

## The Sacrificial Ecclesiology of *City of God* 10

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**Abstract:** In book 10 of *City of God*, Augustine appeals to the notion of true sacrifice in order to counteract the attraction of pagan worship. This appeal to the concept of sacrifice gives a distinct shape to the Christology and ecclesiology he develops in this book. Set against this polemical horizon, and within the context of his wider thought, it becomes clear that sacrifice is itself soteriological motif for Augustine. The work it does in this context is to serve as another way of describing the return of humanity to God through the Incarnate Christ. The cross, the Eucharist, the moral life, and the church itself are all identified as instances of the one true sacrifice of Christ. In this way, sacrifice provides an integrative motif for discussing Augustinian Christology, ecclesiology, sacramental theology, and soteriology.

### Introduction

Within the course of his discussion of true sacrifice in Book 10 of *De ciuitate Dei (ciu.)*,<sup>1</sup> St. Augustine provides the conceptual framework for the renewal of a vigorous Christocentric ecclesiology.<sup>2</sup> The way sacrifice shapes Augustine's

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1. *Ciu.* 10 (BA 34: 418–559).

2. Recent treatments of Augustine's ecclesiology include Lewis Ayres, "Augustine on the Spirit as the Soul of the Body, or Fragments of a Trinitarian Ecclesiology," *AugStud* 41, no. 1 (2010): 165–182; Paul C. V. Vuntarde and Johannes van Oort, "Augustine's Ecclesiology and Its Development between 354 and 387 AD," *Hervormde Teologische Studies* 69, no. 1 (March 2013): 1–5; Kimberly Baker, "Augustine's Doctrine of the *Totus Christus*: Reflecting on the Church as Sacrament of Unity," *Horizons* 37 (2010): 7–24; Michael Cornelius McCarthy, "An Ecclesiology of Groaning: Augustine, the Psalms, and the Making of Church," *TS* 66, no. 1 (March 2005): 23–48. Gerald Bonner's treatment of the pastoral context of Augustine's theology also remains important

discussion allows its Christology to open up into a vision of the church in which ecclesial life, in all its varied aspects, is thoroughly integrated with the person of Christ and the salvation he has achieved. In what follows, I demonstrate how Book 10's sacrificially tinged account of Christology and ecclesiology places Christ firmly at the center of the church's existence, specifically because of the integrative function played by sacrifice in Augustine's argument. In other words, my claim goes beyond the well-established fact that Christology and ecclesiology are mutually interlocking realities for Augustine, or the recognition that the Eucharist is a locus of the intersection of Christology and ecclesiology.<sup>3</sup> Building upon these established data, I focus on the less developed locus of sacrifice,<sup>4</sup> which provides an integrative

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("Augustine's Understanding of the Church as a Eucharistic Community," in *Saint Augustine the Bishop: A Book of Essays*, ed. F. LeMoine and C. Kleinhenz [New York: Garland, 1994], 39–63; "The Church and the Eucharist in the Theology of St. Augustine," *Sobornost* 7, no. 6 [1978]: 448–561).

3. E.g., Allan D. Fitzgerald, "Saint Augustine and Eucharist: The Presence of the Church," in *Our Journey Back to God: Reflections on Augustinian Spirituality*, ed. Miguel Angel Keller (Roma: Curia Generalizia Agostiniana, 2006), 240–254; J Patout Burns, "The Eucharist as the Foundation of Christian Unity in North African Theology," *AugStud* 32, no. 1 (2001): 1–23; Bonner, "Church and Eucharist," (n.2); "Church as a Eucharistic Community" (n.2); Wilhelm Gessel, *Eucharistische Gemeinschaft bei Augustinus* (Würzburg: Augustinus-Verlag, 1966); Cor Traets, "The Eucharist and Christian Community: Some Pauline and Augustinian Evidence," *Louvain Studies* 12, no. 2 (1987): 152–171; Tarcisius van Bavel, "The 'Christus Totus' Idea: A Forgotten Aspect of Augustine's Spirituality," in *Studies in Patristic Christology*, ed. Thomas Finan and Vincent Twomey (Dublin; Portland: Four Courts Press, 1998), 84–94.
4. While there have been important studies of sacrifice in Augustine's thought, including in *ciu.* 10, such studies tend to discuss sacrifice in abstraction from the larger context of Augustine's thought, and, as a result, fail to fully appreciate its potential to integrate other *loci* or the term's function as a means of discussing salvation as the return to God in Christ. See, e.g., J. Lécuyer, "Le sacrifice selon saint Augustin," in *Augustinus magister*, vol. 2 (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1954), 905–914; Ghislain Lafont, "Le sacrifice de la cité de Dieu: Commentaire au *De civitate Dei* Livre X, ch. I à VII," *Recherches de science religieuse* 53 (1965): 177–219; Lawrence F Frankovich, "Augustine's Theory of Eucharistic Sacrifice" (Ph.D. diss, Marquette University, 1976); J. F. O'Grady, "Priesthood and Sacrifice in City of God," *Augustiniana* 21 (1971): 27–44; Basil Studer, "Das Opfer Christi nach Augustins 'De civitate Dei' X,5–6," in *Lex orandi, lex credendi: Miscellanea in onore di P. Cipriano Vagaggini*, ed. Gerardo J. Békés and Giustino Farnedi (Rome: Editrice Anselmiana, 1980), 93–107; Roland J. Teske, "The Definition of Sacrifice in the *De Civitate Dei*," in *Nova Doctrina Vetusque: Essays on Early Christianity in Honor of Fredric W. Schlatter, S.J.*, ed. Douglas Kries and Catherine Brown Tkacz (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), 153–167; Gerald Bonner, "The Doctrine of Sacrifice: Augustine and the Latin Patristic Tradition," in *Sacrifice and Redemption: Durham Essays in Theology*, ed. Stephen W. Sykes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 101–117. Of these studies, Studer, in particular, attends to the polemical context of Augustine's discussion of sacrifice. However, the insight I am pressing here, that sacrifice serves the same function of other soteriological motifs, such as the journey to God, remains relatively unexplored.

logic to the Christological and Eucharistic ecclesiology of *ciu.* 10. Understood in the broader context of Augustinian theology, sacrifice is another locus for discussing the return of humanity to God through the Incarnate Christ.

As I shall show, the ecclesiology implicit in Book 10 is of a piece with the Christology that is made explicit. The Christology of this book is continuous with Augustine's overall thought, but the polemically-driven discussion of sacrifice leads him to express this Christology in a way that opens up new possibilities for articulating the interrelatedness of all aspects of Christian life with the life of the church, and with the journey of salvation. Sacrifice places Christ at the center of the church's existence in all its dimensions: corporate and individual, cultic and quotidian. The one sacrifice of the humble mediator, Christ, forms the horizon for all ecclesial existence.<sup>5</sup>

## The Christology of Book 10

### *The Humble Mediator and the False Mediators*

As is well known, Augustine's Christology trades upon the idea of Christ as the humble mediator,<sup>6</sup> and to this Book 10 of *ciu.* is no exception. In the context of challenging pagan claims against Christianity,<sup>7</sup> Augustine returns to this familiar

