among the members of your Son, of whose Body and Blood we partake” (*In oblationem Ecclesiae tuae, in qua paschale Christi sacrificium nobis traditum exhibemus, respice propitius, et concede, ut virtute Spiritus caritatis tuae, inter Filii tui membra, cuius Corpori communicamus et Sanguini, nunc et in diem aeternitatis numeremur*). The request addressed to the Father that we may be counted as members of the Son (cf. *concede ... numeremur*) is interrupted (or enriched) two times, first by an adverbial subclause in relation to the Spirit (*virtute Spiritus caritatis tuae*) and second by an adjectival subclause in relation to the Son and the Eucharist (*cuius Corporis ...*). The adverbial subclause has an instrumental form, although it is not clear whose instrument the power of the Spirit is because we do not know the subject of *numeremur*. Possibly the Spirit’s role is imagined in an active manner as well, yet this is not made explicit; if so, the Spirit contributes to making us count as members of the Son. Further, the adjectival phrase on partaking in the Eucharist could well have more than descriptive value, yet that other value remains unspecified.

Interestingly, the prayers that follow immediately after Epiclesis II deal with pneumatological topics such as renewal, unity, and charity that are typically what Epiclesis II prays for, but here the Holy Spirit is not mentioned, except for Version III.<sup>28</sup> Immediately after Epiclesis II, it continues with a prayer that we may be vivified with or by the Holy Spirit, which it develops into a few other prayers: “By the [read: our] sharing in this mystery, almighty Father, vivify us with the Spirit, and grant [us] to become conformed to the image of your Son, and confirm [us] in the bond of communion together with our Pope N., our Bishop N. and the other bishops, the priests and

<sup>28</sup> Version I prays immediately after the epiclesis to “renew your Church by the light of the Gospel” and also prays to “confirm the *vinculum unitatis* between faithful and pastors” so that “your people” may be a “prophetic sign of unity and concord” in our world; Version II prays for unity and that we may share *gaudium et fiduciam* with the world; Version III specifies among others that the faithful may scrutinize the signs of the times; Version IV prays among others that we may have our eyes open to the needs of our brothers and sisters, that the church may witness to truth, freedom, peace, and justice, and for a new hope for all people. My suggestion that these are pneumatological topics is confirmed by Walter von Arx’ interpretation, “Das Hochgebet für die Kirche in der Schweiz,” 288.

deacons and your entire people" (*Huius participatione mysterii, omnipotens Pater, nos Spiritu vivifica et imagini Filii tui conformes fieri concede atque in vinculo communionis confirma una cum Papa nostro N., et Episcopo nostro N. cum ceteris Episcopis, cum presbyteris et diaconis et universo populo tuo*). The sentence's pneumatological imagination is instrumental: the Father makes alive with or by means of the Spirit. Possibly the vivification worked through the Spirit should be related to the other elements of the sentence, but the sentence is not clear if and how that relation should be conceived of. Here, too, sharing in the Eucharist seems to play a role, yet the sentence only alludes to that role.

### *Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children I*

The three official Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children were prepared together with those for reconciliation by the same group of experts. They made use of nonofficial and nontraditional models from Belgium and the Netherlands, France, and Germany.<sup>29</sup> Although the official versions are in Latin, they were not meant to be prayed in Latin, which makes Mazza characterize these prayers as "a unique phenomenon."<sup>30</sup> (It is therefore only for reasons of consistency that I will use the Latin formulations for my analysis.) The first prayer splits the *Sanctus* into three parts so that it features not only a preface and a *Post-Sanctus*, but also a substantial prayer in between. The *Post-Sanctus* is brief, as is the epiclesis itself: "Holy Father, wanting to give thanks to you, we have brought bread and wine; make that by the power of the Holy Spirit they may become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, your most beloved Son" (*Pater sancte, gratias tibi referre volentes, panem et vinum attulimus; fac ut virtute Spiritus Sancti Corpus fiant et Sanguis Iesu Christi, dilectissimi Filii tui*). This is followed by the short comment or confession that "in this manner, we shall be able offer to you what was given to us by your gift." Here, the Holy Spirit is imagined in an instrumental manner. The Father is asked to make (*fac*) bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ by (or through or with) the Spirit's power.

<sup>29</sup> See Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy (1948–1975)*, 478, note 42.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. one of the introductory comments in the 2002 Missal: "*Natura sua textus latinus non tantum ad usum liturgicum destinatur, sed potius utpote textus typicus seu exemplar praebetur.*" For the quote from Mazza, see *The Eucharistic Prayers of the Roman Rite*, 236, cf. 235–40. Mazza seems to overlook that the Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs was unique for being a prayer that has been developed locally that was adopted for the universal church. Arguably therefore Von Arx had good reasons to speak in the subtitle of his article of "a liturgy-historical event." See "Das Hochgebet für die Kirche in der Schweiz. Ein liturgiegeschichtliches Ereignis."



