"Msgr. Bohr's wisdom, gained during many years of experience in seminary formation, brings to life the historical and theological research contained in this important work. Informative and well-written, this book will be of great help to seminarians, priests, seminary formation personnel, and all those seeking a deeper understanding of and love for the diocesan priesthood."

—Rev. Richard J. Gabuzda
Executive Director
The Institute for Priestly Formation

"Father David Bohr's rich experience as a priest, a theologian, and a priestly formator clearly shines through the pages of his latest book, *The Diocesan Priest: Consecrated and Sent*. His insights will be a blessing to so many of us who wish the unique charism that is ours as diocesan priests to be explored and promoted for the unique calling that it is."

—Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien
Archbishop of Baltimore

"With a compelling blend of practical insight and serious theological reflection upon the developing understanding of the ministerial priesthood from its apostolic roots in the New Testament, Monsignor David Bohr has used his own twenty years of experience in priestly formation to produce a praiseworthy study of what Pope John Paul II described as the 'gift and mystery' of diocesan priesthood. Each chapter of this work reveals Monsignor Bohr's profound love for and understanding of priestly office and priestly men. A book of this kind promotes authentic, sound, and solid doctrine in an effort to advance a theological study of diocesan priests ordained to be co-sharers with the bishops in continuing the apostolic mission of preaching, sanctifying, and shepherding Christ's flock. Monsignor Bohr has provided a rich and detailed theological reflection that should prove to be of special interest to all those involved in priestly formation."

—Monsignor Aloysius R. Callaghan
Rector and Vice President
The Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity
of the University of St. Thomas
St. Paul, Minnesota

"*The Diocesan Priest: Consecrated and Sent* provides a thorough presentation of the historical and theological dimensions of the Catholic priesthood and is a welcome and valuable resource for anyone interested in understanding more profoundly what it means to be a priest. This study should certainly be part of any seminary formation program. Monsignor David Bohr clearly exhibits not only his expertise on the subject but also his devotion to the formation of priests from his many years as a faculty member and seminary rector."

—Most Reverend Donald W. Wuerl, STD
Archbishop of Washington

"Monsignor Bohr's years of work in priestly formation are evident in his description of the actual concerns of an often divided American presbyterate. He argues for a reappraisal of what diocesan priests *are* after demonstrating, with a rich historical sweep, what diocesan priests are *not*: not monks, not specially trained laypersons, not merely cultic functionaries, but men indelibly deputed to build up communion within the priestly people of God. Tradition teaches that diocesan priests first of all proclaim the Good News of reconciliation. Humble and solicitous like the Good Shepherd, priests seek out both those who know Christ's voice and those who have yet to hear it, and theirs, Bohr notes, is the first word in the history of Christianity: 'Rejoice! Then they celebrate that Word become flesh together with their people, empowering them to move from *missa* to mission.' Bohr notes that celibate priests should learn to enjoy communion in their own lives as well, cultivating the affective maturity that enables them to imitate Christ who engaged in 'preferential friendships' with Mary, Martha, Lazarus, and the disciple who rested his head on the Lord's chest at the Last Supper. This book would be a good companion on any priest's retreat."

—Fr. Robert Christian, OP
Angelicum University
Rome, Italy

"Msgr. Bohr has truly done a great favor for all seminarians and priests in writing *The Diocesan Priest: Consecrated and Sent*. Msgr. Bohr provides a theological reflection that is well grounded in the biblical text, while being deeply attentive to the historical development of the church's understanding of the diocesan priesthood. This book will be a great help for priests and seminarians trying to understand the priesthood as it is experienced in the years following the Second Vatican Council. In particular, Msgr. Bohr provides a profound theological reflection on the particular charism of the diocesan priest as it is lived out in relation to the baptismal priesthood of the lay faithful and their mission in the world. The theological insight of *The Diocesan Priest: Consecrated and Sent* is certainly the fruit of Msgr. Bohr's extensive experience of the diocesan priesthood. It is a book that is most relevant for the church of today."

—Philip A. Smith
Seminarian, Diocese of Toledo in America
Pontifical North American College, Europe

"As a gold mine of development and detail, Monsignor Bohr's treatment of diocesan priestly consecration and mission explores the diocesan priesthood through many phases of the exciting and fluctuating history of Christian spirituality. From the original thrust of the call and sending of the apostles to the closing ignition of priestly ministry for today, this book is a profound, stirring, informative journey. Because priestly holiness is never centered on itself, the glow of evangelization's fire always lights the way, even in periods when the fire, for various reasons, was dimmed.

"Though I was invited to give a brief recommendation, I found myself reading every word because I was learning so much. I think you will too!"

—Fr. George Aschenbrenner, SJ
Co-founder of the Institute for Priestly Formation
Author of *Quickening the Fire in Our Midst: The Challenge of Diocesan Priestly Spirituality*

The Diocesan Priest

Consecrated and Sent

David Bohr

Foreword by Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan

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Seminarians of the Pontifical North American College

Rome, Italy

2004–2007

Mater Mea, Fiducia Mea

From Jesus' prayer for his disciples at the Last Supper:

> *They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth.* (John 17:16-19)

Contents

Foreword

It is a given of our faith that "God can bring good from evil."

One of the "goods" that has come from the horror of the recent past's crisis in the priesthood has been a welcome abundance of solid, helpful, hopeful books on the priesthood.

We bishops and priests are "in the business of hope," and the appearance of these splendid works on the priesthood—by authors such as Howard Bleichner, David Toups, Stephen Rossetti, Mark O'Keefe, Matthew Levering, Thomas Acklin, and Justin Rigali—gives us a lot of confidence that the renewal of the priesthood longed for by Pope John Paul II might indeed be coming about.

This enticing and enlightening book by Father David Bohr is a most welcome addition to the above menu. Father Bohr's qualifications—a serious theologian, a priest of the Diocese of Scranton with long and fruitful years of service in the noble enterprise of priestly formation—make his observations timely and credible.

Far from just a "pep talk" on the priesthood, Father Bohr offers a very digestible but quality *theology* of the priesthood, using the classical methodology of Scripture, the Fathers, and an enjoyable ride through the *historical* elaboration on the theology of the priesthood.

Not to be missed is his *systematic* treatment of such pivotal issues as the Christological context, the priesthood of all believers—and how this differs from ordained priesthood—and the elusive yet essential notion of the sacramental character of Holy Orders.

Make sure you persevere to the end—a pleasant task!—because the chapter on celibacy, especially its spousal dimension, is well worth it.

Searching for a theology/spirituality of the diocesan priesthood has become somewhat of a "quest for the Holy Grail" among us. Father Bohr

offers one of the more engaging considerations of this adventure that I've yet come across.

Let the renewal continue!

Most Reverend Timothy M. Dolan
Archbishop of Milwaukee
February 22, 2009
Feast of the Chair of Peter
Year of St. Paul

Abbreviations

AA	*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, Second Vatican Council's Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, November 18, 1965.
CCC	The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd edition, Rome, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997.
CCL	*Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina*. Turnhout, 1953–.
CL	*Christifideles Laici*, post-synodal apostolic exhortation of Pope John Paul II on the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and the World, December 30, 1988.
DCE	*Deus Caritas Est*, encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI on Christian love, December 25, 2005.
EIA	*Ecclesia in America*, post-synodal apostolic exhortation of Pope John Paul II on the Church in America, January 22, 1999.
EN	*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, post-synodal apostolic exhortation of Pope Paul VI on Evangelization of the Modern World, December 8, 1975.
FC	*Familiaris Consortio*, post-synodal apostolic exhortation of Pope John Paul II on the Christian Family in the Modern World, November 22, 1981.
GS	*Gaudium et Spes*, Second Vatican Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, December 7, 1965.
LG	*Lumen Gentium*, Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, November 21, 1964.
NJB	The New Jerusalem Bible. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1985.
NMI	*Novo Millennio Ineunte*, apostolic letter of Pope John Paul II at the Close of the Great Jubilee Year of 2000, January 6, 2001.
OT	*Optatum Totius*, Second Vatican Council's Decree on Priestly Formation, October 28, 1965.

PDV	*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, post-synodal apostolic exhortation of Pope John Paul II on the Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day, March 25, 1992.
PG	*Patrologia Graeca*. J. P. Minge, ed. Paris, 1857–66, 162 volumes.
PL	*Patrologia Latina*. J. P. Minge, ed. Paris, 1844–64, 221 volumes.
PO	*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, Second Vatican Council's Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, December 7, 1965.
RH	*Redemptor Hominis*, encyclical of Pope John Paul II on the Redeemer of Man, March 4, 1979.
RP	*Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*, post-synodal apostolic exhortation of Pope John Paul II on Reconciliation and Penance in the Mission of the Church Today, December 2, 1984.
SCael	*Sacerdotalis Caelibatus*, encyclical of Pope Paul VI on Priestly Celibacy, June 24, 1967.
SCar	*Sacramentum Caritatis*, post-synodal apostolic exhortation of Pope Benedict XVI on the Eucharist as the Source and Summit of the Church's Life and Mission, February 22, 2007.
USCCB	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.
UUS	*Ut Unum Sint*, encyclical of Pope John Paul II on Commitment to Ecumenism, May 25, 1995.