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5. In many ways, this perspective is similar to Lewis Ayres, "The Christological Context of Augustine's De Trinitate XIII: Toward Relocating Books VIII–XV," in *Studies in Patristic Christology*, ed. Thomas Finan and Vincent Twomey (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 95–121, who argues that the journey of Christian salvation occurs interior to Christ, and that the Incarnation provides the structure for the experience of salvation. See also idem, *Augustine and the Trinity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 147–152, 165–170. Here Ayres builds upon Michel René Barnes, "The Visible Christ and the Invisible Trinity: Mt. 5:8 in Augustine's Trinitarian Theology of 400," *Modern Theology* 19, no. 3 (2003): 329–355. Ayres's student, Adam Ployd, carries this line of argument further, through a consideration of several anti-Donatist sermons in *Augustine, the Trinity, and the Church: A Reading of the Anti-Donatist Sermons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), though sacrifice is not a trope found in the sermons, and, therefore, is not treated by Ployd.
  6. See especially *conf.* 7.18.24–19.25, 21.27 (BA 13: 630–634, 638–627); *trin.* 10.13–14 (BA 16: 300–304); *ciu.* 9.15 (BA 34: 386–390). This theme is ably explored by Brian E. Daley, "A Humble Mediator: The Distinctive Elements of St. Augustine's Christology," *Word and Spirit* 9 (1987): 100–117; Tarcisius J. van Bavel, *Recherches sur la christologie de saint Augustin: L'humain et le divin dans le Christ d'après saint Augustin* (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires, 1954); Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity*, 142–170 (n.5); Michael Cameron, *Christ Meets Me Everywhere: Augustine's Early Figurative Exegesis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 97–129; David Vincent Meconi, *The One Christ: St. Augustine's Theology of Deification* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2013), 79–134.
  7. See *ciu.* 1.praef. (BA 33: 190–192) for Augustine's explanation of his purpose. On the polemical context and structure of *ciu.*, see Gustav Bardy's general introduction to the work as a whole

feature of his thought. Having demonstrated the inability of pagan gods/daemons to secure beatitude in either this life or the next,<sup>8</sup> he turns in Book 10 to the question of whether sacrifices ought to be offered to lesser divinities than the one true God, a question he, unsurprisingly, answers in the negative. In fact, David Vincent Meconi notes that this question, the propriety of worship offered to any other than the one true God, is the driving force of Augustine's rejection of theurgy. Whatever other problems it had (and Augustine was ruthless in exposing these other problems), theurgy's main liability was that it was idolatrous, and, therefore, demonic.<sup>9</sup> In the face of theurgy's promise of purification through the mediation of daemons placated through magical rites,<sup>10</sup> Augustine provides a singularly different account of how mediation works within the logic of Christianity.

Of course, pagan worship held a variety of attractions. Its character as a spectacle offered a certain entertainment value, and, despite being formally illegal, within the fifth-century Roman and North African context, it also offered a social attraction; its

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(BA 33: 9–135), and his introductory notes to Books 6–10 (BA 34: 9–36); Gerard O'Daly, "Augustine's Critique of Varro on Roman Religion," in *Platonism Pagan and Christian: Studies in Plotinus and Augustine* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 65–75; Lafont, "Sacrifice de la cité de Dieu," 181–185 (n.4); Teske, "Sacrifice in *ciu.*," 156–157 (n.4).

8. *Ciu.* 1–5 (BA 33: 190–762) covers the gods' inability to deliver happiness in the mortal life, while Books 6–10 (BA 34: 40–558) focus on their spiritual impotence.
9. See David Vincent Meconi, "Augustine and Dionysius the Areopagite: Two Christian Responses to Theurgy," in *Divine Promise and Human Freedom in Contemporary Catholic Thought*, ed. Kevin A. McMahon (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2015), 18–20. This emphasis is in stark contrast to Frankovich, who notes that true sacrifice must be offered to the true God, but devotes almost no attention to the anti-idolatry polemic that drives Augustine's discussion of sacrifice in the first place, cf. "Augustine Sacrifice," 79 (n.4).
10. See *ciu.* 8.12–10.32 (BA 34: 272–559). For discussion of Augustine's engagement with theurgy see Jean Pépin, "Falsi mediatores duo. Aspects de la médiation dans le sermon d'Augustin *Contra paganos* (S. Dolbeau 26)," in *Augustin prédicateur (395–411)*, ed. Goulven Madec (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1998), 395–417; Henry Chadwick, "Augustin et les païens," *ibid.*, 323–326; Robert Dodaro, "*Christus sacerdos*: Augustine's Preaching Against Pagan Priests in the Light of S. Dolbeau 26 and 23," *ibid.*, 377–393; Goulven Madec, "Le Christ des païens d'après le *De consensu euangelistarum* de saint Augustin," *RechAug* 26 (1992): 3–67; R. A. Markus, *Signs and Meanings: World and Text in Ancient Christianity* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996), 125–146; Stéphane Toulouse, "Que le vrai sacrifice est celui d'un cœur pur: À propos d'un oracle 'porphyrien' (?) dans le *Liber XXI sententiarum* édité parmi les œuvres d'Augustin," *RechAug* 32 (2001): 169–223; Bonner, "Doctrine of Sacrifice, 102–104 (n.4); Matthew Levering, *The Theology of Augustine: An Introductory Guide to His Most Important Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 119–125; Teske, "Sacrifice in *ciu.*," 156–160 (n.4); Meconi, "Augustine and Dionysius," 17–25 (n.9). Unfortunately, *Christus Sacerdos in the Preaching of St. Augustine: Christ and Christian Identity*, Patrologia 14 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2004), an important study by Daniel J. Jones, came to my attention too late to be included in this article.

participants fit in.<sup>11</sup> Its chief attraction, though, was the promise of union with the divine through purification, a goal shared by “non-Christian and Christian alike,” as Meconi notes.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, theurgy may have had a certain populist attraction in this regard. Porphyry saw theurgy as a stopgap of sorts, serving well enough for those not quite suited for a more properly Platonic contemplation.<sup>13</sup> Hence, it provided the everyman with a path to purification. Abstruse philosophy might be beyond the commoners’ capacities, but offering the right victims with the right chants was an attainable enough practice.

However, despite this populist appeal, Augustine deemed pagan worship to be ultimately elitist, as it divided people up into classes: those who could be purified immediately through contemplation, and those who required magical rites and the mediation of daemons.<sup>14</sup> Both of these paths to purification were unacceptable for Augustine. The former was prideful, while the latter was idolatrous and demonic.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, though, they were ineffectual. On the one hand, Augustine’s own experience demonstrated the impossibility of immediate purification.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, theurgy was premised on an anthropology with a bi-partite division of the soul into a lower spiritual part, and a higher intellectual part. The spirits attracted by theurgic rites could only affect the lower part of the soul, while the body, unsurprisingly, was ignored entirely. Hence, the only purification theurgy could offer was partial.<sup>17</sup>

The particular mechanics of theurgy are less important here than the scheme of mediation envisioned by the practice.<sup>18</sup> As Augustine explains in Book 9 of *ciu.*,

