

The Fractured Body: The Eucharist and Anglican Division

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This article confronts the ongoing reality of intra-Anglican divisions, both in North America and within the broader Anglican Communion. Beginning with a treatment of Augustine of Hippo's doctrine of the totus Christus, I suggest that the proper criterion for ecclesial communion is the recognition of one another as members of Christ, rather than doctrinal or ethical teachings. I then supplement this criterion with a definition of ecclesial unity drawn from Ephraim Radner. The church's unity is not a unity of consensus, but a unity that embraces even one's enemies. Finally, I propose a reading of the eucharistic fraction rite that synthesizes its twin dimensions of sacrifice and communion. This understanding of the rite opens up the imaginative space for an emergence of the will to reunion.

Introduction

The church of Jesus Christ is divided, and division has become the context in which the church's life unfolds, rather than an exception. The Anglican Communion has by no means been immune to these disruptions in unity. Indeed, the events of the past several years—the emergence of the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) and the formation of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), the departure (or ouster, depending on one's viewpoint) of the Diocese of South Carolina from the Episcopal Church, continued lawsuits against parishes and dioceses that have withdrawn from the Episcopal Church, impaired states of communion among Global

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South provinces and the Episcopal Church, and so on—showcase how adept we are at schism. The future of the Communion remains uncertain.

Though the divide between the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church in North America is the one I feel most keenly, and the one that features most prominently on my own horizons, I am not focused on any one state of division here. Nor do I intend to take sides, either to justify or to condemn any particular players in these sad events. There is blame enough to go around. To analyze this blame, however, would serve no purpose other than to more deeply entrench the divisions and animosity. Instead, I hope to point a way forward toward the healing of schism. To do so, I propose an argument that formally applies to both “conservatives” and “liberals.” Both parties’ anger and frustration over the current state of affairs demonstrates the need for this applicability to both sides.

Drawing from Augustine’s treatment of the church as the *totus Christus* realized in the eucharist, I propose that the proper criterion for ecclesial unity is not the correctness of one’s views or practices, but the recognition that we all belong to Christ. This criterion allows for not only diversity, but even divergence within Christ’s body, acknowledging that even those who are sorely wrong may still be Christ’s own. Schism is a failure to consistently apply this criterion, refusing to hold together in communion with those who likewise belong to Christ.

If this is the criterion for unity, what is its shape? The conventional wisdom would seem to be that the way to overcome division is to recognize and welcome diversity, or to achieve consensus across diversity. However, as Ephraim Radner argues, in a divided church things are not so simple. Consensus fails to yield the desired results, and celebrations of “diversity” fail to adequately account for the consequences of schism.¹ Instead, Christian unity is a unity that embraces one’s enemies. Finally, returning to the eucharist, I offer an account of the fraction rite that incorporates two dimensions: sacrifice and communion. These two dimensions allow me to synthesize an Augustinian account of eucharistic ecclesiology with Radner’s penitent anti-triumphalism, and to propose a way of cultivating the imaginative space within which reunion of divided churches could occur.

¹ See especially Ephraim Radner, *The End of the Church: A Pneumatology of Christian Division in the West* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 1–25, 278; and *A Brutal Unity: The Spiritual Politics of the Christian Church* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2012), 127–140, 222–264, 405–412.

Membership in Christ: Criterion of Unity

Of course schism is nothing new. The divisions of the sixteenth century still beleaguer us, and even they played out in the context of a church which had been divided along East-West lines for five centuries. Before the Great Schism of 1054 other divisions had occurred within the church. Indeed, Paul's first letter to the Corinthians addresses the state of division that obtained in their church (1 Cor. 1:10–17; 3:1–22; 11:17–22; 12:1–31). In order to address the dividedness of the church at Corinth, Paul appeals to the oneness of Christ himself (1:10–17; 3:1–22), to the image of the church as a body (12:1–31), and to the church's practice of eucharist (11:17–22). This lays the foundation for what will later be termed the "threefold body" of Christ: the historical body, which was born of the Virgin and hung on the cross; the sacramental body, present on the altar; and the ecclesial body, which is the church.² On the basis of the historical, ecclesial, and sacramental bodies of Christ, then, ecclesial division ought to be impossible—Christ is one. Yet, *per impossible*, it does indeed occur. Before arriving at that absurd realization, though, we must trace the lineaments of why schism is unthinkable, a task which this section undertakes with two primary interlocutors, Paul's Corinthian correspondence and Augustine of Hippo's doctrine of the *totus Christus*.