Introduction

I will give you shepherds after my own heart" (Jer 3:15). With these words of the prophet Jeremiah, Pope John Paul II began his landmark post-synodal apostolic exhortation on priestly formation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (*I Will Give You Shepherds*). The pope deliberately chose this biblical image of the *shepherd*, an image that Jesus himself used to describe his own identity and ministry (see John 10:11), with the hope of showing us the way out of the crisis of priestly identity, which had developed and bred much confusion in the years following the Second Vatican Council (1962–65). The Holy Father went on to state in this document that a "correct and in-depth awareness of the nature and mission of the ministerial priesthood is the path which must be taken . . . in order to emerge from the crisis of priestly identity" (PDV 11).

While contributing factors to this priestly identity crisis may be found both within the Church and outside in the contemporary sociocultural context, it arose mainly out of errant attempts by some theologians to reinterpret Vatican II's more elaborative teaching on the nature and mission of the Church and ordained ministry. The Council Fathers had set out to explain the theological meaning of the priesthood by first reaffirming the declarations of the Council of Trent and then enlarging upon them. Trent's sole purpose had been to refute and censure the errors of the Protestant Reformers. It was never given the task of providing a comprehensive theological vision. Therefore, as a result, Trent directly countered the Reformation thesis that priesthood was simply an office of preaching by solemnly declaring that through ordination the priest is, in fact, endowed with the sacramental powers of celebrating the Eucharist and forgiving sins.

The development of the "private" Mass, accompanied by the giving of stipends and the establishment of Mass-saying benefices in monasteries of the Middle Ages, had led by the time of Trent to a commonly accepted

theological understanding that it was primarily for the celebration of the Eucharist that priests were ordained. The liturgy, which in the early Church had been first and foremost a communal gathering in prayer, by now had become a privatized clerical ritual. "Altar priests" were being ordained just to say Masses for the souls in purgatory and for all manner of special intentions. The Reformation readily denounced these practices as superstitious, which Trent in turn refuted with its declaration reaffirming unequivocally the sacramental powers of the priest. This "partial" presentation on priesthood, however, in succeeding centuries would become commonly accepted as the Church's full and complete teaching on the priesthood.

In a desire to return to the biblical and patristic sources Vatican II anchors its teaching on the priesthood in the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ, as teacher, priest, and king. The office of priesthood is viewed here as "a participation in his ministry and thus includes the competence upon earth to build up the Church throughout the ages to become the People of God, the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit."[1] It is the continuation of the threefold commission Jesus entrusted to the apostles in Matthew 28:19-20—"*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*" Vatican II deliberately based its doctrine of the priesthood upon this threefold apostolic mission "in order to retrieve this from its centuries-old restriction to the realm of cult."[2] For too long the operative image of the priest in the Church resembled more that of "the priest" found in the history of religions than it did the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Transforming or expanding archetypes, like shifting paradigms, often precipitate a crisis because they challenge us to change and even discard those long-accepted images, which we have come to depend upon to organize and interpret our world. The process proves frightening to some, like pulling the rug out from under their feet. They resist any change that threatens their carefully constructed and comfortable worldview. Yet others revel in the opportunity to let their imaginations run wild as they explore new and exciting possibilities. As human beings, we live our lives and define reality through the use of our power of imagination. Michael Novak in one of his early works, *Ascent of the Mountain*, *Flight of the Dove*,

[1] Friedrich Wulf, "Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests," Commentary on the Decree, Articles 1–6, in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler, vol. 4, 215 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969).

[2] Ibid., 216. See *Lumen Gentium* 25–28; 34ff. (for the laity); *Presbyterorum Ordinis* 1, 4–6, 7.

observes, "Often mutual understanding depends on one's ability to grasp what is happening in the imagination of the other party in the discussion. . . . The discerning of a faulty imaginative expectation and the construction of a good one enormously raise the probabilities of insight."[3]

The renewal in biblical, liturgical, and patristic studies within the Church during the last century brought to prominence once again the fundamental role that symbols and images play in theology. The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council realized that if the Church was to have any success in effectively carrying out its mission of proclaiming the Gospel to the modern world, it needed once again to address and capture people's imaginations. Vatican II thus entitled its Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*. Christ is "the light of the nations," whom the Church, gathered together in the Holy Spirit, is sent to proclaim (see LG 1). Presenting the mystery of the Church, the same document uses language that has recourse to images and symbols rather than to definitions. The images it employs are sheepfold, field, house, family, temple (LG 6), the body of Christ (LG 7), and people of God (LG 9–17).

Images motivate us to action. They appeal to both our cognitive and affective faculties. They present us with a vision or plan that gives us hope and motivation. Despair, on the other hand, has been described as a curtailment of the private imagination that "reaches the point of the end of inward resource and must put on the imagination of another if it is to find a way out."[4] Just as a poor or confused self-image lies at the root of a personal identity crisis, likewise uncertain or defective images of the role of the ordained priesthood in the Church have given rise to a crisis of priestly identity.

In the aftermath of Vatican II's reaffirmation of the New Testament teaching on the common priesthood of all the faithful, which the Reformation espoused as the source of ministry, a certain ambiguity began to blur the distinction between the priesthood of the baptized and that of the ordained. "There is no difference between the priest and everyone else," soon became a familiar mantra heard within the Catholic Church and was even championed by some theological circles. A number of theologians also began to advocate the Reformation notion of ordination being just an ecclesial act of delegation, ignoring or repudiating its sacramental

[3] Michael Novak, *Ascent of the Mountain, Flight of the Dove* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 18.

[4] William F. Lynch, SJ, *Images of Hope* (New York and Toronto: A Mentor-Omega Book, 1965), 19.

character as incorporation into the one priesthood of Jesus Christ, head and shepherd of the Church.[5]

Furthermore, the Second Vatican Council's teaching in its Dogmatic Constitution on the Church that only bishops possess "the fullness of the sacrament of Orders" (LG 21), and in its decree *Presbyterorum Ordinis* that the ministerial role of bishops "has been handed down, in a lesser degree . . . to the priests" (PO 2), seemed in the viewpoint of many priests to be an implied demotion of some sort. Prior to the Council seminarians were taught that ordination to the priesthood constituted the fullness of Holy Orders. Bishops were essentially priests who received the added power of governance through episcopal consecration.

Then too, in light of the Second Vatican Council's affirmation of the universality of grace,[6] some in the Church began to question the very need of explicitly proclaiming the Gospel. A few theologians even maintained that while Jesus of Nazareth was certainly the Christ, other peoples and cultures have their own christs. "Why, then, send forth missionaries?" others started to ask. A good number of Catholic educators also began to feel that the Catholic school's primary task is to offer quality education, not to evangelize. Proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ, they would maintain, is a direct infringement upon the freedom of personal conscience.

The proliferation of lay ministries and the restoration of the permanent diaconate in the years following the Council also added to the confusion in the minds of many priests trained in a preconciliar, neoscholastic theology. Likewise, a rapidly increasing secularism within Western society and culture itself downplayed and even showed contempt for religion. Priests, long accustomed to being accorded respect and deference in public, now not infrequently found themselves objects of scorn and derision. In a technological society that enshrines usefulness and efficiency as its main values, priesthood quickly fell to the bottom end of the scale. Func-

[5] See, for example, Hans Küng, *Why Priests?: A Proposal for a New Church Ministry*, trans. Robert C. Collins, SJ (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972), 63–64 and 88–95; Edward Schillebeeckx, *Ministry: Leadership in the Community of Jesus Christ* (New York: Crossroads, 1981), 72–73 and 138–39; and Leonardo Boff, *Ecclesiogenesis: The Base Communities Reinvent the Church*, trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1986), 70–75.

[6] See *Lumen Gentium* 16: "Those also can attain to everlasting salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the gospel of Christ or His Church, yet sincerely seek God and moved by grace, strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience." Also, *Gaudium et Spes* 22 and *Ad Gentes* 3.

tionalism as the measure of success in such a setting, moreover, cannot help but undermine and have an effect on priestly ministry.

Within the Church a growing cultural and theological pluralism led to polarizations among generations of the clergy who themselves experienced different models of formation. The growing feminist movement and persistent efforts to impose democracy upon the Catholic Church fueled a spirit of anticlericalism. This mood was further intensified by media scrutiny of clerical sexual misconduct and other errant behaviors, to which it was popularly believed priests were immune because of their "higher calling." As a result, the image of the priesthood and the priest's own self-image were thrown into confusion. The mirror was broken.

Entrusted with the responsibility of directing ministry formation in the Diocese of Scranton—lay, diaconal, and priestly—for nearly thirty years, I myself first found it necessary to have a clear understanding in my own mind of the distinctiveness of each ministry. This required my referring often to the conciliar and postconciliar documents of the Church as well as to other theological and pastoral resources. Vatican II did, indeed, provide us with a renewed perspective from which to view Church teaching. As Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger once stated, "The Council wanted to mark the transition from a protective to a missionary attitude. Many forget that for the Council the counter-concept to 'conservative' is not 'progressive' but 'missionary.'"[7] Thus it is within the context of the Church's mission of evangelization that Vatican II presented the image of the ministerial priesthood.

The Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church never treats the priesthood in isolation, as if it were a gift-apart sent down from heaven. Rather, its teaching on the ministerial priesthood is developed within the context of Christology, ecclesiology, and the apostolic ministry. *Lumen Gentium* presents the mystery of the Church, its nature, and universal mission in chapter 1. In the next chapter it speaks of the new people of God, whom Christ instituted through the new covenant in his blood (LG 9) and who "are consecrated to be a spiritual house and a holy priesthood. . . ." Yet it is careful to explain here that, "Though they differ essentially and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are none the less ordered to one another; each in its own proper order shares in the one priesthood of Christ" (LG 10). It is, then, in chapter 3 on the hierarchical

[7] Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger with Vittorio Messori, *The Ratzinger Report* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1985), 13.

structure of the Church that the Council teaches, "Christ . . . has, through his apostles, made their successors, the bishops namely, sharers in his consecration and mission; and these, in turn, duly entrusted in varying degrees various members of the Church with the office of their ministry" (LG 28).

Many Catholics are too often unaware and confused about the origins and nature of the diocesan priesthood. While serving on the faculty of the North American College recently, I was at table with some guests from the United States, and one of them inquired if I were a Jesuit. I responded, "No, I am a diocesan priest, and the College," I added, "is a seminary for training diocesan priests." The person then asked, "Who is your founder?" I gave sort of a puzzled look and he added, "I mean, like St. Ignatius founded the Jesuits and St. Francis the Franciscans. Who founded diocesan priests?" With even a stranger look on my face I answered, "Well, Jesus Christ, and by saying that I am really not trying to be facetious."

Over the years, while endeavoring to explain the special charism of the diocesan priesthood to seminarians, I have likened the diocesan priest to the physician who is a general practitioner or in family practice, the first to take care of everyone's needs. Father Robert M. Schwartz, I believe, best explained it when he experienced a situation similar to the one I related above. Introduced once by mistake as a Jesuit, he found himself responding, "No, I am a diocesan priest. The charism of diocesan priests is the mission and spirituality of the laity." He then elaborates, "Diocesan and other parish clergy have a unique charism that places them at the heart of the mission of the Church. Not only are they called forth from the laity to be priests but they also choose to continue to live among lay people, to lead communities of lay men and women, and to focus their ministry on the mission and spirituality of the laity."[8]

When I have asked seminary applicants and seminarians why they want to be a priest, not infrequently I have heard the reply, "I want to be a priest because I want to become holy." It leaves me wondering if the respondent truly believes that he cannot possibly become holy as a layperson. Is he aware of the fact that it is first of all through one's consecration at baptism that the Christian is called to holiness? As Pope John Paul II taught, recalling the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, "We come to a full sense of the dignity of the lay faithful if we consider *the prime and fundamental vocation* that the Father assigns to each of them in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit: the vocation to holiness, that is, the perfection of

[8] Robert M. Schwartz, "Servant of the Servants of God: A Pastor's Spirituality," in *The Spirituality of the Diocesan Priest*, ed. Donald B. Cozzens (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1997), 15.

charity" (CL 16). He reiterates this same point in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* before he describes the priest's "specific" vocation to holiness: "By virtue of their consecration, priests are configured to Jesus the good shepherd and are called to imitate and to live out his own pastoral charity" (PDV 22). Just as holiness for the layperson is found in the perfection of charity, so for the priest holiness is found in his faithfully living out the pastoral charity of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd.

Priests are not ordained for their own benefit but are consecrated for the sake of the laity so that they may faithfully exercise their baptismal priesthood.[9] As Pope John Paul II wrote in his 1990 Holy Thursday Letter to Priests, "The priesthood is not an institution that exists alongside the laity, or 'above' it. The priesthood of bishops and priests, as well as the ministry of deacons, is 'for' the laity, and precisely for this reason it possesses a ministerial character, that is to say one 'of service.'"[10] The spirituality of the diocesan priest finds its source not in the private or mystical vision of some founder of a religious congregation but in the priest's own personal configuration, through the outpouring of the Spirit in the sacrament of orders, to Jesus Christ "the head, shepherd and spouse of the church" (PDV 22). Through his ministry, through his exercise of pastoral charity, his faithful living out "Christ's spousal love toward the church, his bride" (ibid.), the diocesan priest is set on the right course to the perfection of life.

Pope John Paul II thus wrote, "Thanks to the insightful teaching of the Second Vatican Council, we can grasp the conditions and demands, the manifestations and fruits of the intimate bond between the priest's spiritual life and the exercise of his threefold ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral charity" (PDV 26). He then proceeded to demonstrate how each ministry contributes to the priest's growth in holiness. For instance, when preaching, the priest must first "abide" in the Word, approaching it with a docile and prayerful heart so that "it may deeply penetrate his thoughts and feelings and bring about a new outlook in him—'the mind of Christ' (1 Cor. 2:16). . . ." In celebrating the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, the priest's spiritual life is "built up and molded by the different characteristics and demands of each of the sacraments as he celebrates them. . . ." Likewise, encouraging and leading the ecclesial community "demands of the priest an intense spiritual life, filled with those qualities and virtues which are typical of a person who 'presides over' and 'leads' a community . . ." (PDV 26). The exercise and demands of ministry, when undertaken

[9] See CCC 1120.

[10] John Paul II, *Letters to My Brother Priests—Holy Thursday (1979–1994)*, ed. James P. Socias (Princeton: Scepter Publishers; Chicago: Midwest Theological Forum, 1992), 198.

faithfully with a sincere heart, serve to bring the priest into a more intimate communion with Christ and therefore with the Blessed Trinity, the God who is Love. The priest's identity flows from and leads back to the Triune God, who is the true source of every Christian identity (see PDV 12).

The first chapter of *Presbyterorum Ordinis* is entitled "The Priesthood in the Church's Mission." The title itself is significant. The priesthood can only be rightly understood within the context of mission, of being sent as Christ himself was sent by the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Council's teaching on the priesthood, both in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (LG 28) and in this decree (PO 2), begins with the Johannine reference to Jesus as the one "'whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world' (Jn. 10:36)." Consecration is for mission. Indeed, we see this same connection in Luke's gospel where Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth reads the words of the prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor" (Luke 4:18).

In *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, Pope John Paul II reported that the synod Fathers, who met in October 1990 to discuss "The Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day," continually returned to this Lukan passage as the starting point for their reflection upon the goal of seminary formation, that is, "the ministerial priesthood as a participation—in the church—in the very priesthood of Jesus Christ" (PDV 11). Referring to the synod Fathers again, he wrote, "It is within the church's mystery, as a mystery of Trinitarian communion in missionary tension, that every Christian identity is revealed, and likewise the specific identity of the priest and his ministry" (PDV 12). He further explained:

> In particular, "the priest minister is the servant of Christ present in the Church as mystery, communion and mission. In virtue of his participation in the 'anointing' and 'mission' of Christ, the priest can continue Christ's prayer, word, sacrifice and salvific action in the Church. In this way, the priest is a servant of the Church as mystery because he actuates the Church's sacramental signs of the presence of the risen Christ. He is a servant of the Church as communion because—in union with the bishop and closely related to the presbyterate—he builds up the unity of the Church community in the harmony of diverse vocations, charisms and services. Finally, the priest is a servant to the Church as mission because he makes the community a herald and witness of the Gospel."[11]

[11] PDV 16 with endnote reference to Synod of Bishops, eighth ordinary general assembly, "The Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day," *Instrumentum Laboris* 16; cf. Proposition 7.

The ministerial priesthood finds its identity in its configuration to Jesus Christ "whom the Father has consecrated and sent into the world" to bear witness to (*martyria*) and manifest in his flesh the God who is self-giving, reconciling Love—the God who is Trinity.

While serving as academic dean at the Pontifical North American College, the American seminary in Rome, from 2004 to 2007, I was asked to present a short course on the priesthood to the second-year theologians studying for dioceses in the United States and Australia. The course was part of the College's pastoral formation program and was meant to supplement the courses on the sacraments, which the seminarians attended either at the Pontifical Gregorian University or the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas. In March 2006 the Papal Visitation of Seminaries and Houses of Priestly Formation took place at the North American College. Upon reading my outline for the priesthood course, Bishop Allen H. Vigneron of the Diocese of Oakland (now archbishop of Detroit), who chaired the visitation team, approached me about possibly developing it into a book. My responsibilities as academic dean and formation advisor, as well as conducting a first-year theological seminar for students at the Pontifical Gregorian University, made it impossible to even consider such a project. I therefore remain deeply grateful to my ordinary, Bishop Joseph F. Martino, who upon my return to the Diocese of Scranton most willingly granted me a sabbatical year to undertake the task.

Every author, of course, brings an individual and limited interpretive perspective to his or her own work, depending very much upon one's personal experiences, talents, studies, and cultural influences. I write as someone who entered a college seminary upon graduation from a diocesan co-ed Catholic high school in 1964, while the Second Vatican Council was still in session. Two years later at twenty years of age, I was sent to Rome where I attended the Pontifical Roman Major Seminary, the seminary of the Diocese of Rome, and received a PhB from the Lateran University in 1968. I was then transferred to the North American College and the Gregorian University, where I obtained an STL in dogmatic theology in 1972 after having been ordained a priest of the Diocese of Scranton in December 1971.