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11. These *desiderata* are on at least implicit display in *s. Dolbeau* 26, as Augustine attempts to fli-buster his congregation, so to speak, in order to keep them away from the pagan new year celebrations (François Dolbeau, “Nouveaux sermons de saint Augustin pour la conversion des païens et des donatistes (IV),” *RechAug* 26 [1992]: 90–141). That Augustine had to devote such energy to combatting this attraction shows that pagan worship’s being deemed illicit did not curtail its influence. Fitzgerald discusses the social dimension of pagan worship’s attraction in “St. Augustine and Eucharist, 240–242 (n.3).
  12. Meconi, “Augustine and Dionysius,” 16 (n.9).
  13. *Ciu.* 10.9, 27 (BA 34: 456–458, 520–522). Chapter 27 introduces the Porphyrian elitism, while chapter 9 merely notes the anthropology in play. I credit Meconi with alerting me to this critique (“Augustine and Dionysius,” 21 [n. 9]). See also John C. Cavadini, “Trinity and Apologetics In the Theology of St. Augustine,” *Modern Theology* 29, no. 1 (2013): 59.
  14. *Ciu.* 10.27 (BA 34: 520). Meconi, “Augustine and Dionysius,” 21–22 (n.9).
  15. *Trin.* 4.14.19–4.5.20 (BA 15: 386–390).
  16. *Conf.* 7.17.23 (BA 13: 626–630). See discussion below.
  17. Meconi, “Augustine and Dionysius,” 20–21 (n.9).
  18. For discussions of theurgy’s practices, see Gregory Shaw, *Theurgy and the Soul: The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995); Sara Rappe, *Reading Neoplatonism: Non-Discursive Thinking in the Texts of Plotinus, Proclus, and Dam-*

the mediation of daemons was an ontological mediation. The daemons' ontological constitution was itself intermediary: eternal like God, but subject to passion and misery like human beings, daemons appeared to bridge the ontological gap between God and humanity.<sup>19</sup> Generally speaking, Book 9 is concerned with showing the incoherence of this viewpoint. The daemons are eternal, yes, but theirs is a wretched eternity because of the misery they share with us. Despite their ontologically intermediate character, they are not in a position to do us good.<sup>20</sup> By contrast, Christ's mediation corrects a relational rather than an ontological problem. Rather than occupying an intermediate status, Christ is at once fully human and fully divine: he fully occupies the position of both parties.<sup>21</sup> By becoming fully human, he is able to embrace and purify the human nature in its entirety, and not just a portion of it. By being fully God, he is not limited in his capacity to act, like a lesser divinity (whether angelic or demonic) would be.<sup>22</sup>

Additionally, Christ's full humanity demonstrates that the problem which requires there to be a mediator between God and humanity is not that their natures are disparate—a fact which, in itself, is not problematic—but, rather, that humanity has become sinful. As Augustine puts it, “Human beings are separated from God only by sin.”<sup>23</sup> The human nature needs to be purified, not from its nature, but from the vitiation of that nature due to sin.<sup>24</sup> It is this that Christ's mediation addresses. Moreover, in becoming fully human, Christ takes upon himself a supposed indignity that the daemons would not, and which seemed to be beneath the dignity of one who is true God.<sup>25</sup> Hence, Christ is the humble mediator. Significantly, this humility that Christ displays is itself the means according to which humanity is purified and brought back to God. This humility informs Augustinian polemics against Platonism (the proximate concern here), Donatism, and Pelagianism.<sup>26</sup>

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*ascius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Meconi, “Augustine and Dionysius,” 16–17 (n.9).

19. *Ciu.* 8.14, 16 (BA 34: 278–282, 286–290); 9.9, 13 (BA 34: 372–374, 380–384). See also the chart in Pépin, “*Falsi mediatores duo*,” 405 (n.10).

20. *Ciu.* 9.13 (BA 34: 380–384).

21. *Ciu.* 9.15 (BA 34: 386–390); 10.24, 29 (BA 34: 508–510, 528–536). See also Daley, “Humble Mediator,” 105–109 (n.6).

22. So Meconi, “Augustine and Dionysius,” 21 (n.9).

23. *Ciu.* 10.22 (BA 34: 502, all translations are my own): “non enim nisi peccatis homines separantur a deo.”

24. *Ciu.* 10.24 (BA 34: 508). See also Cavadini, “Trinity and Apologetics,” 62–64 (n.13).

25. *Ciu.* 10.24 (BA 34: 508).

26. See especially Ployd, *Augustine, the Trinity, and the Church*, 42–54 (n.5); Burns, “Foundation of Christian Unity,” 1–23 (n.3); Fitzgerald, “Augustine and Eucharist,” 242–247 (n.3); Daley,

As Augustine's experience of failed mystical ascent in Book 7 of the *Confessiones* (*conf.*) attests, pride inhibits the return to God.<sup>27</sup> Brian Daley notes that between his Platonic and Christian conversions, Augustine was not so much inhibited by a lack of theological knowledge as by pride: he needed "the grace of Christ experienced firsthand."<sup>28</sup> In contrast to the pride that inhibits the return to God, humility, and especially the humility of faith, purifies the soul. Faith is a species of humility because it consents to forego direct vision of God, and instead see the man Jesus and believe that he is also the invisible God.<sup>29</sup> In this way, human beings are able to pass from the material Christ, who is one with them, to the eternal and invisible God with whom he is also one.<sup>30</sup> Our humble consent to believe, rather than see, is, in fact the path of return to God. And, at the same time, the path is the humble mediator himself, who carries faith's pilgrims along the way.<sup>31</sup> As we shall see, Christ's sacrifice both cuts through the inchoate elitism of theurgy, and connects worshipers, in their entirety, to the true God. It is the universal way of salvation

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"Humble Mediator," 100–117 (n.6); David Vincent Meconi, "The Incarnation and the Role of Participation in St. Augustine's Confessions," *AugStud* 29, no. 2 (1998): 61–75; Bonner, "Church and Eucharist," 453 (n.2)

27. *Conf.* 7.17.23 (BA 13: 626–630). Of course, in the proximate context, it is the weight of sexual habit that prevents this: "pondus hoc consuetudo carnalis." (BA 13: 626). However, later in the book, he notes that it was his failure to know the humble mediator (7.18.24 [BA 13: 630]): "et quaerebam uiam comparandi roboris, quod esset idoneum ad fruendum te, nec inueniebam, donec amplecterer mediatorem dei et hominum, hominem christum iesum."
28. Daley, "Humble Mediator," 108 (n.6). Of course, according to the Augustine of *conf.* 7.9.13–14 (BA 13: 608–610), he was still missing a crucial theological datum. From the Platonists he had learned John 1:1–4, that the pre-existent Logos was with God and was God in the beginning, but he had not learned John 1:14, that the Logos had also been made flesh. Nevertheless, his struggle with conversion in *conf.* 8.8.19–9.21 (BA 14:46–52) occurs *after* he has embraced the truth of the Catholic faith, which allows Daley's point to stand. The bare doctrinal fact of the Incarnation did not convert Augustine, but, rather, the grace that flows from the Incarnate Christ.
29. On this see especially Barnes, "Visible Christ," 333–346 (n.5). See also, Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity*, 143–169 (n.5); idem, "Christological Context," 105–113 (n.5).
30. *Doctr. chr.* 1.12–14 (BA 11/2: 90–96). It is worth noting that immediately after his Christological statement of humanity's passage from material things to the immaterial God, Augustine makes an ecclesiological application: "For the church is his body, as the apostolic doctrine commends, which [the church] is also called his spouse. . . . And, during this time, he exercises and purifies her with certain medicinal pains, so that delivered from this age, she may be united and joined as a spouse to him in eternity" (*doctr. chr.* 1.16 [BA 11/2: 96]): "Est enim ecclesia corpus eius, sicut apostolica doctrina commendat, quae coniux etiam eius dicitur . . . exercet autem hoc tempore et purgat medicinalibus quibusdam molestiis, ut erutam de hoc saeculo in aeternum sibi copulet coniugem." See also Barnes, "Visible Christ," 342–346 (n.5); Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity*, 166–170 (n.5).
31. In addition to *conf.* 7.18.24 (BA 13: 630), see also *doctr. chr.* 1.11–14 (BA 11/2: 90–94); *trin.* 4.18, 20 (BA 15:396–400, 404–412). See also Barnes, "Visible Christ," 335–344 (n.5); Ayres, "Christological Context," 108–121 (n.5); *Augustine and the Trinity*, 144–155 (n.5).

that Porphyry anticipated, but did not believe he had found.<sup>32</sup> Christ delivers upon what theurgy can only claim to partially answer, and which partial results it cannot even deliver in reality.