The second epiclesis follows immediately after the *Mysterium fidei* acclamation and moves from a request to allow access to God’s table to the request to send the Holy Spirit so that we may be one body: “Father, who loves us so much, allow us to approach to this your table and send us the Holy Spirit so that we may take the Body and Blood of your Son and may be one heart and one spirit” (*Pater, qui nos tantopere diligis, ad hanc tuam sine nos mensam accedere et mitte nobis Spiritum Sanctum ut, Filii tui Corpus et Sanguinem sumamus, et simus cor unum et anima una*).<sup>31</sup> The second epiclesis imagines the Spirit primarily in a passive manner, as sent by the Father. The fact that this request is followed by an *ut ...* clause implies that the Spirit contributes to the unity that is being prayed for, which suggests an active involvement too. The partaking in the Eucharist also plays a role (cf. *mensam accedere* and *sumamus*), yet what role remains unclear.

### *Eucharistic Prayer for Masses with Children II*

The Second Eucharistic Prayer for Children features a somewhat more elaborated *Post-Sanctus* in which Christ is praised as “the friend of children and the poor” and ends with a reference to the Spirit: “He [Christ] has promised that the Holy Spirit will be with us all days [read: always], so that [drawing] from your life we may live as sons [read: children]” (*Ipse [sc. Christus] promisit Spiritum Sanctum cunctis diebus nobis adfuturum, ut de tua vita tamquam filii viveremus*). After an acclamation, it continues with the following short epiclesis: “We ask you, God our Father: send your Spirit, so that these gifts of bread and wine may become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord” (*Te Deum, Patrem nostrum, rogamus, mitte Spiritum tuum, ut haec dona panis et vini Corpus et Sanguis fiant Iesu Christi Domini nostri*). This epiclesis betrays a passive pneumatological imagination (cf. *mitte*), with the *ut ...* clause possibly implying an active one. This corresponds exactly to the way the earlier, *Post-Sanctus* Spirit reference presented the Spirit.

After the *anamnesis* follows the second epiclesis, which focuses on unity both in the community and the wider church: “Heed us, Lord God, and give the Spirit of your love to all who share in this banquet, so that in the church they may be one more and more, with our Pope N. and our Bishop N. and the other bishops, and all who minister to your people” (*Exaudi nos, Domine Deus, et dona Spiritum tui amoris cunctis, qui de hoc participant*

<sup>31</sup> To make sense of the sentence, one must change the Latin somewhat, either by removing the commas before and after the phrase *Filii tui corpus et sanguinem sumamus* (which is what I have done), or, less probably, by adding the word *qui* between *ut* and *Filii tui* (which would translate as “we, who may take ..., may be one heart...”).

*convivio, ut in Ecclesia magis magisque sint unum, cum Papa nostro N. et Episcopo nostro N., ceterisque Episcopis et omnibus, qui plebi tuae ministrant*). The wording of this second epiclesis points at a pneumatological imagination that is quite similar to the first epiclesis in the Eucharistic Prayer for Masses with Children II. The Spirit is imagined in a passive manner, yet the *ut ...* clause suggests that the gift of the Spirit has an effect, namely unity; this hints at an active or instrumental imagination of the Holy Spirit.

### *Eucharistic Prayer for Masses with Children III*

Finally, as with the first two, the last eucharistic prayer for children has a substantial *Post-Sanctus*, yet this one refers only to the Father and, especially, to Christ. The first epiclesis reads: “Very good Father, may you deign to sanctify these gifts of bread and wine through the power of the Holy Spirit, so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ your Son” (*Pater optime, haec dona panis et vini per virtutem Sancti Spiritus sanctificare digneris, ut nobis fiant Corpus et Sanguis Filii tui Iesu Christi*). The preposition *per* (“through”) in Epiclesis I—which is used in no other eucharistic prayer—points to an instrumental pneumatological imagination. Here, too, the *ut ...* phrase possibly implies an active involvement.<sup>32</sup>

The second epiclesis follows after an *anamnesis* that is relatively long because of the acclamations that have been added. The sentence containing the epiclesis is itself relatively long too. It consists of various phrases that link the Eucharist, the Holy Spirit, joy, unity, and charity: “Holy Father, who has called us to take joyfully from this table the Body of Christ, give, we ask, that strengthened by the power of this food, we may please you more and more, and that through the communion of the Holy Spirit we may become one body in charity” (*Pater sancte, qui nos vocasti, ut de hac mensa in laetitia Corpus Christi sumeremus, tribue, quaesumus, ut huius cibi virtute roborati, tibi magis magisque placeamus, et per communionem Spiritus Sancti unum corpus in caritate fiamus*). Epiclesis II contains two parallel requests. The first is about us pleasing God and is related to the strengthening power of the Eucharist; the second is about us becoming “one body in charity” and is related to the communion of the Holy Spirit. Again, the preposition *per* points to an instrumental pneumatology. Various other convictions remain unclear: is the Spirit the author of communion (*genetivus subjectivus*) or its instrument (*genetivus objectivus*)? And how do the two parallel requests relate?

<sup>32</sup> As is commonly known, in an earlier version the first epiclesis missed an explicit reference to the Holy Spirit; consequently, the words “through the power of the Holy Spirit,” added in the *Editio typica*, are often absent in translations into the vernacular.

### *Intermediary Conclusion*

In conclusion, in all these eucharistic prayers, the Father is the main point of reference; this holds true for the epicleses as well. Although the epicleses share a Father-centered framework, we have seen that they nonetheless differ remarkably in their imagination of the Holy Spirit. [Table 1](#), below, gives an overview of the explicit pneumatological imaginations.