After two years of parochial, chancery, and Catholic high school work, I returned to Rome and earned a doctorate in moral theology, summa cum laude, at the Academia Alfonsiana in 1977 under the direction of the late Father Bernard Häring, CSsR. My dissertation was entitled *Evangelization in America*.[12] It sought to demonstrate the necessary interdependence of

[12] David Bohr, *Evangelization in America: Proclamation, Way of Life, and the Catholic Church in the United States* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977).

the major theological disciplines—Scripture, doctrine, moral and spiritual theology—within the context of the Church's primary and essential mission of evangelization. Our lived faith-response to the grace of Christ, namely, the life in the Spirit proclaimed by the Gospel, is the true foundation of the Christian moral life. It furthermore constitutes the apt subject matter for a theology of Christian living, which the Second Vatican Council for all practical purposes called for when it mandated the renewal of moral theology (see OT 16). While over the years I may not have seen eye-to-eye, nor at all times concurred with some of Father Häring's conclusions on moral issues and a few other theological matters, I shall ever remain grateful to him for his overall theological vision, depth of spiritual insight, and constant encouragement always to see, first of all, God's grace operative in our world. He also initially pointed out to me what he called "my gift" of first seeing the whole before its parts, the gift of a synthetic as opposed to an analytical mind.

For thirty years I have been primarily involved in ministerial formation, teaching, diocesan administration, and evangelization programming (both on the diocesan and national levels). My assignments have included serving as diocesan director of the Office for Continuing Education of Priests (1978–89); vice-rector/academic dean (1988–90) and rector (1990–2004) of St. Pius X Seminary, Dalton, Pennsylvania (a college, pre-theology program); founding director (1984–88) and fourth director (1995–2004) of the diocesan Pastoral Formation Institute; as well as founding director of the diocesan permanent diaconate formation program (1988–2004). I have also been teaching courses in Christian formation and moral theology in all the above venues over the same time period. It is from this perspective that I write this theological reflection on the diocesan priesthood.

The Diocesan Priest: Consecrated and Sent is intended for anyone interested in reflecting upon the historical and theological developments that underlie the contemporary understanding of the ministerial priesthood, mainly within the Roman Catholic tradition. Bishops, priests, seminarians, as well as those discerning a vocation to the diocesan priesthood, are envisioned as the prospective reading audience. Chapters 1 and 2 trace the development of the understanding of priesthood from biblical times up to the eve of the Second Vatican Council. Chapter 3 reflects upon the theological meaning of "consecration" or "anointing" as it first applied to Jesus of Nazareth—the Messiah, the Christ, God's Anointed One—and then to the Christian priesthood. As found in the Sacred Scriptures, moreover, consecration is always for "mission." Chapter 4, therefore, explores the theology of mission and its unfolding in the threefold office of diocesan priests—ordained to be co-sharers with their bishops in continuing the

apostolic mission of preaching, sanctifying, and shepherding Christ's flock. In chapter 5, I conclude with a brief look at the history and theology of celibacy, a charism of the Holy Spirit that over the centuries has become an integral part of the ministerial priesthood in the Latin Rite.

Many books and articles, indeed, have been written in recent years analyzing the impact that changes within the Church and society have had upon the priesthood since the Second Vatican Council (1962–65). Some have reflected experientially upon what it means to be a priest today. Others have looked upon priests and priesthood candidates from sociological, cultural, psychological, and formational perspectives. Celibacy and the spiritual life of the priest also provide the focus of a number of these works. A few, in addition, have presented a history or theology of the priesthood. *The Diocesan Priest: Consecrated and Sent* proposes chiefly to be a "theological reflection" upon the developing understanding of the ministerial priesthood from its apostolic roots in the New Testament. The course I first presented at the North American College consisted largely of a blending of sources that I pulled together over my nearly twenty years in seminary formation. This book reflects that basic synthesis. At the same time, I hope it still captures a bit of the spirit of St. Bonaventure who maintained that theology exists not merely "to serve contemplation, but also to make us holy; in fact, its first purpose is to make us holy."[13]

[13] Bonaventure, *Prologue to the Commentary on the Book of Sentences*, 3, Quarachi ed., I, 13.

Chapter 1

Biblical Foundations of Priestly Office

Jesus said: "I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep."

—John 10:14-15

The image of the priest that comes to us from the history of religions is that of someone whose office it is to perform religious rites and make sacrificial offerings on the behalf of the people. The priest is a person set apart or consecrated to serve as a mediator between the deity and the worshiper. Originally, such cultic functions were carried out by the head of the family. The office later became a public one, and in many instances was connected with the head of a clan or the king. Thus history provides us with numberless examples of blending political activity with religious functions, like the Pharaoh in Egypt, who fulfilled the role of a king-priest. We also find examples of shamanism in which the functions of the priest and prophet or seer are combined, as was the case with Zarathustra in Persian religion. Strictly speaking, shamans are not priests since their mediatorship is not cultic but personal by nature because of a mystical gift. For our purposes in this chapter, we shall first consider the changing images of the priest in the Hebrew Scriptures. Then we will reflect upon the New Testament's understanding of Christ's priesthood and its continuance in and through the apostolic ministry of the Church.

Priests and Elders in the Hebrew Scriptures

As we search the Old Testament for antecedents to the Christian priesthood, we need to look beyond both the Aaronic priesthood and that of the Levitical line in postexilic Judaism. Indeed, when we later move into the New Testament we never find the word "priesthood" or "priest" (*hiereus*) employed to designate the ordained ministry or the ordained minister. Only the Letter to the Hebrews will use the term and apply it to Christ alone, whom it refers to as the "great high priest" (Heb 4:14ff.). Yet, as we shall shortly see, even there the concept of priesthood is developed with exceptional originality. Furthermore, the leadership instituted by the apostles in the first Christian communities more readily resembled the college of seventy elders established by Moses through his giving them a portion of his spirit (cf. Num 11:16-17). These ruling presbyters or *zeqēnîm* continued to serve within the Jewish community during the New Testament period and beyond as representatives of the people in political and religious matters, and frequently acted as judges.[1]

Scripture scholars have identified two different forms of priesthood during the historical development of Judaism. An earlier nonspecialized exercise of priestly functions was evident in the time of the patriarchs, when religious and cultic roles were carried out by the heads of families or clans. Even later Moses himself, not a priest in the strict sense, performed the sacrificial ritual of the covenant (cf. Exod 24:3-8). David and Solomon, furthermore, exercised the activities of the king-priest following the pattern of other monarchies in the Near East. Melchizedek, to whom Jesus' priesthood will be compared in the Letter to the Hebrews, was a particular example of such a king-priest outside Judaism. His meeting with Abraham is recounted in Genesis 14:18-20. This monarchical priesthood was, in fact, more ontological than functional. It arose from the king being anointed with oil at his coronation, thus constituting him a son of God in some sense. "The priestly status itself was bestowed upon the monarch by means of an oath sworn by the deity at the king's coronation: 'The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek' (Ps 110, 4)."[2] Such a royal priesthood, therefore, was considered to be more permanent and enduring than that of the ordinary priests who ministered in the many local Jewish sanctuaries.

[1] See CCC 1541: "The liturgy of the Church, however, sees in the priesthood of Aaron and the service of the Levites, as in the institution of the seventy elders [cf. Num 11:24-25], a prefiguring of the ordained ministry of the New Covenant."

[2] D. W. Rooke, "Jesus as Royal Priest: Reflections on the Interpretation of the Melchizedek Tradition in Heb 7," *Biblica* 81 (2000): 81.

A specialized priestly function connected with the tribe of Levi emerged during the period of the Judges. The priest, called in Hebrew *kōhēn*, was fundamentally a man attached to a sanctuary or temple, where he carried out sanctuary duties on a day-to-day basis. Until the limitation of the priestly ritual to Jerusalem, which occurred sometime just before the Babylonian exile, groups of priests also served other sanctuaries, such as at Shiloh (1 Sam 1–3) and Nob (1 Sam 21–22). They attended the Ark in the sanctuaries at Shiloh and Kiriath-jearim (1 Sam 7:11), as well as in Jerusalem. Priests alone were allowed to carry the Ark when it was moved (1 Sam 4:4-11; 2 Sam 6:6-7; 15:24-29). We do not find anywhere in Israel the idea that one was divinely called to be a priest. Priesthood was simply a job, a function that came to be hereditary once it was exclusively associated with the tribe of Levi in the postexilic period.

In addition to their ritual or cultic functions, Israelite priests in the early period also delivered oracles to disclose the will of God by using objects called Urim and Thummim inside an ephod, which was a sort of cultic instrument kept in a sanctuary or near the Ark (1 Sam 2:18; 2 Sam 6:14). They thus manifested the divine mind in terms of a yes or a no, or by indicating "this" action rather than an alternative. Later in the royal period the priests were given the further task of preserving and handing down the law, ordinarily pronouncing on questions of the separation of the holy from the profane.[3] They carried out all their functions under the authority of the high priest. After the Exile, however, the law came to be interpreted principally by legal scholars and the scribes. The priests now confined their activities to worship and the offering of sacrifices.