### *Accounting for Sacrifice: Context and Content*

The foregoing is a fairly standard Augustinian account of mediation and purification, which is indispensable background for making sense of the Christology of *ciu.* 10, which is developed in sacrificial terms. While this account of mediation is more clearly articulated elsewhere in his corpus, this schema is certainly operative in *ciu.* 10.<sup>33</sup> In Book 10 this account of mediation receives a distinct flavor from Augustine's use of the trope of sacrifice, which is not always utilized.<sup>34</sup> Two factors seem to drive Augustine's use of the concept of sacrifice. The first, and most obvious, is the polemical context, his opposition to sacrifice offered to daemons.<sup>35</sup> Sacrifice is the disputed category, and he offers an alternative account of it. Second is the long history of conceiving of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, which Augustine has inherited.<sup>36</sup> Nearly all of Augustine's discussions of sacrifice also involve a discussion of the Eucharist.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, this Christian ritual provides the practical form of

32. *Ciu.* 10.32 (BA 34:546–558). See further, Meconi, "Augustine and Dionysius," 22–25 (n.9).

33. See esp. *ciu.* 10.24, 29 (BA 34: 506–510, 528–536).

34. His most commonly used tropes are the journey to the homeland through interior purification (e.g., *doctr. chr.* 1.10 [BA 11/2: 88]; *conf.* 7.18 [BA 13: 626–632]; *trin.* 4.*proem.* [BA 15: 338]; *trin.* 13.7 [BA 16: 290–292]; *Io. eu. tr.* 26.1–5 [BA 72: 480–496]), and the destruction of death by Christ's immortal life. This latter category is sometimes expressed in sacrificial terms (see below, n. 35), but at other times takes the form of Christ's defeat of the devil through justice rather than power (e.g., *trin.* 4.12.17 [BA 15: 380–384]; *trin.* 13.13 [BA 16: 310–312]), or is simply asserted (*Io. eu. tr.* 26.10 [BA 72: 504]).

35. Augustine's other systematic discussions of sacrifice also involve polemic against pagan worship: see, e.g., *trin.* 4.14–15 (BA 15: 454–460); *conf.* 10.42–43 (BA 14: 260–268); *s. Dolbeau* 26, *passim* (Dolbeau 90–141).

36. For treatments of this tradition, see Jean François Noël de Watteville, *Le sacrifice dans les textes eucharistiques des premiers siècles* (Neuchâtel; Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1966); Rowan Williams, *Eucharistic Sacrifice: The Roots of a Metaphor* (Nottingham: Grove Books, 1982); Andrew McGowan, *Ascetic Eucharists: Food and Drink in Early Christian Ritual Meals* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999); "Eucharist and Sacrifice: Cultic Tradition and Transformation in Early Christian Ritual Meals," in *Mahl und religiöse Identität im frühen Christentum: Meals and Religious Identity in Early Christianity*, ed. Matthias Klinghardt and Hal Taussig (Tübingen: Francke, 2012), 191–206. See also Bonner, "Doctrine of Sacrifice," 101–117 (n.4); "Augustine's Understanding of the Church," 39–63 (n.2); "Church and Eucharist," 448–452 (n.2), for an account of Augustine's desire to work within the preceding tradition.

37. See, e.g., *conf.* 9.12, 13 (BA 14: 128–136); 10.43.69–70 (BA 14: 264–268), *s.* 227 (SC 116: 234–243); *s. Dolbeau* 26.47, 53 (Dolbeau: 127, 132). *ciu.* 10.6, 22 (BA 34: 448, 498).

resistance against pagan ritual: rite is opposed to rite. This is significant because, apart from contexts related to anti-demon polemic or the Eucharist, Augustine tends not to talk about sacrifice, preferring other motifs to describe Christ's work. In other words, sacrifice is a category especially chosen for this polemical task and/or associated with the Eucharist.

As Cavadini notes, the discussion of sacrifice serves as a microcosm of Augustine's distance from Platonism. The Platonic approach to cultic activity amounted to a prideful displacement of sacrifice. This displacement either dispensed with the need for sacrifice altogether, as the contemplative elites presumed themselves to be able to do, or shifted the focus of sacrifice to some wholly external act that does not truly impinge upon the self, which ought to be the sacrifice. In contrast, Christ himself becomes a sacrifice, an act of humble condescension formally similar to his assuming the human nature that Platonic thought deemed to be beneath the true God.<sup>38</sup>

Sacrifice, for Augustine, is primarily a matter of the heart. "Our heart is an altar when it is lifted up to him [God]," and a variety of acts such as "contending for the truth," especially unto martyrdom, and a "pious and holy love," are identified as sacrifices offered on this altar.<sup>39</sup> Sacrifice names the unreserved gift of self to God. Repeatedly in Book 10, he stresses that we ourselves ought to be a sacrifice.<sup>40</sup> This gift-of-self is offered with a view to beatitude: in order to see God properly and cleave to him, "we are purified from every sin and evil desire and consecrate his name, because he himself is the font of our beatitude, he himself is the end of all our desire."<sup>41</sup> For a twofold reason God is the only acceptable recipient of sacrifice. First, only God is worthy of such unreserved self-gift.<sup>42</sup> Second, only God is capable of delivering the felicity towards which one aims in so giving oneself.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, Augustine's repeated citations of Psalm 72:28, "But it is good for me to cleave to God,"<sup>44</sup>

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38. Cavadini, "Trinity and Apologetics," 64–69 (n.13).

39. *Ciu.* 10.3 (BA 34: 434): "cum ad illum sursum est, eius est altare cor nostrum . . . ei cruentas uictimas caedimus, quando usque ad sanguinem pro eius ueritate certamus; eum suauissimo adolemus incenso, cum in eius conspectu pio sanctoque amore flagramus."

40. *Ciu.* 10.7, 16, 19, 25 (BA 34: 450, 486, 494, 516). On this point see Bonner, "Augustine's Understanding of the Church," 50–52 (n.2); Cavadini, "Trinity and Apologetics," 64–69 (n.13).

41. *Ciu.* 10.3 (BA 34: 434): "ad hunc uidendum, sicut uideri poterit, eique cohaerendum ab omni peccatorum et cupiditatum malarum labe mundamur et eius nomine consecramur. ipse enim fons nostrae beatitudinis, ipse omnes appetitionis est finis."

42. *Ciu.* 10.1–2 (BA 34: 422–432).

43. *Ciu.* 10.3, 5 (BA 34: 434–438, 440).

44. The Latin of the psalm reads "mihi autem adhaerere deo bonum est." Citations of the psalm are found in *ciu.* 10.6, 18 (twice), 25 (BA 34: 446, 492, 514).

demonstrate that this twofold reason is really one. This is the good: to be united to God, and to enjoy beatitude in him.