It shows in the first place that the Spirit is imagined predominantly in a passive manner, that is, as sent by the Father/Christ or as belonging to the Father/Christ, and in an instrumental manner, as the instrument the Father works with or through. By contrast, in a minority of cases, the Spirit is imagined in an active manner. Upon closer consideration, six out of ten eucharistic prayers never explicitly imagine the Holy Spirit as actively involved. In Eucharistic Prayer III, Reconciliation I, Reconciliation III, and For Children

*Table 1. (Explicit) Pneumatological Imaginations*

<b>Passive</b>	
<b>Epiclesis I</b> 6 times	<b>1) Eucharistic Prayer (EP) II</b> ( <i>Spiritus tui</i> ); <b>2) EP IV</b> ( <i>idem Spiritus</i> refers to <i>Christus misit a Patre</i> ); <b>3) Reconciliation I</b> ( <i>Spiritus virtutem effunde; tui</i> ); <b>4) Reconciliation II</b> ( <i>effusione; Spiritus tui</i> ); <b>5) Various Needs I–IV</b> ( <i>Spiritus tuum; emittas</i> ); <b>6) Children II</b> ( <i>mitte; tuum</i> ).
<b>Epiclesis II</b> 5 times	<b>1) EP III</b> ( <i>Spiritu eius</i> ); <b>2) Reconciliation II</b> ( <i>eiusdem; Spiritum praestare digneris</i> ); <b>3) Various Needs I–IV</b> ( <i>Spiritus caritatis tuae</i> ); <b>4) Children I</b> ( <i>mitte Spiritum</i> ); <b>5) Children II</b> ( <i>dona Spiritum; tui amoris</i> ).
<b>Instrumental</b>	
<b>Epiclesis I</b> 5 times	<b>1) EP II</b> ( <i>spiritus tui rore sanctifica</i> ); <b>2) EP III</b> ( <i>eodem Spiritu sanctificare</i> ); <b>3) Reconciliation II</b> ( <i>Spiritus effusione sanctifica</i> ); <b>4) Children I</b> ( <i>fac ut virtute Spiritus fiant</i> ); <b>5) Children III</b> ( <i>per virtutem Spiritus</i> ).
<b>Epiclesis II</b> 4 times	<b>1) Reconciliation I</b> ( <i>Spiritus Sancti virtute</i> ); <b>2) Various Needs I–IV</b> ( <i>virtute Spiritus</i> ); <b>3) Various Needs III</b> ( <i>Spiritu vivifica</i> ); <b>4) Children III</b> ( <i>per communionem Spiritus</i> ).
<b>Active</b>	
<b>Epiclesis I</b> 2 times	<b>1) EP IV</b> ( <i>Spiritus sanctificare dignetur; also perficiens and compleret</i> ); <b>2) Various Needs I–IV</b> ( <i>qui dona sanctificet</i> ).
<b>Epiclesis II</b> 3 times	<b>1) EP II</b> ( <i>a Spiritus congregemur</i> ); <b>2) EP IV</b> ( <i>a Sancto Spiritu congregati</i> ); <b>3) Reconciliation II</b> ( <i>qui omnia auferat</i> and the sentence on unity, peace and communion that follows).
<b>Unclear</b>	
<b>Epiclesis II</b> 2 times	<b>1) EP III</b> ( <i>Spiritu Sancto repleti</i> ); <b>2) Children III</b> ( <i>communio Spiritus Sancti</i> ).

I-III, the benefits that are requested for the gifts and the community are not described as a consequence of the Spirit's presence and action.<sup>33</sup>

Secondly, about half the number of these epicleses combine passive imaginations with active or instrumental ones. For example, in the Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs, the Spirit that the Father has first been asked to send (*emittas*, cf. *tuum*) is then said to sanctify (*qui ... sanctificet*). This also holds true for Epiclesis I in Eucharistic Prayer IV and for Epiclesis II in the Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation II. Similarly, Epiclesis I in the Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation II and Epiclesis II in Version III of the Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs combine a passive and an instrumental imagination. The Spirit who is said to be poured out is also who the Father sanctifies with: *Spiritus ... effusione haec dona sanctifica* (Reconciliation II), and the Spirit who is called *caritatis tuae* is also who the Father vivifies with: *nos Spiritu vivifica* (Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs III). Still, these nuances take nothing away from the remarkable paucity of active imaginations over against passive and instrumental ones.

Thirdly, almost all epicleses feature *possible* pneumatological imaginations that are hinted at without being explicit and specific. Although the prayer for the Spirit to be sent so that the bread may become the Body of Christ (cf. *ut fiat*) clearly implies an involvement of some sort, it is not clear what exactly that involvement is. It could be an active one: the Spirit is sent so that He causes the bread to become the Body of Christ. It could also be an instrumental involvement: the Spirit is sent so that the Father may make the bread become the Body of Christ by means of the Spirit. For Epiclesis II, something similar holds true, but in this case, the Eucharist plays a role, too, in achieving or receiving the grace that is being prayed for. Although this is unsurprising in the light of the nature of Epiclesis II—which is precisely about building up the unity and community that the Eucharist represents—and in the light of the original single epiclesis pertaining both to the gifts and the community, it has as a consequence that the Spirit and the Eucharist seem to be overlapping with each other.