When men were installed as priests, they were "made holy" (in Hebrew *qiddēš*—cf. 1 Sam 7:1). Holiness was not here considered to be a moral quality, but rather referred to being set apart to serve God, who alone is holy. To make someone a priest was to separate him from the profane so that he could more appropriately approach God as a mediator on behalf of the people by bringing their prayers and sacrifices into the sanctuary or temple. Virtually nothing is known about any ritual acts utilized to initiate men into priestly service in the preexilic period. After the exile we do find descriptions of ceremonies used to consecrate or ordain priests and high priests (cf. Exod 29 and Lev 8). Indeed, it seems that the rite of royal anointing was transferred from a prophet to the high priest. The anointing of ordinary priests was a custom introduced only later. During this same period the high priest was not only the head of cult, but he also

[3] See John J. Castelot and Aelred Cody, OSB, "Religious Institutions of Israel," in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* 76:9.

became the president of the Sanhedrin and the chief representative of the people to the foreign powers ruling Palestine during these centuries.

The Sanhedrin, a council of ruling elders or presbyters (*zeqēnîm*), can be traced back to the establishment of a college of seventy elders by Moses (cf. Num 11:16-17). Both the Jewish and Christian concepts of the presbyterate are based upon this latter body. By the time of the Roman occupation of Palestine every Jewish community had its own sanhedrin or *zeqēnîm* elected by the people to administer the community's affairs. They interpreted the law, collected and distributed alms to the needy, and had charge of the local synagogues and the Temple in Jerusalem. These Jewish presbyters of the Roman era, although not of the priestly line, were ordained by the laying on of hands. This practice finds its origin in Moses' laying on of hands and sharing his spirit with Joshua, who in turn shared it with the elders of Israel (Num 27:18ff.; Deut 34:9).[4] The ritual laying on of hands thus came to denote the imparting of the divine spirit in order to carry out an assigned task or mission.

Prior to the Babylonian exile, it must be noted, the prophets also played a major religious leadership role in Judaism. Derived from the Greek *prophētēs*, literally "one who speaks before others," the prophet was someone who communicated divine revelation. Like the priests, they too were set apart or sanctified not by contact with the altar but by their possession of and by the word of God. Samuel was one of the first to appear on the scene in Israel. He was a judge as well as a prophet. At the word of Yahweh he installed Saul as king (cf. 1 Sam 7–10). Then he delivered an oracle deposing Saul (duplicate accounts in 1 Sam 13 and 15) and anointed David as king (1 Sam 16:1-13). Samuel offers sacrifice (1 Sam 16:2) as does the prophet Elijah on Mount Carmel (1 Kgs 18:18-46). Moses, moreover, came to be revered as the greatest of all the prophets. He was the supreme example of one who receives the word of Yahweh and speaks it to Israel. In the postexilic community, however, the written word of the law replaced the spoken word of the prophets. The connection, nevertheless, between the one who proclaims the Word and the one who offers sacrifice continued in the early Christian church, where itinerant apostles and prophets are invited to preside at the Eucharist.

As the Old Testament transitions to the New, John the Baptist arrives on stage as the last and greatest of the prophets (Matt 11:7-14; Luke 7:24-28). His parents, Zechariah and Elizabeth, both belonged to priestly families (Luke 1:5). In John the Jewish belief that Elijah would return before the

[4] James A. Mohler, SJ, *The Origin and Evolution of the Priesthood* (Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1970), 3.

Messiah was fulfilled (Matt 17:13). His mission was to prepare the way for Jesus by baptizing the crowds that came to him at the Jordan River with a baptism of repentance. Jesus himself came from Nazareth in Galilee to be baptized. John testified to him saying, "The one who has the bride is the bridegroom; the best man, who stands and listens for him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made complete. He must increase; I must decrease" (John 3:29-30). Jesus of Nazareth is the long-awaited "messiah" (in Hebrew *māšîah*), the Christ (in Greek *christos*), God's "anointed" one. In the Old Testament this title was reserved principally for kings (1 Sam 16:6; 2 Sam 19:22) but was also applied to prophets (Ps 105:15) and priests (Lev 4:3; Dan 9:25-26). The gospels thus testify that Jesus is "the Christ" anointed as prophet, priest, and king.

Jesus the Good Shepherd: A Royal Priesthood

The gospels clearly proclaim that Jesus is the "son of David" (Matt 22:42; Mark 12:35; Luke 20:41), a descendant of the royal house of Judah, from which the Messiah was to come. Jesus is not a member of the priestly tribe of Levi, and he never applies the title "priest" (*hiereus*) either to himself or to his disciples. However, one should not imply from this fact that Jesus did not view his life and ministry as priestly service. Just as Jesus prohibited the use of the term Messiah in application to himself (Matt 16:20f.; Mark 1:34; 8:30; Luke 4:41; 9:21), because the popular understanding of the title would have been altogether misleading, so too, a comparable situation would have come into play with the title of "priest." Indeed, the priesthood Jesus claims was not like the Jewish priesthood then in place.

The Letter to the Hebrews is the only New Testament work that speaks explicitly of Christ as priest. Written for Jewish Christians who were having second thoughts about their newfound faith, the author wanted to demonstrate that the worship of the old covenant was superseded by the sacrifice of Jesus, and that although Jesus was not a member of the tribe of Levi, his priesthood is vindicated by the application to him of the priesthood of Melchizedek. As Father Jean Galot, SJ, points out, "The Epistle contains a comprehensive doctrine on the priesthood and sacrifice of the Son of God, cast within the cultic framework of the Old Testament, which is itself construed as a prefiguration whose whole reality is to be found in Jesus proclaimed forever a priest of the order of Melchizedek."[5] By

[5] Jean Galot, SJ, *Theology of Priesthood* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1985), 31.

comparing the priesthood of Jesus Christ to "the order of Melchizedek," the Letter to the Hebrews wishes to state the fact that it is a royal priesthood constituted by Jesus' divine Sonship. It is "ontological" and not merely functional. The priesthood of Jesus Christ, indeed, far surpasses the Levitical priesthood in reality and scope, just as his messiahship transcends the expectations current among the Jews of his time.

In chapter 7 of the Letter to the Hebrews we find an extended comparison drawn between Jesus and the king-priest Melchizedek, while in Hebrews 8:1–10:18 the author presents us with an elaborate description of Jesus' saving work by referring to the functions of the Aaronic high priest on the Day of Atonement.[6] This New Testament epistle accordingly brings together in a unique way the two major Christological strands of sonship and priesthood (see Heb 5:5-6), which are elements of the ancient royal ideology and a defining component of messianism. According to the Old Testament tradition, Melchizedek is not only a priest but a king (Gen 14:18).

> His name first means righteous king, and he was also "king of Salem," that is, king of peace. Without father, mother, or ancestry, without beginning of days or end of life, thus made to resemble the Son of God, he remains a priest forever. (Heb 7:2b-3)

The royal component of Melchizedek's identity is an all-important interpretative key often passed over in theological treatises on the priestly Christology put forth in this Letter. "Coming as they do, therefore, right at the start of the exposition in Heb 7," D. W. Rooke maintains, "the etymologies of Melchizedek's name set a definite royal tone which is all too easily overlooked in the rush to concentrate on the priestly aspects of the exposition."[7] Righteousness and peace, furthermore, have long been regarded as specific qualities having messianic connotations.

In attempting to explain the nature of Jesus' royal priesthood, the Letter to the Hebrews states, "It is clear that our Lord arose from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests" (Heb 7:14). The word "arose" (*anatellō*) occurs in the Septuagint to denote the appearance of a messianic figure. Jesus being a member of the tribe of Judah satisfies perfectly the messianic criteria that are readily explainable in terms of the ancient sacral kingship.[8] He is a priest by virtue of his identity as king or

[6] Rooke, "Jesus as Royal Priest: Reflections on the Interpretation of the Melchizedek Tradition in Heb 7," 82.

[7] Ibid., 86.

[8] Ibid., 90.

Messiah. Jesus, moreover, obtains his priesthood not according to a legal requirement concerning "physical descent but by the power of a life that cannot be destroyed" (Heb 7:16). This is another way of saying that he has been anointed by the power of the Spirit through his Resurrection and remains a priest forever. Lastly, the priesthood of Jesus is granted by an oath ensuring its permanency (Heb 7:20-22) and attesting to the reality that it is the "ontological" priesthood of the monarch, which in itself is qualitatively different from the "functional" priesthood of the Levites, including the high priest.

The author of the Letter to the Hebrews proceeds to describe Jesus' priestly ministry in chapters 8 and 9 in terms of the Levitical high priest. He does not continue his "sacral monarch" theme throughout the priestly analogy but resorts to a mixture of metaphors to depict the many facets of Christ's saving work. Most important, at the same time Jesus is shown functioning as high priest, he is also portrayed as the sacrificial victim (Heb 9:11-14). Jesus as both priest and victim adds a whole new dimension and a qualitative difference to the duties carried out by the earthly priests. Christ's ministrations are definitely efficacious in a way that those of ordinary priests are not (Heb 9:13-14, 24-26; 10:11-14). The Jewish high priest went through numerous ablutions and purifications before entering the Holy of Holies to "see the face of the Lord," but Jesus is purified by his filial obedience and enters the true Holy of Holies by his Resurrection, having offered one sacrifice for sins once and for all (Heb 10:1-18). The redemptive action of Jesus in his irrevocable status of unending self-gift also purifies those in union with him, insofar as they share with him in a priesthood of love and filial obedience. Here we find the true meaning of Christian priesthood and worship "in Spirit and truth" (John 4:23).