Ritual expressions of sacrifice, such as the sacrifices of the Old Testament, are *sacramenta* of the sacrifice of the heart desired by God.<sup>45</sup> That sacrifice is a matter of the heart must not be misunderstood, however. Augustine does not have in view a purely spiritual or interior or disembodied reality when he writes of sacrifice. This is abundantly clear from the fact that the foremost instance of true sacrifice he gives is Christ's death on the cross, an embodied act to be sure.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, the Eucharist, an embodied, ritual action is described as a true sacrifice as well.<sup>47</sup> Augustine recoils at the suggestion that visible sacrifices be offered to the daemons, while the superior, invisible sacrifices be offered solely to God.<sup>48</sup> The *sacramentum* cannot be separated from the reality of which it is a sign. Indeed, the Eucharist is a "daily *sacramentum*" of Christ's one sacrifice, and, at the same time "the most true sacrifice to which all others have given way."<sup>49</sup> Even Christ's sacrifice on the cross

45. *Ciu.* 10.5 (BA 34: 440–442). On the import of the category *sacramentum* in Augustine's thought, see, e.g., Joseph T. Lienhard, "Sacramentum and the Eucharist in St. Augustine," *The Thomist* 77 (2013): 173–192; Basil Studer, "'Sacramentum et exemplum' chez saint Augustin," *RechAug* 10 (1975): 87–141. See also the discussion in Ayres, "Christological Context," 106–113 (n.5); idem, *Augustine and the Trinity*, 168–170 (n.5). Also important in this connection is Augustine's theory of signification more broadly, on which see *doctr. chr.* 1.2; 2.1–3 (BA 11/2: 78, 136–140), as well as Markus, *Signs and Meanings*, 1–35, 71–101 (n.10); Rowan Williams, "Language, Reality and Desire in Augustine's 'De doctrina,'" *Journal of Literature and Theology* 3 (1989): 138–150; Mark D. Jordan, "Words and Word: Incarnation and Signification in Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*," *AugStud* 11 (1980): 177–196.

46. *Ciu.* 10.6, 20 (BA 34: 446, 498).

47. *Ciu.* 10.20 (BA 34: 498). See further Lécuyer, "Sacrifice selon Augustin," 906 (n.4); Lafont, "Sacrifice de la cité de Dieu," 205–207 (n.4). This is at some variance with Frankovich, "Augustine Sacrifice," 110–124 (n.4), who sees Augustine as discussing only the cross as a "true" sacrifice. The sacrifice of the Eucharist is associated with the cross, but not explicitly marked out as "true." While I agree with Frankovich's judgment that the Eucharistic sacrifice is always in a position relative to the cross, I disagree that it is not explicitly identified as true. First, *ciu.* 10.6 (BA 34: 446) identifies true sacrifice as *any* work done to promote a holy society between humanity and God. Second, while the Eucharistic sacrifice is relative to the sacrifice of the cross, it is so in the sense that it is linked by relative pronouns to that sacrifice (see below), thereby identifying them. Hence, the Eucharist is a true sacrifice because it is *the same* sacrifice as Calvary. Finally, at the level of logic, if the Eucharist is a sacrifice it is either a true sacrifice or a false one. It is absurd to imagine that Augustine regards it as false. See also Bonner, "Doctrine of Sacrifice," 106. (n.4) Bonner upholds the notion that the Eucharist is a sacrifice because of the cross, but not at the expense of recognizing the Eucharist's sacrificial character.

48. *Ciu.* 10.19 (BA 34: 494–496). See further, Bonner, "Doctrine of Sacrifice," 102–104 (n.4); Cavadini, "Trinity and Apologetics," 64–67 (n.13).

49. *Ciu.* 10.20 (BA 34: 498): "cuius rei sacramentum cotidianum esse uoluit ecclesiae sacrificium . . . huic summo ueroque sacrificio cuncta sacrificia falsa cesserunt."

is described as a *sacramentum*.<sup>50</sup> Hence, a simple interior-exterior, visible-invisible, or, even, *sacramentum*-true bifurcation is inadequate for Augustine's thought.

### A Sacrificial Christology

The most fulsome definition of sacrifice in Book 10 comes in chapter 6, where Augustine explains that a "true sacrifice is every work which is done in order that we might cleave to God in a holy society, referred to that supreme good by which we are able to be truly blessed."<sup>51</sup> From the outset, then, Augustine's understanding of sacrifice is social; sacrifice and ecclesiology belong together. Subsequently, Augustine singles out acts of mercy, so long as their reference is to our felicity in God, as particularly worthy of the name.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, only Christ, as himself truly God, could offer this definitive sacrifice, for as God he enjoys perfect beatitude, needing nothing. Because of this lack of need, he is able to act in a singularly merciful manner, apart from any shadow of self-interest, thus meeting the criteria for true sacrifice.<sup>53</sup> From this logic, Augustine concludes that "it follows that the entire redeemed city itself, that is, the congregation and society of the saints, is offered to God as a universal sacrifice by the great priest, who offered himself, according to the form of a servant, in his passion for us, in order that we might be the body of so great a head."<sup>54</sup> In this densely packed sentence, Augustine has identified the church as a true sacrifice and, in the same breath, identified the sacrifice by which the church is offered with the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Moreover, the sacrifice of the cross was offered *so that* the church would be the body of Christ, and it is "according to" his sacrificial offering that "he is the mediator."<sup>55</sup>

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50. *Ciu.* 10.24 (BA 34: 508).

51. *Ciu.* 10.6 (BA 34: 444): "proinde uerum sacrificium est omne opus, quo agitur, ut sancta societate inhaereamus deo, relatum scilicet ad illum finem boni, quo ueraciter beati esse possimus." This, then, once more works against Frankovich's claim that *only* the cross is a true sacrifice (see above, n.4). The expansive definition allows for other instances of true sacrifice, even within the same chapter, as when Augustine links ethics, church unity, and the Eucharist as instances of sacrifice. Surely they are not false sacrifices. What we have, though, is a means both for upholding the cross as *the* true sacrifice, and for endorsing the veracity of these other sacrifices.

52. *Ciu.* 10.6 (BA 34: 444, 446).

53. So Cavadini, "Trinity and Apologetics," 66 (n.13).

54. *Ciu.* 10.6 (BA 34: 446): "profecto efficitur, ut tota ispa redempta ciuitas, hoc est congregatio societasque sanctorum, uniuersale sacrificium offeratur deo per sacerdotem magnum, qui etiam se ipsum obtulit in passione pro nobis, ut tanti capitis corpus essemus, secundum formam serui." See further, Lafont, "Le sacrifice de la cité de Dieu," 204–205 (n.4); Basil Studer, "Opfer Christi," 100–101 (n.4); Levering, *Theology of Augustine*, 122–123 (n.10).

55. *Ciu.* 10.6 (BA 34: 446): "Hanc enim obtulit, in hac olatus est, quia secundum hanc mediator est."

Hence, the telos of the Incarnation is the offering of Christ's sacrifice, which is to be understood not simply as his death on Calvary, but as the offering of the entire church as his body.<sup>56</sup> These are not separate sacrifices, but rather one. Augustine glosses what he means by this with a citation of Romans 12:2–3, and the Pauline instruction to offer one's body as a living sacrifice through ethical action.<sup>57</sup> He concludes the section by noting, "This [i.e., ethics] is the sacrifice of Christians: the many are one body in Christ. This [sacrifice] the church also celebrates in the sacrament of the altar, well known to the faithful, in which it is shown to her that in what she offers, she is herself offered."<sup>58</sup> The elegance of this chapter's argument is striking. On the one hand, true sacrifice is any act, and particularly acts of mercy, done to unite humanity and God in a holy fellowship. On the other hand, *the* true sacrifice is Christ's, but, as Augustine's repeated relative pronouns indicate, this one sacrifice is identified with the cross, the offering of the entire redeemed city, the ethical lives of Christians, and the Eucharist. The merciful act of Christ whereby he unites humanity and God in a holy fellowship encompasses and enfolds all other sacrifices to the extent that they are not *other* sacrifices, but facets of this one true sacrifice.<sup>59</sup>

### *One Offering: Cross, Church, Eucharist*

That the offering of the cross, the church, the Eucharist, and ethics are all somehow one in Augustine's mind is obvious enough. To understand how they are connected requires recourse to the Augustinian concept of the *totus Christus*, which is another important dimension of Augustine's Christology, and particularly developed in his exegesis of the Psalms.<sup>60</sup> Tarcisius van Bavel explains that

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56. This is stated explicitly in *ciu.* 10.24 (BA 34: 508). It is also implicit in the reasoning of *trin.* 4.14 (BA 15: 388), where what is offered (human nature) must be received from those on whose behalf it is offered. See also Studer, "Sacramentum et exemplum," 140–141 (n.45).