Paul and the Corinthians

The eucharist is a privileged locus for any theological reflection, but is an especially apt point of departure when considering the unity (or lack thereof) of the church. The fullest New Testament account of eucharistic doctrine or practice comes in the context of addressing divisions in the church (1 Cor. 1:22–34). On the one hand, Paul will grant the inevitability of schism, but on the other hand, he roundly condemns it, suggesting that sharing in a eucharist under conditions of division is "not really to eat the Lord's supper" any longer (1 Cor. 11:20). While it ought to be the case that "we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Cor. 10:17), the Corinthian church's synaxes were marked by failure to "discern the body,"

² The classic treatment of the threefold body remains Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages*, ed. Laurence Paul Hemming and Susan Frank Parsons, trans. Gemma Simmonds, Richard Price, and Christopher Stephens (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007). See also Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995), 190–197.

with the result that communicants ate and drank judgment on themselves, grew “weak and ill,” and even died (1 Cor. 11:29–30).

Paul insists that because of common baptism and eucharistic sharing (1 Cor. 12:13), the church must be united. The church is one body consisting of many members. There is a dialectic of unity and diversity at play here. It is imperative to understand that the Pauline image of the body is not meant to be monolithic and uniform. Indeed, his deployment of the body image in the Corinthian correspondence works to show how important a unified diversity is for the mystery of Christ. After all, “If all were a single member, where would the body be?” (1 Cor. 12:19). It would seem, then, that a diversity without unity and a unity without diversity are equally unacceptable alternatives in the Pauline theology.

The reason it is unacceptable to compromise either unity or diversity for the sake of the other stems from the close connection between the church and Christ for Paul. In speaking of the church he writes, “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ” (1 Cor. 12:12). In Paul’s mind, to have competing factions within the church is tantamount to a divided Christ (1 Cor. 1:13). Such reasoning is developed in later Pauline literature such as the letter to the Ephesians, where the church becomes the fullness of Christ and the one body in which diverse ethnicities are reconciled (Eph. 1:22–23; 2:11–22). Though it never reaches a systematic articulation in the Pauline literature, already we can discern the links between the person of Jesus, the church as his body, and the body of Christ in the eucharist, as well as a tendency to hang the weight of unity upon the eucharistic meal.

Augustine and the Totus Christus

These links are carried forward in the church’s subsequent tradition, reaching perhaps their highest patristic synthesis in the thought of Augustine of Hippo and his doctrine of the *totus Christus*. Though the *totus Christus* concept shows up throughout Augustine’s writings, most notably the *Enarrations on the Psalms*,³ its mature articulation, and one that touches upon the themes of this essay, is found in *The*

³ See particularly his expositions on Psalm 63, Psalm 55:3, and Psalm 64:7. See further Tarcisius van Bavel, “The ‘*Christus Totus*’ Idea: A Forgotten Aspect of Augustine’s Spirituality,” *Studies in Patristic Christology*, ed. Thomas Finan and Vincent Twomey (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 84–94.

City of God, particularly book 10. The theme of book 10 is true sacrifice, which is owed solely to God, and of which the sacrifice of Christ is the fullest expression. Christ is both the priest and the victim of the perfect sacrifice. The sacrifice of Christ is designed specifically to gather into one body a holy society, the whole of redeemed humanity. By the sacrifice of Christ, the redeemed are bound to one another, to God, and to Christ as the head of the body of which they are the members. This sacrifice is most specifically realized in the eucharist, which Christ has designed to be a daily *sacramentum* of the *res* of his true sacrifice.⁴

However, it is imperative to note that Christ is not alone in this sacrifice. He offers himself on the altar of the cross so that he might also with himself offer up his members to God. The sacrifice of Calvary is offered so that the sacrifice of the *totus Christus* might be offered.⁵ For this reason, the body of Christ present upon the altar cannot be viewed solely in terms of the historical body of Jesus, but must also be seen as the ecclesial body, comprised of all the faithful. Famously, Augustine adverts to the fact that his congregation sees themselves on the altar, and that they receive and become what they are.⁶

For Augustine this offering of Christians has both corporate and individual implications. On the one hand, the whole redeemed city, including the saints on earth and in heaven, is the sacrifice offered by Christ to God.⁷ On the other hand, individual acts of piety undertaken by individual Christians are likewise conceived of as sacrifices of this sort.⁸ Indeed, in *City of God* 10.6, the one sacrifice of Christ is defined as the cross, as the offering of the entire people of God, as the individual's body/ethics (citing Romans 12:1–2), as the unity of the church as one body, and as the eucharist. As Roland Teske notes,

⁴ Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 10.6, 20.