The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews finds himself grappling to explain in cultic terms familiar to his audience the true revolution in the meaning of "sanctity," "sacrifice," and "worship" that has transpired with the unfolding of Christ's paschal mystery. Thus, D. W. Rooke writes, "When viewed in this light, the link between chapters 7 and 8–9 becomes clear: all three chapters use the earthly cult as a foil for their descriptions of Jesus' work in terms of a new and better priesthood. . . . [Here] cult is not the norm to which Jesus' ministry is being assimilated, but the element to which it is being contrasted."[9] Indeed, the gospels record that Jesus' attitude toward the comportment of the priests of his day was less than favorable. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, for example, he tells of both a priest and a Levite who "passed by on the opposite side" of the

[9] Ibid., 93.

road without stopping to help the wounded man (Luke 10:31-32). They resort to the legalism of cultic impurity in order to justify their wanton failure to show to a neighbor the love to which he is entitled. The Samaritan, on the other hand, who refuses to be hampered by racial and cultic constraints, exemplifies the compassion, love, and generosity that are to be distinctively characteristic of the new priesthood.

The image of the "shepherd" best embodies for Jesus his own understanding of his ministry. The shepherd image has distinctly "priestly" connotations. He is "the good shepherd" who "lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). At the same time, the shepherd image expands the understanding of priesthood beyond its cultic functions. In the ancient East the shepherd and king motifs are closely allied. As Walter Kasper observes, "Behind both stood the question of sound and healthy order, which gives protection against ruin and chaos, the question of leadership and guidance, security, tranquility and peace."[10] Yahweh is king (Exod 15:18; Ps 145:11ff.; 146:10; etc.) and Yahweh is Israel's shepherd (Ps 23; Gen 48:15; 49:24; etc.). Jesus was reserved in applying the messianic expectations to himself. As Cardinal Kasper further elaborates:

> [T]he Cross destroyed them [i.e., the messianic expectations] completely and made it clear that his rule was of a different order, that of service to the many. So he knows he is sent as a shepherd to seek out the lost sheep (Lk 15:4-7; Mt 18:12-14); he has compassion on the throng that is scattered and without a shepherd (Mk 6:34; Mt 9:36). Consequently he wants to gather together the lost sheep of Israel (Mt 10:6, 15:24). Under the image of shepherd he sees his own death (Mk 14:27f.) as well as the Last Judgment (Mt 25:32). The image of the shepherd, in fact, takes up Jesus' words about discipleship; Jesus goes before those who are his on the way. . . . The fullest treatment of Jesus as the good, that is, true shepherd, is found in the fourth gospel; he gives his life for his sheep, knows his own who know they are safe with him (Jn 10:11-16).[11]

Mark's gospel, moreover, records that the heart of Jesus "was moved with pity" for the vast crowd because "they were like sheep without a shepherd" (6:34). This image is borrowed from Numbers 27:17 where it reflects Moses' anxiety to find a successor lest they be without leadership (see Ezek 34:5).

Important for us to note here is the context in which Mark places Jesus' observation. In the beginning of the passage (Mark 6:30-34), the apostles

[10] Walter Kasper, *Jesus the Christ* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1976), 263.
[11] Ibid.

have just returned from their first evangelizing mission. He invites them to get some rest. They get in a boat and head for a deserted place, but the crowd sees them departing and it rushes on ahead of them. When they arrive at the place and Jesus sees the crowd, his heart is moved with pity and "he began to teach them many things" (v. 34). After teaching them at length there is concern about them being hungry, so Jesus tells his disciples,[12] "Give them some food yourselves" (v. 37). Jesus ends up taking and blessing five loaves and two fish and giving them to his disciples to set before the "five thousand men." After all were satisfied, "they picked up twelve wicker baskets full of fragments" (v. 43).

This whole episode presents Jesus as the new Moses, who leads and shepherds his flock in the desert—"a deserted place"—by teaching them and feeding them with the true bread come down from heaven (cf. John 6:48-51). Here he clearly incorporates the apostles in his mission and ministry of shepherding the flock. There are "twelve wicker baskets full of fragments" left over. The Twelve are meant to continue to feed the new Israel from the table of the Word and the table of the Eucharist. As Father Jean Galot, SJ, explains:

> In Christ the shepherd, we find a triple priestly function which corresponds to the three titles which, in the Old Testament perspective, are distinct from each other: prophet, priest, king. This is a sign that Christ intends the mission of the priest to go beyond the sphere of worship which is the specific concern of the priesthood. In the priesthood, he has conjoined the prophetic, the cultic, and the royal functions.[13]

The shepherd image in the Old Testament is also associated with the Servant of God image in Isaiah, who "offers his life in atonement" (Isa 52:10).

The priesthood of the shepherd truly comes to the fore in the Johannine perspective when Jesus asserts, "A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). With these words Jesus recalls the fourth Servant Song of Isaiah, where the Servant "gives his life as an offering for sin" (Isa 53:10). This sacrifice of atonement is priestly in nature and alludes to the high priest, who on the Day of Atonement sprinkles the people with the

[12] Mark's gospel often uses "disciples" and "apostles" interchangeably. "The Twelve" form a special inner group of Jesus' disciples and are sometimes referred to as apostles. We shall see below that the term "apostle" is also applied to others elsewhere in the New Testament.

[13] Galot, *Theology of Priesthood*, 45.

blood of the victims. Jesus thus integrates the personal sacrifice of his own life with his mission and ministry of service. He tells the apostles, "For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). In its original sense, ministry means service. In addition, for Jesus, ministry also means life-giving personal sacrifice. Father Galot sums up the concerted significance of these scriptural passages when he writes, "By declaring that he came to serve, Jesus offers himself as a model to all those who would be called upon to exercise the priestly authority after him."[14]

In the Gospel according to John, Jesus further specifies his mission when at the Last Supper he states, "I am the way and the truth and the life" (John 14:6). In the words of Cardinal Kasper, "Jesus Christ through his Spirit is the way (pastor and king), the truth (prophet and teacher) and the life (priest) of the world."[15] This is the same threefold ministry Jesus then entrusted to the apostles, when immediately before his ascension in Matthew's gospel he gives them the great commission:

> All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations [*pastor and king*], baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit [*priest*], teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you [*prophet and teacher*]. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age. (Matt 28:18-20)

All four gospel accounts, in fact, conclude with Jesus sending his apostles to accomplish—in, with, and through his enduring presence—what has become known in traditional teaching as his threefold office of prophet, priest, and shepherd. "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21; cf. also John 17:18).

Just as Jesus Christ himself was the way, the truth, and the life, so the apostles must be the same in their turn, like him, with him, and in him. Employing the image of the good shepherd who "lays down his life for the sheep," Jesus has taken the profession of his royal priesthood to a higher level. In effect this image, in the words of Father Galot, has "the advantage of evoking an authority which unfolds in the direction of love. . . . The ministry of the shepherd has a dynamic facet: it entails the effort at gathering a community that will continue to increase in numbers, and will reach out to those who are still outside."[16] It is primarily and

[14] Ibid., 44–45.
[15] Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, 259.
[16] Ibid., 49, 50.

essentially a ministry serving the mission of evangelization, the ultimate goal being that "there will be one flock, one shepherd" (John 10:16).

Apostleship and the Development of Presbyteral Ministry in the New Testament

The call of the apostles is one of the first steps Jesus took after his baptism in the Jordan. "He went up the mountain and summoned those whom he wanted and they came to him. He appointed twelve [whom he also named apostles] that they might be with him and he might send them forth to preach and to have authority to drive out demons" (Mark 3:13-15). Reflecting on this passage, Pope Benedict XVI states:

> In choosing the Twelve, introducing them into a communion of life with himself and involving them in his mission of proclaiming the Kingdom of God in words and works (cf. Mk 6:7-13; Mt 10:5-8; Lk 9:1-6; 6:13), Jesus wants to say that the definitive time has arrived in which to constitute the new People of God, the people of the twelve tribes, which now becomes a universal people, his Church.[17]

The word "apostle" (*apostolos*) means someone who is sent. Jesus "went up the mountain" (a place of divine revelation) and summons the Twelve "that they might be with him" before he sends them forth on mission to preach and cast out demons. They are called in order to be sent. Their vocation is for mission, but before they can go forth to evangelize they need to spend time with Jesus and establish a personal relationship with him. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI, "An apostle is one who is sent, but even before that he is an 'expert' on Jesus."[18] The apostles do not simply impart a message or communicate doctrine, they are sent forth as "witnesses" of the Risen Christ (Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8), inviting their listeners to encounter God's Word in person.