### III. Theological Evaluation

The *lex orandi* analysis in the previous section clearly revealed a variety of pneumatological imaginations. The Holy Spirit belongs to the Father or the Son, the Holy Spirit is an instrument that the Father or the Son use for carrying out his/their salvific work, and the Holy Spirit is actively

<sup>33</sup> Cf. the questions quoted from McGowan, *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern*: see footnote 8.

involved in sanctifying or unifying. In addition, sometimes the Holy Spirit’s role and action are not so clear. Yet what is the *meaning* of these findings? Does it matter how exactly the Holy Spirit’s role is imagined, and does it matter that active imaginations are relatively rare? After first drawing a practical conclusion about using more precise language, I will reflect on these questions in the light of liturgical theology, Trinitarian theology, and pneumatology.

### A. A Plea for Precision

In the first place, these observations challenge the broadly shared, probably somewhat unreflected idea that the epiclesis is a prayer for the Spirit to sanctify and transform bread and wine or the community. In the introduction we quoted Lamberts calling the Spirit “the artisan of the Eucharist.”<sup>34</sup> That is not how the epicleses actually talk about the Holy Spirit. The prayers do not usually describe the Spirit as artisan; in fact, the Spirit is imagined predominantly in a passive or instrumental manner. If the formulation of liturgical texts means something, scholars, and to a lesser extent the faithful, should talk with more precision about the epiclesis and the Holy Spirit’s salvific significance.

That such a plea for precision is not superfluous can be demonstrated in more detail on the basis of Anne McGowan’s analysis of Eucharistic Prayer III. As we have seen, the prayer’s first epiclesis is related to a short *Post-Sanctus* prayer. McGowan comments that, different from Eucharistic Prayer II, in this case the *Post-Sanctus* section “does mention the Holy Spirit as a source of life and holiness active in the economy of salvation through God’s Son”; according to her, the first epiclesis “continues this theme and provides a clear transition to the institution narrative.”<sup>35</sup> That is a beautiful interpretation but not what the text states. Rather than being active as the source of life and holiness, the Holy Spirit’s role is only an active one in a vague sense (*operare* in the *Post-Sanctus*) or an instrumental one (*eodem Spiritu sanctificare* in Epiclesis I). What McGowan attributes to the Spirit is, according to the text, the

<sup>34</sup> See footnote 2. Cf. the active tone in his description of the newly introduced epicleses: “Il est ici (in Epiclesis I, jm) très expressément demandé dans l’épîclèse consécatoire que le Saint Esprit veuille sanctifier, transformer les offrandes en le Corps et le Sang du Christ” and “Il y (in Epiclesis II, jm) est très explicitement demandé que le Saint Esprit empreigne la vie de ceux qui se trouvent rassemblés autour du pain et du chalice,” Lamberts, “Eucharistie et Esprit Saint,” 49.

<sup>35</sup> See McGowan, *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern*, 160; italics in the original text. The contrast (cf. *does*) makes sense in the light of her observation that in Eucharistic Prayer II “the Spirit does not act directly as the agent of sanctification for the gifts; rather, the petition is addressed to the Father,” 158.

Father's role; he brings life and holiness.<sup>36</sup> Stressing in the next paragraph that the epiclesis requests that "God sanctify the eucharistic gifts through the Spirit,"<sup>37</sup> McGowan now interprets the text correctly, seemingly without noticing the contradiction with what she wrote a couple of lines earlier.

In relation to Epiclesis II, McGowan reads more into the text than it actually states. Although she explains that "one 'fruit' of communion is itself the indwelling of the Spirit, without whose presence the desired unity could not be realized,"<sup>38</sup> the relationship between the Spirit and unity is absent in the text. The phrase *Spiritu ... repleti* is an adjectival subclause with a descriptive function that, at most, possibly *hints* at the Spirit's significance for unity.

Finally, McGowan underlines the connection between the two epicleses in Eucharistic Prayer III with the help of a quote from Alan Detscher, an American priest and diocesan director of liturgy. According to McGowan and Detscher, "The Spirit who transforms the gifts also transforms those who receive the gifts. The Spirit who causes the bread to be the body of Christ also causes those who receive the sacramental body of the Lord to be the body of Christ, the church."<sup>39</sup> Once again, that beautiful interpretation is not based on the text, which speaks neither about the Spirit transforming the gifts nor those who receive them in communion.

A similar critique holds true for both many academic representations and more popular presentations. To mention but one more example, the French priest Olivier de Cagny writes in his book *Les prières eucharistiques* in relation to Eucharistic Prayer II: "Through baptism and confirmation, we have entered in the fullness of salvation that is already offered by Christ's sacrifice, and these offerings which are sanctified by the Spirit make us really present to it." That the gifts are sanctified "by the Spirit" is not what the text of Eucharistic Prayer II actually states.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, we need more precise language.

<sup>36</sup> For the full text of the *Post-Sanctus*, see footnote 19.

<sup>37</sup> See McGowan, *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern*, 160.

<sup>38</sup> McGowan, *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern*, 161.

<sup>39</sup> McGowan, *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern*, 161; the quote is from Alan F. Detscher, "The Eucharistic Prayers of the Roman Catholic Church," in *New Eucharistic Prayers: An Ecumenical Study of their Development and Structure*, ed. Frank C. Senn (Mahwah, NY: Paulist Press, 1987), 15–52, esp. 35. Cf. Detscher's comment on the first epiclesis that he had lauded as an "explicit epiclesis" with a "strong expression of the action of the Holy Spirit," 35; that praise is not warranted by the text of Eucharistic Prayer III.