57. *Ciu.* 10.6 (BA 34: 446, 448). In the context of Romans, this verse begins the ethical section of the letter, meaning that the whole of what follows can be understood in sacrificial terms. On this see Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, ed. Eldon Jay Epp, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 724–731; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9–16*, Word Biblical Commentary 38a (Dallas: Word Books, 1988), 708–710; C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 2, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), 595–605.

58. *Ciu.* 10.6 (BA 34: 448): "hoc est sacrificium christianorum: multi unum corpus in christo. quod etiam sacramento altaris fidelibus noto frequentat ecclesia, ubi ei demonstratur, quod in ea re, quam offert, ipsa offeratur."

59. Bonner, "Doctrine of Sacrifice," 109–110 (n.4); Lafont, "Le sacrifice de la cité de Dieu," 204–207 (n.4); Teske, "Sacrifice in *ciu.*," 159–160 (n.4).

60. E.g., *en. Ps.* 64 (CCSL 39: 830); *en. Ps.* 68 (CCSL 39: 901). See Tarcisius van Bavel, "The 'Christus Totus' Idea: A Forgotten Aspect of Augustine's Spirituality," in Finan and Twomey, *Studies in*

two dynamics run through Augustine's Christology. First, there is the joining of humanity to Christ by virtue of Christ's assumption of the human nature. There is also a second, more mystical Christology, whereby the faithful are united to Christ through charity.<sup>61</sup> This is particularly the work of the Holy Spirit, who, through the gift of charity, functions as the soul of the body, so to speak.<sup>62</sup> This latter type of Christology is seen in, for instance, *In Iohannis euangelium tractatus* (*Io. eu. tr.*) 26, where Augustine warns would-be recipients of the Eucharist that if they desire to benefit from the body of Christ in the sacrament, they must not neglect to be the body of Christ through charity, for the Spirit animates the body.<sup>63</sup> It is also implicit earlier in *ciu.* 10, where Augustine speaks of God's indwelling the church because "we are, at once all together and individually, his temple."<sup>64</sup>

Recalling that sacrifice has been defined in terms of the heart's disposition, and particularly love, it follows that the same reality at the heart of the sacrifice that constitutes the movement of the return to God is also the glue that holds together the *totus Christus*.<sup>65</sup> This means, then, that sacrifice is another conceptuality for discussing the Augustinian motif of salvation as a journey back to God.<sup>66</sup> Love binds the church together, and is the most basic reality of salvation, because it is the

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*Patristic Christology*, 84–94; Meconi, *The One Christ*, 195–216 (n.6); Kimberly F. Baker, "Transfiguravit in Se: The Sacramentality of Augustine's Doctrine of the *Totus Christus*," *SP* 70 (2013): 559–567; Baker explores the exegetical underpinnings of the *totus Christus* concept in Augustine's thought. See also McCarthy, "Ecclesiology of Groaning," 30–34 (n.2), for a treatment of how, over time, Augustine's exegesis of the *totus Christus* shifted from the more straightforwardly Tyconian approach evident in *doctr. chr.* 3.31 (BA 11/2: 296) to the more mature expression in which the whole Christ speaks with one voice. For a broader treatment of the exegetical moorings of Augustine's Christology, see Cameron, *Christ Meets Me Everywhere*, 134–164 (n.6).

61. Van Bavel, *Christologie de saint Augustin*, 79–85 (n.6).

62. *Ibid.*, 113–114; Meconi, *The One Christ*, 165–172 (n.6); Ayres, "Augustine on Trinitarian Ecclesiology," 174–178 (n.2). See esp. Ployd, *Augustine, the Trinity, and the Church*, 100–143 (n.5), for a discussion of both the Holy Spirit's role in bringing the church into the life of the Trinity and the relation between the Holy Spirit and charity.

63. *Io. eu. tr.* 26.13–14 (BA 72: 516–518).

64. *Ciu.* 10.3 (BA 34: 434).

65. *Ciu.* 10.3 (BA 34: 434–436): "hunc eligentes uel potius religentes (amiseramus enim neglegentes)—hunc ergo religentes, unde et religio dicta perhibetur, ad eum dilectione tendimus, ut perueniendo quiescamus, ideo beati quia illo fine perfecti."

66. This theme runs throughout the Augustinian corpus. See, e.g., *doctr. chr.* 1.10 (BA 11/2: 88); *conf.* 7.18 (BA 13: 626–632); *trin. proem.* (BA 15: 338); *trin.* 13.7 (BA 16: 290–292); *Io. eu. tr.* 26.1–5 (BA 72: 480–496). See further van Bavel, *Christologie de saint Augustin*, 75–85 (n.6); Daley, "Humble Mediator," 105–111 (n.6); Barnes, "Visible Christ," 335–336 (n.5); Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity*, 152–155 (n.5); *idem*, "Christological Context," 117–121 (n.5); Meconi, *The One Christ*, 123–124 (n.6). Levering treats the return to God as a leitmotif in Augustine's major works, see his *Theology of Augustine*, *passim* (n.10). It is extensively developed in Ployd, *Augustine, the*

nature of the God to whom we are joined in salvation. This marks out the church as the community of salvation in the strong sense.<sup>67</sup> The church is not merely the assembly of those who are saved, but is itself the medium and the realization of salvation.<sup>68</sup> This, then, accounts for the interconnection between Christ's sacrifice on the cross and the sacrifice of the church. The charity by which the *totus Christus* holds together is the same charity that finds expression in concrete acts of love and service, and is the same charity by which the faithful cleave to God, and is the same charity that forms the inner heart of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Charity is the *res* of which Calvary is the *sacramentum*; indeed, it is the *res* of which all true sacrifices are *sacramenta*.

The notion of sacrifice as a *sacramentum* brings us to the Eucharist, which Christ "desired to be a daily *sacramentum* of the *res*" that is his sacrifice on the cross.<sup>69</sup> This obviously accounts for the connection between the Eucharist and the cross. Augustine's next move accounts for the relationship between Eucharist and church. In the Eucharist, which is the "sacrifice of the church, which [i.e., the church], being his body, learns to offer herself through him."<sup>70</sup> Hence, it is particularly through the Eucharist that the faithful become competent to offer the sorts of sacrifices of charity enumerated in chapters 3, 5, and 6. Because of this, Augustine is able to say of the ethical injunctions of Romans 12:2–3, "This is the sacrifice of Christians: the many are one body in Christ," which sacrifice is also offered upon the altar, and the content of which is none other than the lives of the church's members.<sup>71</sup>

Indeed, by appealing to the notion of *sacramentum* in this connection, Augustine presses the issue of an ecclesial understanding of sacrifice. *Sacramenta* are a species of *signa*, which brings us back to Augustine's theory of signification,

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*Trinity and the Church* (n.5), though Ployd's treatment is limited to a series of sermons preached over six months and does not cover Augustine's entire corpus.