[17] Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, March 15, 2006, in *The Apostles: The Origins of the Church and Their Co-Workers* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2007), 11–12. In his *Jesus of Nazareth* (New York: Doubleday, 2007), 171, Benedict XVI further reflects on the words in Mark 3:14, "he appointed [literally: 'made'] twelve." He writes: "The first thing to ponder is the expression 'he made twelve,' which sounds strange to us. In reality, these words of the Evangelist take up the Old Testament terminology for appointment to the priesthood (cf. Kings 12:31; 13:33) and thus characterize apostolic office as priestly ministry."

[18] Ibid., 14.

When first commissioning the Twelve during his public ministry, Jesus gave them the instruction, "Do not go into pagan territory or enter a Samaritan town. Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt 10:5b-6). According to the Messianic expectation of Israel, God himself would gather his people through his Chosen One as a shepherd gathers his flock (Ezek 34:22-24). Through this "gathering together" of the people of Israel, the kingdom of God would be proclaimed to all the nations. Such was not to happen before Jesus' Passion, death, and Resurrection, so the Risen Lord then sends his apostles forth to "make disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:19). For this mission, however, Jesus at the Last Supper first prayed for them to the Father: "Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth" (John 17:17-19).

The Word-made-flesh, in the total and obedient surrender of his life in love on the Cross, consecrates himself so that the apostles might likewise be consecrated in the same self-sacrificing and reconciling love for the sake of continuing his mission—the mission of gathering together disciples from all nations into the new Israel, the Church (*ecclesia*). Thus, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, "it is clear that the entire mission of the Son-made-flesh has a communitarian finality."[19] Apostolic ministry in the New Testament, as a consequence, can only be properly understood in the context of ecclesiology and mission.

Central, moreover, to any understanding of ministry in the postresurrection, apostolic period is the steadfast belief that the Risen Lord continues to be present as the head of his Body, the Church. It is Christ and he alone who continues to shepherd and gather his flock. Jesus assured the Eleven at their great commissioning: "And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Matt 28:20). While the apostles are delegated to act in his name, they do not exercise authority in his stead. "They bear witness to his guiding presence. They allow his Spirit to work through them for the direction and nurture of the community."[20] They sacramentally proclaim Christ's abiding presence as head and shepherd of his flock.

Just as Christ himself is portrayed as the Apostle of the Father, so those whom he sends as apostles represent what he is himself. "Whoever listens

[19] Pope Benedict XVI, *The Apostles*, General Audience of Wednesday, March 15, 2006 (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2007), 10.

[20] Bernard Cooke, *Ministry to Word and Sacraments: History and Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 48.

to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me. And whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me" (Luke 10:16; also Matt 10:40).[21] Saint Paul best sums up the apostles' role when he writes, "Thus should one regard us: as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor 4:1). Nowhere in the New Testament does one find a trace of the notion that some designated minister has the function to "make Christ present," for he is never considered to be absent from the gathering of the faithful, from the Church, which is his Body (Matt 18:20).[22]

During his earthly life Jesus sent his disciples to announce the imminent approach of the kingdom of God by words and signs. After the Resurrection they themselves witnessed to the inauguration of the kingdom that had come about through his paschal mystery. Apostolic ministry thus is first and foremost a matter of proclamation; it is a prophetic ministry of proclaiming the gospel, a ministry of the Spirit (*diakonia toū pneúmatos*—2 Cor 3:8). As Father Gisbert Greshake explains:

> By the apostolic preaching, the self-offering of Jesus for the world is made present; it comes to us 'in the form of the word.' Indeed, it can be said that in Apostolic preaching the Lord himself causes us to come in contact with his sacrifice and in it with himself 'in the form of the word.' . . . Consequently apostolic office can be called 'priestly': not because it has responsibility for cult or because it offers 'sacrifice', but because it testifies to the self-sacrifice of Jesus for us, making this sacrifice present for us as a gift and a task to be performed by us, and because it founds and leads local communities according to this 'programme.'[23]

Saint Paul describes himself as "a minister (*leitourgos*) of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in performing the priestly service (*hierurgein*) of the gospel of God, so that the offering up of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the holy Spirit" (Rom 15:16). Bernard Cooke writes, "Really what the New Testament evidence seems to point to quite conclusively is the view that the Eucharistic breaking of bread is essentially an act of evangelic proclamation."[24] Indeed, St. Paul states, "For as often as you eat this bread

[21] See Joseph Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987), 273. Title of German original: *Theologische Prinzipienlehre* (Munich: Erich Wewel Verlag, 1982).

[22] Cooke, *Ministry to Word and Sacraments*, 530.

[23] Gisbert Greshake, *The Meaning of Christian Priesthood* (Dublin: Four Courts Press; Westminister, MD: Christian Classics, 1988), 45. Translation by Fr. Peadar MacSeumais, SJ, of *Priestersein* (Freiburg–Basel–Vienna: Herder, 1982).

[24] Cooke, *Ministry to Word and Sacraments*, 529.

and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes" (1 Cor 11:26).

Immediately prior to the passage just cited from First Corinthians, St. Paul had just taken the Christian community of Corinth to task because of their lack of unity and discipline when they gathered for the Lord's Supper (vv. 17-22). He tells them, "For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself" (v. 29). Paul's reference to "discerning the body" here does not refer to the eucharistic species but rather to all the members of the community (see 1 Cor 10:17). If apostolic ministry of its very nature is primarily the proclamation of the gospel, its content is reconciliation both with God and with one another, thereby building up the Body of Christ.

In Second Corinthians, while proclaiming that we have become a "new creation" in Christ through his death and Resurrection, Paul adds, "And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ *and* given us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor 5:18, emphasis added). "Thus at a decisive point, where Paul is describing the central doctrine of the Christian faith, he speaks in the same breath of the ultimate foundation and basic essence of his apostolic office: by the decisive salvific act of reconciliation, God has at the same time and by the same act instituted the ministry of reconciliation."[25] The import of Paul's perspective here must not be overlooked. Ministry or office in the Church has its origin in Christ's paschal mystery and flows from there as the ministry of reconciliation.

Clearly the apostle carries out his ministry as an "ambassador" for Christ. The apostle represents Christ, and this representation is definitely not to be understood in the sense that Christ is absent. Rather, he is a "co-worker" of God (1 Cor 3:9; 1 Thess 3:2) and sacramental sign of Christ himself who continues to be present in his Church. Indeed, such ministry does not replace an immediate relationship with Christ, but actually makes such a relationship possible. Saint Paul, for this reason, primarily sees his work of ministry as introducing others into the life of Christ: "I am again in labor until Christ be formed in you!" (Gal 4:19). And to this end he acts with the authority of Jesus Christ (1 Thess 4:2), who conferred upon the apostles the power to forgive sins (John 20:22-23).

Saint Paul sees his authority as a genuine pastoral power by which he can ask obedience from others (see Phil 2:12; 1 Cor 11:34; 16:1) and even punish disobedience (2 Cor 10:6). He explains that this power (*exousia*)

[25] Greshake, *The Meaning of Christian Priesthood*, 34.

has been given him for the sake of building up, not tearing down (2 Cor 10:8). For Paul, moreover, being personally called by Christ is a constitutive element of apostolic ministry (e.g., Gal 1:10-17), and apostleship, as a result, is a specific office that does not belong to all the faithful (1 Cor 12:29). The apostle, finally, can be said to possess a special authority of service (*diakonia*) in two senses. First, he represents and serves Christ, speaking only what Christ gives him to say (Rom 15:18) and rendering an account to him (1 Cor 4:4ff.). Second, he serves the community by not lording it over their faith but by working together with them for their joy (2 Cor 1:24).

By contrast with this developing theology of apostleship, no single pattern of leadership appears to emerge as normative during the first generation for all local churches. Indeed, actual historical details are either scant or nonexistent, and the available sources provide information that is too brief and difficult to interpret. We do know that in the New Testament the title of apostle was extended beyond the Twelve and St. Paul. Indeed, Barnabas (Acts 14:4) and the otherwise unknown Andronicus and Junias (Rom 16:7) are also called "apostles," and Paul includes apostleship among the charismatic offices of the Church (Eph 2:20). Even during Jesus' earthly ministry, Luke records the mission of the seventy-two, which does not differ in power and scope from the mission of the Twelve as he reports it (Luke 9:2-5).

Luke in Acts 6:1-6 recounts the ordination of the Seven, the first ordination to be reported in the life of the early Church. This step was taken to resolve the tension between the Hebrew- and Greek-speaking sections of the Jerusalem church. The Twelve told the community: "It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve at table. Brothers, select from among you seven reputable men, filled with the Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint to this task, whereas we shall devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (vv. 2-4). Although they were called to "service" (*diakonia*), Luke does not explicitly refer to the Seven as "deacons." Thus, while this passage has become the classical biblical reference for the institution of the diaconate, another interpretation stretching all the way back to John Chrysostom sees here the actual beginning of the presbyteral ministry. Far from limiting their ministry to charitable relief, one of them, Stephen, was actively engaged in preaching; another, Philip, in evangelizing.