<sup>40</sup> Olivier de Cagny, *Les prières eucharistiques*, nouvelle édition (Paris: Parole et Silence, 2012), 98; cf. "Nous sommes entrés par le Baptême et la Confirmation dans la plénitude du salut déjà offert par le sacrifice du Christ, et ces offrandes sanctifiées par l'Esprit nous y rendent réellement présents." For another example, see Edward

### ***B. Liturgical-Theological Validity?***

What, however, is the point? Do the details of the epicleses' articulation of the Holy Spirit's role matter? For indeed, the epicleses are part of the eucharistic prayer, which itself is to be understood within the framework of the whole of a given eucharistic celebration. Should we not include in our analysis Trinitarian elements such as the Trinitarian opening and closing of the liturgy "in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit"? What about the Trinitarian concluding formula of the opening prayer and the Creed? What about, for example, prefaces with (or without!) references to the Spirit or the Trinity? And, also more critically, what about the binitarian concluding formula of the prayer over the gifts and the prayer after communion?

Moreover, beyond words liturgy comprises melody, silence, symbols, gestures, building, and so on. The pneumatological imagination implied in these other liturgical aspects should be included in the analysis as well. For example, in an interesting chapter on the Holy Spirit's elusive real presence, Teresa Berger, professor of liturgical studies at Yale, wonders if texts are the best place to look for the Holy Spirit and draws attention to silence: "Can silence be seen as a placeholder, an indication of the truly un-speakable depth of yearning for the coming of the Holy Spirit?"<sup>41</sup>

Finally, in addition to these synchronic perspectives, a proper epicletic assessment requires a historical and genetical analysis. How has the Spirit been conceived in liturgical contexts in the various Christian traditions that these prayers originate from, and how has that conception changed over the course of the centuries? And what do these historical conceptions and their development mean for current liturgical expressions? In short, for comprehensive statements, broader research is indispensable.

J. Kilmartin, "The Active Role of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the Sanctification of the Eucharistic Elements," *Theological Studies* 45 (1984): 225–53. The article is precious for its courageous ecumenical stance and its useful trinitarian-theological proposal, yet when Kilmartin concludes that Orthodox and Roman Catholic theology agree that Christ "sent the Spirit to transform the bread and wine into his body and blood" (243, cf. 244), he says more than the formulations he has carefully listed earlier in the article allow for. For example, he quoted statements from the International Catholic-Lutheran Commission: "During his life on earth, Jesus Christ did all things in the Holy Spirit... It is also through the Holy Spirit that Christ is at work in the Eucharist," 226; in that statement, the Holy Spirit neither has the role to transform nor another explicitly and unambiguously active role. Moreover, my own article demonstrates that unfortunately even that more nuanced statement cannot count as a correct representation of the *lex credendi* of the epicleses in the Roman-Catholic eucharistic prayers.

<sup>41</sup> Teresa Berger, "Veni Creator Spiritus: The Elusive Real Presence of the Spirit in the Catholic Tradition," in *The Spirit in Worship*, 141–54.

The current project contributes to that broader research by focusing on a single aspect, namely the specific wording of the epicleses and the pneumatological imagination they reveal. Echoing the word used by the liturgical scholar John McKenna in his balanced reflection on the significance of the epiclesis, I would like to characterize these specific wordings as a “microcosm” of christological, pneumatological, ecclesiological, and sacramental convictions.<sup>42</sup> Delving into the pneumatological aspect of that microcosm has revealed that the Spirit is considered to be an actor markedly less than we commonly think.

### C. Trinitarian Complementarity?

In the third place, the same question, “What’s the point?,” may be asked from a Trinitarian perspective. Does it matter how exactly the Holy Spirit’s role is articulated and imagined? After all, one could argue that the plurality of pneumatological imaginations beautifully evokes a flexible Trinitarian communion in which mutual complementarity is the key value, not a Divine Person’s own contribution. In that communion, the Father has the primordial role of being the origin of sanctification. This conviction is enshrined in the text insofar as the Father is, generally speaking, the addressee of the eucharistic prayer. In some cases, He is considered as the direct author of sanctification, which He is said to carry out through or by means of the Spirit. In other instances, He is present in the background and makes the Spirit sanctify. Christ is presented as the one whose salvific life, death, and resurrection we commemorate. Sometimes, He is also presented as sending the Spirit. The Holy Spirit contributes to salvation too. The Spirit’s role is always conceived of in the context of the Father and/or the Son. Occasionally, the Spirit is described as actively involved. The exact distribution of roles differs from one eucharistic prayer to another, to the extent that one epiclesis may specify that Christ takes away division (Reconciliation I) and another that the Spirit does so (Reconciliation II). That is not a problem but an expression of the flexible and complementary Trinitarian relations.