⁵ Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 10.6. See also Gerald Bonner, "The Doctrine of Sacrifice: Augustine and the Latin Patristic Tradition," in *Sacrifice and Redemption: Durham Essays in Theology*, ed. S. W. Sykes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 101–17; 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), 153–67; Kenneth Stevenson, *Eucharist and Offering* (New York: Pueblo, 1986), 75–82.

⁶ Augustine, *Sermo CCXXVII*.

⁷ Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 10.6.

⁸ Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 10.3.

“The theme of the whole Christ (*totus Christus*) underlies the unity of the many acts of sacrifice with the one sacrifice of Christ.”⁹

Like the Pauline notion of the church as the body of Christ, the *totus Christus* concept is not a totalizing concept. Individuality is not absorbed into the body. Instead, “we are indeed, both singly and all together, his temple, because he deigns to inhabit us all together harmoniously and singly; he is not greater in the whole than in the single, because he is neither expanded by the mass nor diminished by the partition.”¹⁰ For Augustine the corporate and the individual are mutually interior. We cannot neatly separate the sacrifices made by individual Christians from the sacrifice made by the church as a whole, for the inmost reality of both is the one sacrifice of Christ. This will be crucial to bear in mind throughout my discussion. In Augustine’s thought, then, Christians being members of the *totus Christus* does not preclude their individual sacrificial agency, but provides the condition of its possibility. Precisely because Christ is the head, inseparably united to the body, the church learns in the eucharist to offer itself, corporately and individually, to God through Christ—an activity which is realized in but extends beyond the context of the sacrament.

The point of all this is simple enough. For Augustine and the tradition lying behind him, including Paul, all those who belong to Christ belong to his body, to the *totus Christus*. Any separation between Christ and his people is deemed out of bounds, incompatible with the gospel’s truth. For this reason, any division among Christ’s people must also be deemed out of bounds and incompatible with the gospel’s truth. If the whole Christ is presented to the Father in the eucharistic action, then to undertake that action in willful isolation from other Christians ought to be unthinkable. Yet it happens every day without a second thought.

Now, of course, this leaves open the question of whether or not divisions might at times be necessary for the church. If moral or doctrinal norms become so distorted that a person or institution can no longer be recognized as Christian, then this argument may not apply. For instance, the “Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification” by the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church notes that the respective condemnations of Trent and the Lutheran confessions are valid and church dividing (no. 1), and that despite ongoing

⁹ Teske, “The Definition of Sacrifice in the *De Civitate Dei*,” 167.

¹⁰ Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 10.3, author’s translation.

diversity of articulation (nos. 18–39), these condemnations no longer apply to the respective churches' doctrines of justification (nos. 40–42).¹¹ In many ways, the Joint Declaration, while demarcating clear doctrinal boundaries, also exemplifies the Pauline principle of unity in diversity. At the same time, it envisions circumstances under which diversity would be unacceptable, requiring the enactment of division.

While I admit that the need for division is a possibility, I believe that it is a rare one.¹² While the sad history of schism tends to be one of Christians de-Christianizing each other and of communions de-churching each other in order to justify their division, grace can remain operative in even the most distorted and perverse environments. This means that Christ's own are to be found in these places, and that the bonds of communion ought to be maintained. In other words: the criterion for unity is *not* rightness of doctrinal or moral teaching or practice *per se*—Christian unity can sustain a great deal of diversity, and, I would say, even error in these matters—but the recognition of Christ's members.

Love of Enemies: The Substance of Unity

I have argued that the bonds of communion ought to be maintained at all costs. Yet, the reality is that they have not been. The church is fragmented and continues to fragment. There may be times when divisions may be necessary. Nevertheless, given the criterion I have proposed, these situations are few and far between, because the question is not whether or not we are sufficiently agreed upon doctrinal or moral teachings and practices, but rather whether or not we are all members of Christ. Moreover, Christians have grown in their recognition that Christ's own are indeed found in other communions, which are indeed true churches, and from which they are divided. To help resolve this egregious situation, the ecumenical movement works for reunion of divided churches. However, despite landmark consensus statements in bilateral and multilateral dialogues, progress has been slow going.

Robert Jenson surveys this consensus lamentingly, noting that issues that would not have been enough to divide the churches back

¹¹ www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_31101999_cath-luth-joint-declaration_en.html.