The Seven in Acts are clearly portrayed in the role of presbyteral apostolic assistants. Some scholars view their daily distribution of food to widows as an obvious allusion to the Eucharist. In addition, the term "widow" in the New Testament refers not only to those who are needy

but also to women who lived some form of consecrated life. This whole scenario evokes Luke's earlier description of the daily life of the Jerusalem community: "Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes" (Acts 2:46).[26] In such case, ordained assistants would obviously be needed to help with the daily eucharistic celebrations held in Christian households throughout the city.

Later, when Palestinian Christian Jews, who were scattered by persecution, preach the Gospel in Antioch, many Greeks came to believe. The Jerusalem church then sends Barnabas to organize the community there (Acts 11:20-22). A nucleus of prophet-teachers, which included Saul, gathered around Barnabas. As Mohler writes, "Teaching was an important charism in the early Church, often overlapping apostleship and prophecy. False teachers were common and early documents are constantly warning against them."[27] These prophet-teachers in Antioch with a laying on of hands send Saul and Barnabas to do missionary work elsewhere. The inspiration to do so occurred during a liturgical celebration. These "prophets and teachers" were celebrating liturgy; they played an essential cultic role.

Afterward, as Paul and Barnabas traveled throughout the diaspora, we are told they appointed presbyters to govern the local churches (Acts 14:23). From all that we can piece together from the New Testament evidence, it appears that two forms of ecclesiastical organization developed in the infant Church: "at Jerusalem the Church is governed by a sanhedrin of presbyters under the presidency of James, while in Antioch the Christian community is under a delegated apostle, living temporarily in the community in order to organize it."[28]

In the Pastoral Epistles to Timothy and Titus we see further developments in the role of the Christian presbyters along with a distinction being made between the college of presbyters and its guardian president (*episkopos*). The qualifications for the office of deacon are also given (1 Tim 3:8-13). Furthermore, Timothy and Titus served as regional apostolic vicars of the apostles. As such, their task was twofold. First, they served as custodians or guardians of the truths of divine revelation contained in the apostolic preaching (2 Tim 4:1-5). Second, they organized the apostolic ministry in the local churches by ordaining bishops and deacons, while assuring that the presbyters were fittingly honored (1 Tim 3:1-13; 5:17). They were

[26] Galot, *Theology of Priesthood*, 160–62.
[27] Mohler, *The Origin and Evolution of the Priesthood*, 19.
[28] Ibid., 18.

cautioned to choose such men with care and "not lay hands too readily on anyone" (1 Tim 5:21). By the end of the first century, however, the "bishop" (*episkopos*) is still not clearly distinct from the "presbyter." The threefold hierarchy, which Ignatius of Antioch (d. AD 107) took for granted, is not yet found universally nor is it clearly defined.[29]

An outline for apostolic succession may also be found in the New Testament. In his farewell address to the presbyters of the Church of Ephesus (Acts 20:18-35), St. Paul is "attempting to demonstrate the bond between the apostolic and postapostolic Church by depicting the transfer of pastoral responsibility from apostle to presbyters, who thus become, in practice, the 'successors of the apostles.'"[30] The office of presbyter is an institution of the Holy Spirit, who has appointed them "overseers" (*episkopoi*) of the whole flock (v. 28). The reference to the presbyters being appointed overseers of the flock connotes once again the image of shepherd and shows, as of yet, the lack of a clear distinction between the office of bishop and that of the presbyter. In like manner, 1 Peter 5:1-4 employs the image of shepherd to describe the presbyteral ministry, when the author instructs them, "Do not lord it over those assigned to you, but be examples to the flock" (v. 3). In this passage also the two offices of apostle and presbyter are identified with each other. Thus Ratzinger states, "This, in my opinion, is the strongest linking of the two offices to be found in the New Testament. In practice, it means a transfer of the theology of apostleship to the presbyterate."[31]

What becomes clear in our quest for the biblical foundations of the priestly office in the Church is that we have to begin with the unique and eternal high priesthood of Jesus Christ, who as the Good Shepherd—the true and perfect Pastor—gives his life for his sheep whom he knows by name. His is a royal or "ontological" priesthood. Jesus thus completely redefines the "functional" cultic priesthood as well as the idea of sacrifice by his total self-gift in reconciling Love on the Cross. He is the Good Shepherd and not "a hired hand" (John 10:11-13). After his Resurrection, he continues to be present as the head and Shepherd of his flock, his Church. As Risen Lord, he commissions the apostles, who were with him "beginning from the baptism of John" (Acts 1:22), to go forth in his name and continue his mission and ministry of proclaiming the Gospel and making disciples of all the nations. Thus in the words of the then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, "Apostleship is the immediate measure and starting

[29] André Lemaire, *Ministry in the Church* (London: SPCK, 1977), 16.
[30] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 278.
[31] Ibid., 279.

point of the office of presbyter. As a continuation of the mission of Jesus Christ, it is, in the first place an office of evangelization. But the ministry of the word, which it thus represents, is to be understood against the background of the incarnate and crucified Word."[32]

The Universal Priesthood of the New Covenant

Jesus applied the title "priest" (*hiereus*) neither to himself nor to his disciples. Indeed, the designation of priest is first applied in the New Testament to the Christian community in 1 Peter 2:5, 9 and Revelation 1:6; 5:10; and 20:6, recalling the promise God had made to the whole Jewish nation: "You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation" (Exod 19:6; similarly in Isa 61:6). Certainly this text does not mean that the cultic functions attributed to the priestly tribe of Levi had been transferred to the people. Rather, through the Sinai covenant Israel received "the vocation to establish the right worship of God in the midst of the peoples who do not know him. As the chosen people, Israel has the mission to be the place of true adoration and thus to be at once priesthood and temple for the whole world."[33] Through baptism, which is now seen as the new Sinai, Israel's election passes over to the Church as the new people of God (Rom 15:16). The universal priesthood is understood as strictly collective. It refers to the people as a whole and to the individual only to the extent that he belongs to this people. "Priestly people" is thus a title of honor transferred to the new Israel and does not express a permanent or temporary office of any kind.[34]

The New Testament passages, furthermore, always speak in terms of a "royal" priesthood, accenting its ontological character. It is a participation in Christ's own priesthood, in his self-gift for the life of the world. "Christians are a priestly people because they are the Body of him who is the one high priest; in joining their lives and persons to his sacrifice they are giving to the Father the worship that is due."[35] Therefore, St. Paul writes to the Church at Rome:

[32] Ibid., 281.

[33] Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Called to Communion: Understanding the Church Today* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), 125.

[34] Greshake, *The Meaning of Christian Priesthood*, 48.

[35] Cooke, *Ministry to Word and Sacraments*, 530.

> I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect. (Rom 12:1-2)

Paul here exhorts the Romans to offer their bodies as "a living sacrifice . . . your spiritual worship [*logike latreia*]." In Greek, *logike latreia* means worship characterized by the word (*logos*). Ratzinger explains, "We ask that the Logos, Christ, who *is* the true sacrifice, may 'logify' us, make us 'more consistent with the word', 'more truly rational', so that his sacrifice may become ours and may be accepted by God as ours. . . . We pray that his presence might pick us up, so that we become 'one body and one spirit' with him."[36]

Saint Paul urges us not to offer some external or material sacrifice, as people once did with the physical sacrifices of old. Rather, he is telling us that we ourselves must become Eucharist with Christ. This involves an entire "metamorphosis" or transformation of mind and body "that takes us beyond this world's scheme of things, beyond sharing in what 'people' think and say and do, and into the will of God—thus we enter into what is good and pleasing to God and perfect."[37] Also, in the Johannine gospel we read of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, where Jesus says, "But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him" (John 4:23). Galot comments, "Recent exegetical research shows that the expression 'in spirit and in truth' evokes on the one hand the Holy Spirit, and on the other the Truth-in-Person, namely, Christ."[38] Through the Spirit given at baptism each Christian is immersed into the truth of Christ's self-giving and reconciling love, his redeeming sacrifice, which itself calls for the surrender of the self. In this new worship, each one must be engaged and personally responsible for his or her own self-offering.

[36] Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith: The Church as Communion* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 116 (emphasis in the original), where the author adds: "We find the same word, too, in the Roman Canon, where we ask, immediately before the Consecration, that our sacrifice may be made *rationabilis*. It is not enough—indeed, it is quite wrong—to translate this as saying that it should become rational. We are asking rather that it may become a logos-sacrifice."

[37] Ibid., 117–18.

[38] Galot, *Theology of the Priesthood*, 113.

This universal priesthood of the baptized no more negates the ministerial priesthood of the Church than the common priesthood of Israel did away with the priestly ministrations of the tribe of Levi. Quite the contrary, the priestly office continues the apostolic ministry instituted by Christ in service to the priestly people of God. Indeed, St. Paul states that Christ "gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Eph 4:11-12). The ministerial priesthood exists "to equip" the baptized to carry out their priestly mission of evangelization in the world. In the words of Joseph Ratzinger, "The ultimate end of all New Testament liturgy and of all priestly ministry is to make the world as a whole a temple and a sacrificial offering to God. This is to bring about the inclusion of the whole world into the Body of Christ, so that God may be all in all (cf. 1 Cor 15:28)."[39]

[39] Ratzinger, *Called to Communion*, 127–28.