However, the low number of active pneumatological imaginations and the contrast with the higher number of passive and instrumental ones suggests that this may be a too-positive interpretation. Rather, what we have found typically exemplifies the Western tendency to *Geistvergessenheit*. The term “*Geistvergessenheit*” means that faith, spirituality, liturgy, and theology (sometimes) take insufficient consideration of the Holy Spirit. Introduced by the German Lutheran theologian Otto Dilschneider as part of a christological

<sup>42</sup> John McKenna, “Eucharistic Epiclesis: Theological Myopia or Microcosm,” *Theological Studies* 36 (1975): 265–84, esp. 284.



discussion, the term pointed not only at theology that lacked *Geist* (here it echoed Heidegger's *Seinsvergessenheit*) but it also meant a faith and theology in which the Holy Spirit functions as no more than an "appendix."<sup>43</sup> A famous painful example of forgetting the Spirit was found in the 1973 General Instruction of the Roman Missal that, explaining the epiclesis, failed to mention the Holy Spirit and spoke instead of "God's power."<sup>44</sup> The fact that according to the Roman Missal the concluding formula for the second and third presidential prayers should be *Per Christum Dominum nostrum* or *Qui vivit / vivis et regnat / regnas in saecula saeculorum* may count as another example;<sup>45</sup> seemingly mentioning the Holy Spirit is not as essential as invoking Christ and can be left out. Although there are many positive developments in relation to *Geistvergessenheit*,<sup>46</sup> the absence of sustained attention to the Holy Spirit in the highly praised *Systematic Theology* handbook edited by Francis Schüssler Fiorenza and John P. Galvin shows that *Geistvergessenheit* has not yet been overcome.<sup>47</sup>

Clearly, this type of *Geistvergessenheit* is not present in the epicleses, for they do mention the Spirit. But *Geistvergessenheit* has also manifested itself and continues to do so in another, more subtle form; in those cases, the Spirit is not absent but situated at a lower level under the Father or the Son. A typical example of this is the concern to bind the Holy Spirit to Christ without a similar concern for Christ to be bound to the Holy Spirit. When Yves Congar concluded his impressive pneumatological work with the booklet *La Parole et le Souffle*, he wrote in the introduction, "No pneumatology without

<sup>43</sup> See Otto Dilschneider, "Die Geistvergessenheit der Theologie. Epilog zur Diskussion über den historischen Jesus und kerygmatischen Christus," *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 88 (1961): 255–66.

<sup>44</sup> This has been observed by many scholars. See for example Edward Foley, "The Structure of the Mass, Its Elements and Its Parts," in *A Commentary on the General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, eds. Edward Foley, N. D. Mitchell, and Joanne M. Pierce (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 175–76, esp. 176. This was amended in the 2002 edition of the Instruction, see General Instruction on the Roman Missal, 2002, [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc\\_con\\_ccdds\\_doc\\_20030317\\_ordinamento-messale\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20030317_ordinamento-messale_en.html), §79c.

<sup>45</sup> General Instruction on the Roman Missal, 2002, §77 and 89.

<sup>46</sup> For example, Teresa Berger spoke in 2009 of a "pneumatological turn"; Anne McGowan elaborated on the examples she gave for that in 2014. See Teresa Berger, "Introduction," in *The Spirit in Worship*, xi–xxv, esp. xiii–xv and xx–xxi; McGowan, *Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern*, 3–4.

<sup>47</sup> Francis Schüssler Fiorenza and John P. Galvin, eds., *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011). There is a chapter on Christ and one on the Trinity; the Holy Spirit is rarely discussed for more than a few lines.

Christology, *no Christology without pneumatology*.”<sup>48</sup> Why did Congar, by using italics, accentuate the latter statement? For theoretically speaking, the former statement is as much a danger as the latter, and realistically speaking, more so. In other terms, the problem is the one-sided concern to bind the Spirit to Christ. Here Spirit-Christology deserves to be mentioned as an example of a Christology that also develops Christ’s dependence from the Spirit.

Another typical manifestation of this second type of *Geistvergeessenheit* is a one-sided instrumental function of one divine person in relation to another. True complementarity means that Christ carries out the work of salvation through the Spirit by sending the Spirit of truth and that the Spirit carries out the work of salvation through Christ, in whom the Spirit dwells, or by inspiring the faithful with the example of Christ. In this regard, the Trinitarian reflections by the American Benedictine theologian Kilian McDonnell are worth quoting. McDonnell criticizes the one-sidedness of the Spirit’s dependence on Christ: “What is problematic is when the Spirit never attains the age of majority, never reaches the kind of ‘autonomy’ recognized in the Second Person, even though it is admitted that the modalities of this ‘autonomy’ or ‘maturity’ are different for each person.” He speaks of “the problem of the improper subordination of the Spirit to the Son” such that faith language adds the Spirit after Christ, grace, church, and sacraments; consequently, the Spirit has “something of a junior status” and leads to “an excessively instrumental understanding of the visible and invisible missions of the Spirit.”<sup>49</sup> Instead, McDonnell pleads for a *mutual* dependence.<sup>50</sup>

To conclude, the passive and instrumental pneumatological imaginations that we have found could be part of a healthy Trinitarian theology as much as of an unhealthy one. In the light of this second type of *Geistvergeessenheit*, however, some hermeneutics of suspicion are commendable. Only on the basis of a more active imagination of the Spirit can one convincingly interpret the other Trinitarian imaginations of the epicleses as expressing mutual complementarity.

#### ***D. The Spirit as Actor***

This brings us to the issue under the issues, namely the question of whether speaking of the Spirit as actor or “artisan” makes theological sense. Is it possible to analyze and evaluate the epicleses as we did? How does it

<sup>48</sup> Yves Congar, *La Parole et le Souffle*, nouvelle edition ([1984]; Paris: Mame-Desclée, 2010), 14.