67. Note that in *Io. eu. tr.* 26.15, 17 (BA 72: 520–524) having everlasting life is described as both sharing in Christ's body and blood and as life in the church as Christ's body. See also Meconi, *The One Christ*, 228–231 (n.6), who stresses this point rather well. Also Ayres, "Christological Context," 108–116 (n.5), who stresses that the *exercitatio* by which one passes from *scientia* to *sapientia* occurs within Christ's body.

68. See especially Ployd, *Augustine, the Trinity, and the Church*, 141–142 (n.5).

69. *Ciu.* 10.20 (BA 34: 498): "cuius rei sacramentum cotidianum esse uoluit ecclesiae sacrificium." I have retained the Latin of *sacramentum* and *res* to highlight the terminology used. I do not necessarily mean to evoke the more fully developed scholastic theology that trades upon these terms.

70. *Ciu.* 10.20 (BA 34: 498): "ecclesiae sacrificium, quae cum ipsius capitis corpus sit, se ipsam per ipsum discit offerre."

71. *Ciu.* 10.6 (BA 34: 448): "hoc est sacrificium christianorum: multi unum corpus in christo. quod etiam sacramento altaris fidelibus noto frequentat ecclesia, ubi ei demonstratur, quod in ea re, quam offert, ipsa offeratur."

articulated in *De doctrina christiana* (*doctr. chr.*), where the differentiation of signs and things also serves the soteriological motif of the journey to the true homeland, by using created things in order to enjoy the uncreated God.<sup>72</sup> As R. A. Markus has demonstrated, conventional signs (which would include sacraments) depend upon interpretive communities for their efficacy, which serves as a major theme in Augustine's opposition to pagan worship. Sacrifices offered to daemons are not a wholly extrinsic affair, leaving the worshiper untouched. Rather, they form a communal bond between worshipers and the daemons to whom they are offered.<sup>73</sup> True sacrifices, because they are also *sacramenta*, are also necessarily communal. The true communion with God that is the *totus Christus* is a condition of possibility for the efficacy of the Eucharistic sacrifice, through which the church learns to offer itself through Christ.<sup>74</sup>

Hence, the notions of the *totus Christus* and of sacrifice are mutually illuminating. Apart from an account of the whole Christ, the dynamics by which the one sacrifice of Christ is at once the cross, the whole redeemed city, the ethical life, the unity of the church, and the Eucharist, are opaque, and the connection between them tendentious (all have to do with something named as Christ's "body," but the connection between them could be extrinsic and proto-nominalist). At the same time, sacrifice, with its concern for purification, clarifies the dynamism at the heart of the *totus Christus*, and especially the Christ-church-Eucharist connection that it affords. This is neither a static image, nor a separate concern from the soteriological motif of the journey to the homeland, but is itself a species of talking about salvation as the return to God within the Incarnate Christ.<sup>75</sup>

### **Sacrifice as Integrative Horizon of Ecclesial Existence**

As we have seen, the ecclesiology implicit in *ciu.* 10 is a soteriological ecclesiology, which, given its polemical context, is also a sacrificial ecclesiology. Sacrifice, the inmost reality of which is charity, is the return of humanity to God in union with

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72. *Doctr. chr.* 1.2–5 (BA 11/2: 78–82).

73. Markus, *Signs and Meanings*, 32–43, 105–120, 125–146 (n.10). See *doctr. chr.* 2.23.36–25.38 (BA 11/2: 192–196); Jordan, "Words and Word," 179, 185 (n.45).

74. *Ciu.* 10.6, 20 (BA 34: 446–448, 498).

75. The dynamism at the heart of the *totus Christus* is also noted by Baker, "Transfiguravit in se," 559–567 (n.60); and idem, "Augustine's Doctrine of the *totus Christus*," 15–17, 21–22 (n.2). Similar judgments are made by Ayres, "Christological Context," 117–121 (n.5); Ployd, *Augustine, the Trinity, and the Church*, 56–99 (n.5); and Meconi, *The One Christ*, 123–124 (n.6). For the judgment that the doctrine of Eucharistic sacrifice played a significant role in the development of Augustine's ecclesiology, see Bonner, "Doctrine of Sacrifice," 110–112 (n.4).

the Incarnate Christ. It is by charity that redeemed humanity cleave to God and to one another in Christ. It is by charity that Christ offered himself, and by that same act offered the redeemed city. The ethical lives of Christians, themselves sacrifices, are informed by charity, and these sacrifices themselves flow from the sacrifice of the church, which is at once identified as a *sacramentum* of Christ's sacrifice, as the ethical lives of Christians, and as the unity of the one body.<sup>76</sup>

Three intertwined themes run through and inform this discussion of sacrifice then: (1) the interior disposition of charity, which is the reality at the heart of sacrifice; (2) charity's outward manifestation in various *sacramenta*, ranging from the animal (and grain) victims of the Old Testament,<sup>77</sup> to Christ himself,<sup>78</sup> and to the Eucharist;<sup>79</sup> and (3) Christ's body, considered as the body that hung on the cross, the body that gathers around the altar, and the Eucharistic body upon the altar.<sup>80</sup> Throughout Book 10, Augustine moves fluidly between them all. Charity, the true sacrifice, elides with its *sacramenta*, which are especially the acts of or involving the body of Christ, while the three instances of Christ's body are discussed in ways that simply flow into each other without transition: from the offering of the redeemed city, to the offering of the passion, to the offering of one's own body, to the unity of the church, to the Eucharist. All of these are, in Augustine's eyes, one sacrifice.

The unity of these themes yields a significant ecclesiological gain for Augustine. By giving an ethical account of sacrifice, particularly one in which the interior disposition of charity is at the fore, Augustine has marked out sacrifice as another trope for discussing salvation as the return to God through interior purification.<sup>81</sup> Theurgy promises purification through the placation of daemons, but this is a false promise. Not only are the daemons invalid mediators between God and humanity—precisely because of their ontologically intermediate status, the very feature that marked them out as plausible mediators—but, even within the logic of theurgy, they could also only effect a partial purification of the lower part of the soul.<sup>82</sup> The sacrifice of Christ, however, truly enacts humanity's passage to God, bringing the whole human nature into communion with the true God. Sacrifice is not simply something Christ does for the salvation of humanity, but is itself human-

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76. While it also appears elsewhere in the book, all of this is found in *ciu.* 10.6 (444–446). See my exposition above.

77. *Ciu.* 10.5 (BA 34: 440).

78. *Ciu.* 10.24 (BA 34: 508).

79. *Ciu.* 10.20 (BA 34: 498).

80. *Ciu.* 10.6 (BA 34: 446–448).

81. See n.66, above.

82. *Ciu.* 10.9, 27 (BA 34: 456–458, 520–522). See discussion above.

ity's salvation. Understood in this light, sacrifice proves to be a locus that allows an integration of disparate Augustinian discourses that are not always integrated: his Christological and Eucharistic ecclesiology is seen to be of a piece with his soteriology of the return to God.