<sup>49</sup> Kilian McDonnell, *The Other Hand of God: The Holy Spirit as the Universal Touch and Goal* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 86 and 88–89, cf. 90.

<sup>50</sup> McDonnell beautifully sketches what a true complementarity of Son and Spirit looks like in the final pages of his book; see McDonnell, *The Other Hand of God*, 227–29.

fit in with classical Trinitarian-theological notions such as the *ad extra* rule, which stresses that God’s outward (*ad extra*) action belongs to the one God? And more constructively, what does a more actively formulated pneumatology look like?

The *ad extra* rule is extremely useful for protecting against tritheism, but it is not without vulnerabilities. Acknowledging no “proper” salvation-historical unicity within the Trinity and thereby protecting divine unity, the *ad extra* rule does allow the Father or the Son or the Spirit to have appropriated roles. However, a minimal interpretation of appropriation as meaning only a so-called proper role obscures the real salvation-historical sense of God’s three-ness, as several scholars have pointed out over the course of the past decades.

For example, the German Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner singled out the *ad extra* rule and the notion of appropriation for negatively impacting a truly Trinitarian faith. In his seminal 1960 essay on the theology of the Trinity, he deplored that the three divine persons had little or no meaning for Christian life and wondered if we have in fact returned to an unchristian type of monotheism.<sup>51</sup> He discredited thinking about the Trinity exclusively with the help of the notion of appropriation as a form of “anti-trinitarian timidity,” explaining that it “has induced theologians to conceive the relation brought about by grace between man and the three divine persons as one based upon ‘created grace,’ a product of God’s efficient causality, merely ‘appropriated’ differently to the single persons.”<sup>52</sup>

Heribert Mühlen, another German theologian with a special interest in pneumatology, shared Rahner’s apprehension. In the last chapter of his study on the Holy Spirit’s proper (*eigentümliche*) function within the Trinity and salvation history,<sup>53</sup> he called appropriation a

<sup>51</sup> Karl Rahner, *The Trinity: With an Introduction, Index, and Glossary by Catherine Mowry LaCugna* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1997), 10–12. This is a translation of Karl Rahner, “Der dreifaltige Gott als transzendenter Urgrund der Heilsgeschichte,” in *Mysterium Salutis*, vol. II (Einsiedeln: Benzinger, 1967), 317–401, and goes back to (and elaborates on) the essay, “Bemerkungen zum dogmatischen Traktat ‘de Trinitate,’” in *Schriften zur Theologie*, vol. IV (Einsiedeln: Benzinger, 1960), 103–33, originally published in Ludwig Lenhart, ed., *Universitas. Dienst an Wahrheit und Leben. Festschrift für Bischof Dr. Albert Stohr* (Mainz: Grünewald, 1960), 130–50.

<sup>52</sup> Karl Rahner, *The Trinity: With an Introduction, Index, and Glossary by Catherine Mowry LaCugna*, 13–15, esp. 13. Cf. his earlier, more technical essay based on similar convictions “Zur scholastischen Begrifflichkeit der ungeschaffenen Gnade,” Karl Rahner, *Schriften zur Theologie*, vol. I (Einsiedeln: Benzinger, 1954), 347–75. Originally published in *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 63 (1939): 137–56. In that essay, he linked pre-Christian monotheism with appropriation too; see 374–75.

<sup>53</sup> Heribert Mühlen, *Der Heilige Geist als Person. Beitrag zur Frage nach der dem heiligen Geiste eigentümlichen Funktion in der Trinität, bei der Inkarnation und im*

“problem.”<sup>54</sup> Complaining about “an excess of clarity,” he argued that appropriation was useful so long as it was not the only possibility to talk about God’s interaction with humankind.<sup>55</sup> According to Mühlen, it should be complemented with another approach that develops the “proper” relations between the divine persons and humankind: “We will try to show that it can and must be supplemented according to its origin by Anselm from Canterbury through the dialectical equivalent: *In Deo omnia sunt tria, ubi non obviat unitas essentiae*. In this sense, the above-mentioned sentence of the Council of Florence [viz., *In Deo omnia sunt unum, ubi non obviat relationis oppositio*] makes visible only one aspect of the Latin doctrine of the Trinity.”<sup>56</sup>

Contemporary theologians, too, hesitate about the *ad extra* rule and appropriation. For example, Catherine LaCugna explained in her Trinitarian masterpiece from the 1990s that “once it is assumed that the Trinity [and not a particular person] is present in every instance where Scripture refers to God, and once the axiom *opera ad extra* is in place, no longer, it seems, is there any need for the plurality of persons in the economy.”<sup>57</sup> Trinitarian theology needs to be restructured in such a way that salvation history—the *oikonomia*—is its starting point; this will result in an active conception of the Spirit “as the one who brings the creature into union and communion with God and other creatures.”<sup>58</sup> And although Neil Ormerod attempted in his 2005 reflection on the Trinity to rethink and

*Gnadenbund*, 2nd rev. ed. ([1963]; Münster: Aschendorff, 1966), cf. the opening line, “Das Grundanliegen in der folgenden Untersuchung ist der Versuch, nach der dem Hl. Geist eigentümlichen Funktion in der Trinität, bei der Inkarnation und im Gnadenbund zu fragen, um dadurch vielleicht etwas zur Lehre vom Hl. Geist beizutragen,” 1.

<sup>54</sup> The chapter was entitled “Das Axiom: ‘*In Deo omnia sunt unum, ubi non obviat relationis oppositio*’ und die inhabitatio propria des Heiligen Geistes,” see Mühlen, *Der Heilige Geist als Person*, 306–29. The title of the first section read, “Das Problem der Appropriation,” 306–13. The chapter was added in the second edition. Interestingly, Mühlen refers to Rahner’s “Bemerkungen” on page 309.

<sup>55</sup> Mühlen, *Der Heilige Geist als Person*, 309–10. The expression “Übermaß an Klarheit” Mühlen took from De Régnon.

<sup>56</sup> Mühlen, *Der Heilige Geist als Person*, 306, developed 315–18. The translation is mine.

<sup>57</sup> Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity & Christian Life* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 99. Cf. her reflection on the Spirit’s personhood, for example, in the following quote: “The axiom that the works of God *ad extra* are one, along with the doctrine of the *filioque*, obscure the *proprium* of the Spirit by relegating the Spirit to an intradivine realm as the bond between Father and Son,” 298.

<sup>58</sup> LaCugna, *God for Us*, 298. This she considers to be the Spirit’s *proprium*.

thereby reappropriate the *ad extra* rule, he did so after admitting that it “has been increasingly sidelined in contemporary theology.”<sup>59</sup>

In fact, it need not be so. The God who interacts with us is both one God and Father, Son, and Spirit. The *ad extra* rule is useful in protecting the oneness of God so long as it is held in a creative tension with another axiom that protects God’s three-ness. Ironically, the appropriation rule could be this other rule, provided that it is not understood anxiously and restrictively as allowing for no more than “only as if”; in that weak understanding, the rule was rightly criticized by Rahner and Mühlen and others. It could, however, be creatively reconceived into a mature complement to the *ad extra* rule. In that reconceived version, it would be unafraid in specifying the “proper” contribution of the divine persons, while always considering the *ad extra* rule as its essential complement (and vice versa).<sup>60</sup>

Highlighting the Spirit’s humility, *kenosis*, and mysterious nature, some theologians hesitate to focus on the Spirit’s proper role. They point out that Scripture does not speak about the Spirit as a person in the same way as it does about the Father and the Son—Teresa Berger spoke a few years ago of the Spirit’s “elusive real presence”<sup>61</sup>—or that the Spirit is not focused on himself but rather orientates people to the kingdom or to the Son and the Father. Further, some recall that the Eastern tradition is not concerned about the proper mission of the divine persons in the way we seem to be in this article. Responding to these meaningful considerations is beyond the scope of this article, but these considerations do not invalidate the results of our textual analysis, and they should not be used to “explain” or give excuse for *Geistvergessenheit*.

In the light of these (too brief) Trinitarian reflections, it seems quite possible to explore and evaluate the Spirit’s exact role in the epicleses. Divine unity has no priority over divine three-ness; rather, divine unity and divine three-ness are both true. The *ad extra* rule should be invoked only once the Spirit is conceived as part of a flexible and complementary divine three-ness in a manner that corresponds to Trinitarian equality.

More concretely and constructively, it is therefore not only possible but also better if the epiclesis were simply to pray (for example) that the Holy Spirit would sanctify the gifts and unify the community. Within the eucharistic prayer’s obvious Trinitarian structure—it is addressed to the Father and

<sup>59</sup> Neil Ormerod, *The Trinity: Retrieving the Western Tradition* (Marquette, WI: Marquette University Press, 2005), chap. 5, 99–123, esp. 99.

<sup>60</sup> McKenna seems to have had similar intuitions in 1975; cf. what he says about appropriation “in the strong sense” in *Eucharist and Holy Spirit*, 198–203, here 200.

<sup>61</sup> Berger, “*Veni Creator Spiritus*.”

commemorates particularly the Son—the Spirit’s active involvement should be formulated unambiguously and explicitly. Only then the Spirit is rightly lauded as the “artisan of the Eucharist.”

### Conclusion

The introduction of explicit Spirit epicleses into the new eucharistic prayers is an important step forward in overcoming *Geistvergessenheit*. What matters, however, is not only *that* the Spirit is mentioned but also *how*. The details of the way we pray and the details of what we pray are meaningful, including the textual details. This exploration has revealed that the epicleses feature remarkably diverse pneumatological imaginations, with active imaginations being a minority. Therefore, we need to talk with greater precision about the epiclesis. Moreover, passive and instrumental pneumatological imaginations can only be claimed to be part of a flexible and complementary Trinitarian dynamic on the condition that the Holy Spirit’s active role is sufficiently clear. Finally, talking about the Spirit as “the artisan of the Eucharist” with a “proper” role does not inevitably lead to tritheism, as is sometimes feared, for a healthy Trinitarian theology equally promotes God’s unity and God’s three-ness. Although one would need to delve deeper into liturgical history, pneumatology, and Trinitarian theology in order to be able to make more comprehensive evaluations and to make constructive proposals on possible liturgical improvements, in the meantime hymns like the Pentecost sequence *Veni Sancte Spiritus* encourage those who advocate a more active role for the Holy Spirit. With its bold pneumatological language (*veni, reple, lava, flecte, rege, da*), it shows that prayers in which the Spirit is unambiguously portrayed as actively involved in our salvation can be found within the Western tradition itself.