By his account of sacrifice as *sacramentum*, Augustine is not only able to expand the notion of what counts as sacrifice, but also to refer all these instances of sacrifice to the one, all-encompassing sacrifice.<sup>83</sup> The various outward manifestations of sacrifice are *sacramenta* of the true sacrifice that is charity, and by which we return to God. And so, even as the instances of what can be considered sacrifice expands, all of these instances of sacrifice are integrated with each other. I am not suggesting that this expansion of sacrifice was novel to Augustine. It is evident in the New Testament, and the subsequent history of the church leading up to Augustine.<sup>84</sup> Indeed, his primary resource for expanding the notion of sacrifice is the Old Testament.<sup>85</sup> However, the way he uses *sacramentum* language to allow all of these sacrifices to coalesce as one is unique.<sup>86</sup>

Finally, Augustine's deployment of body of Christ language provides him with a theological basis for his expansive and integrative account of sacrifice. By his Incarnation and his one act of sacrifice, Christ has bound humanity together with himself, with the result that the acts of his members are indeed his own. This is why

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83. On this see Teske, "Sacrifice in *ciu.*," 167 (n.4); Frankovich, "Augustine Sacrifice," 78 (n.4); Cavadini, "Trinity and Apologetics," 66–68, 80 (n.13); Bonner, "Doctrine of Sacrifice," 105–110 (n.4) Meconi, "Augustine and Dionysius," 22–25 (n.9).

84. On this theme, see Robert J. Daly, *Christian Sacrifice: The Judaeo-Christian Background before Origen* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1978); Williams, *Eucharistic Sacrifice*, 6–17 (n.36). Note, however, the claim of Jonathan Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), that this development ought to be considered an expansion, rather than a denigration, of sacrifice. See also McGowan, "Eucharist and Sacrifice," 191–206 (n.36), who builds upon Klawans's argument. Traets, "Eucharist and Christian Community," 152–171 (n.3), demonstrates the ways in which Augustine is developing Pauline imagery, though he devotes very little attention to sacrifice. Bonner, "Doctrine of Sacrifice," 102–105 (n.4), notes that Augustine's sacrificial thought is derived first and foremost from scripture.

85. Especially the quotations of Pss. 15:2; 51:18; 49:12–15; Mic. 6:6; and Hosea 6:6 in *ciu.* 10.5 (BA 34, 440–444).

86. Bonner, "Doctrine of Sacrifice," 102–113 (n.4), similarly sees Augustine's doctrine of sacrifice as an exercise in synthesis. My argument goes beyond Bonner's by recognizing that sacrifice is, essentially, another way of talking about deification, a soteriological theme that Bonner sees in Augustine but does not develop in terms of sacrifice. Cf. his "Augustine's Conception of Deification," *JTS* 37 (1986): 369–386. Meconi comes close to this insight in *The One Christ*, 79–134 [n.6]. Likewise, Ployd sees similar dynamics at play in Augustine's ecclesiology, but without much recourse to sacrifice (*Augustine, the Trinity, and the Church*, passim [n.5]).

the offering of his passion is also the offering of the whole redeemed city, and why ethical action is the sacrifice of Christians, which is also the unity of the church as Christ's body, which is also offered in the sacrament of the altar, and through which Christ's members understand themselves to be offered, and learn to offer themselves through him.<sup>87</sup>

As a result, sacrifice is capable of serving as an integrative principle for ecclesiology, accounting for and unifying all aspects of the church's existence. Augustine gestures toward this when he writes: "For in order that a human being might knowingly love himself, there is appointed to him an end, to which he may refer everything he does, in that he might be blessed. For he who loves himself desires nothing other than to be blessed. And this end is to adhere to God."<sup>88</sup> The return to God by charity, which is what Augustine means by sacrifice, is a horizon to which all actions are referred.

Hence, all of the church's life may be discussed under the rubric of sacrifice. Because the Eucharist is the sacrifice of Christians, sacrifice refers to the church's cultic activity.<sup>89</sup> Sacrifice also refers to the church's internally directed life of love, as the sacrifice of Christians is the unity of the body.<sup>90</sup> Sacrifice is also the offering of one's individual body, meaning that the lives of the faithful within the world are also included.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, Augustine even hints at a missionary application of sacrifice, when he notes that "To this good we ought both to be led by those by whom we are loved and to lead those whom we love . . . Therefore already the one who knows how to love oneself, when commanded to love one's neighbor as oneself, what else is one commanded except that one, insofar as one is able, commend love of God."<sup>92</sup> No aspect of ecclesial existence is left off. Everything the church does can be understood as a sacrifice undertaken in union with Christ's one sacrifice,

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87. *Ciu.* 10.6, 20 (BA 34: 444–448, 498). See also Studer, "Opfer Christi," 101 (n.4).

88. *Ciu.* 10.3 (BA 34: 436): "ut enim homo se diligere nosset, constitutus est ei finis, quo referret omnia quae ageret, ut beatus esset; non enim qui se diligit aliud uult esse quam beatus. hic autem finis est adhaerere deo."

89. *Ciu.* 10.6, 20 (BA 34: 448, 498). This is well developed by Cavadini, "Trinity and Apologetics," 66–68 (n.13); Meconi, "Augustine and Dionysius," 22–25 (n.9).

90. *Ciu.* 10.6 (BA 34: 448). See Ployd, *Augustine, the Trinity, and the Church*, 100–143 (n.5), for his treatment of charity and church unity and esp. for its role in the return to God.

91. *Ciu.* 10.6 (BA 34: 444–448).

92. *Ciu.* 10.3 (BA 34: 436): "ad hoc bonum debemus et a quibus diligimur duci, et quos diligimus ducere . . . iam igitur scienti diligere se ipsum, cum mandatur de proximo diligendo sicut se ipsum, quid aliud mandatur, nisi ut ei, quantum potest commendet diligendum deum?" See also Baker, "Augustine's Doctrine of the *Totus Christus*," 7–24 (n.2), who also notes the potential for a missionary application of the dynamism inherent in the *totus Christus* doctrine.

and, hence, as a step in the journey of salvation, a participation in the movement whereby humanity returns to God in Christ.

## Conclusion

According to the ecclesiology of *ciu.* 10, the church is the body of Christ, which is to say the people brought back to God in union with him. The redeemed are brought back in a movement that is itself interior to Christ, interior to his body, the church. In the idiom of *ciu.* 10, this movement is properly named sacrifice. To be the church is to share in this movement of sacrifice and salvation. Augustine's account of sacrifice, particularly as allied with his accounts of *sacramentum* and the *totus Christus* allows us to conceive of the faithful as being brought back to God in a movement that is truly their own. They are themselves a sacrifice, and learn to offer themselves through Christ. But at the same time, and most ultimately, it is a movement that is carried out by Christ himself. The sacrifices of his members are themselves facets of the one sacrifice that he truly offers: the sacrifice of his passion, the offering of the whole redeemed city. In this way, we are able to conceive of the total life of the church—both as directed *ad intra* (the Eucharistic sacrifice, the unity of the body), and as directed *ad extra* (ethical living in the quotidian, and commending the love of God to one's neighbor)—as also sharing in Christ's return to the Father.

Such an ecclesiology has a clearly demarcated center: Christ. Nevertheless, on Augustine's account, Christ is such a center that, even when the church is at its most dispersed, still Christ is the constitutive reality. Because Christ has joined himself to humanity and offered himself in his passion so that the church might be his body and itself be offered to God, every dimension and aspect of ecclesial existence, from the Eucharistic assembly to the dispersion of the church's members throughout the world in their daily lives, is informed by this one act of sacrifice, the act by which he has achieved redemption. Understood in this sacrificial sense, the church is salvation, for the church is itself this movement of redeemed humanity within and as the body of Christ, back to the Father.<sup>93</sup>

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