¹² The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral's insistence upon "the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian Faith" strikes me as an appropriate boundary.

in the sixteenth century now seem to be enough to keep them from reuniting now, even after earlier causes of division have been sorted through.¹³ It would seem that the main obstacle to reunion is not doctrinal divergence, but rather a widespread lack of will to reunion. This is not to minimize the divergences that remain, but rather to recognize, as Jenson notes, that the churches have become quite adept at finding new reasons to remain divided, even after the initial reasons have been put to rest.¹⁴

Ephraim Radner's Lament and Figural Ecclesiology

It is into such a grim situation that Ephraim Radner proffers his elegiac scholarship of ecclesial division, which he notes remains more or less a lone voice in terms of theological (as opposed to sociological) scholarship.¹⁵ His first book, *The End of the Church*, is a lament of the reality and consequences of division. Schism occurs because of a failure of ecclesial love, and only secondarily develops doctrinal justifications.¹⁶ Radner attempts to make sense of the reality of a divided church without thereby falsifying the saving history of Jesus of Nazareth.¹⁷ This he does by integrating the reality of ecclesial division with that history by way of a retrieval of patristic era figural exegesis. The divided church, like divided Israel, is moribund and pneumatically abandoned. Christ takes up scripture's figures and unites them in himself, and the event in Christ's history that corresponds to death and pneumatic abandonment is the cross. Radner describes what he does and does not mean by this:

The phenomenon of pneumatic deprivation as it is expressed in the figural life of the Church cannot be taken . . . in an absolute sense. It is a facet, not the foundation, of a historical process of conformance to the shape of Christ Jesus, and its ultimate significance is already revealed in him. But as a historical phenomenon, pneumatic deprivation cannot

¹³ Robert W. Jenson, *Unbaptized God: The Basic Flaw in Ecumenical Theology* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1992), 4. See also Radner's treatment of convergences between Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Christians and the "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification" in his *Brutal Unity*, 225–237.

¹⁴ Jenson, *Unbaptized God*, 1–8.

¹⁵ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 3.

¹⁶ Radner, *End of the Church*, 65–80.

¹⁷ Radner, *End of the Church*, 26–35.

be experientially overleaped, anymore than can the various elements of Jesus' own life and death as they were both assumed in his flesh and subsequently received by his followers. The divided Church is still Christ's Body; and it is a Body for which the life of God is given and given with the promise of indelibility. But as a divided Church, it is a dead body, no less Christ's and no less taken up by a living God, but dead for all that.¹⁸

Significantly, these words show that Radner does not mean to suggest that the Holy Spirit has truly abandoned the church, nor to deny the reality of the resurrection.¹⁹ Instead, he finds the figure in scripture that corresponds to the reality of a divided church, and reflects theologically upon that figure. By locating the dead and divided church in this history, we are able "to affirm these experiential elements as constitutive of Christian division" without the need to "give up the Gospel, let alone to void it."²⁰

This is Radner's burden: to affirm at once the truth of the gospel and the reality and consequences of division. Radner insists that we honestly own the concrete facts of the church's lived history. The reality of the church must be given due weight in a consideration of the church's nature. To locate sinfulness and division as somehow not aspects of the church "as such," accidental to it, will not do.²¹ The church is not other than its history. It is what it has become.²² Of course the church is transcendentally and eschatologically oriented, so that it is not simply enclosed in its history. Nevertheless, on its way to that destiny, the church has a temporal and embodied history, and there is only one history of that church.²³ This is a soteriologically significant point, and is bound closely together with the concern to make sense of a divided church without thereby compromising the

¹⁸ Radner, *End of the Church*, 195.

¹⁹ Radner, *End of the Church*, 343. See also Bruce D. Marshall, "The Divided Church and Its Theology," *Modern Theology* 16 (2000): 377–96; Joseph L. Mangina, "Review Essay: *The End of the Church: A Pneumatology of Christian Division in the West*," *Pro Ecclesia* 9.4 (Fall 2000): 490–96; David S. Cunningham, "A Response to Ephraim Radner's *The End of the Church: A Pneumatology of Christian Division in the West*," *Anglican Theological Review* 83.1 (Winter 2001): 89–100.

²⁰ Radner, *End of the Church*, 39.

²¹ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 121–127.

²² Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 159–160.

²³ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 129.

truth of the gospel. Referencing the popular bumper sticker that reads, “*Jesus, save us from your followers,*” Radner observes: “Without his followers, it makes no sense to speak of a Jesus who saves. Christ Jesus may remain faithful while we are faithless, as Scripture claims (2 Tim. 2:13); but in that case Christ Jesus also remains unknown. Stripped of a Church whose life in history conforms to the object of its worship, this Jesus becomes wrapped in obscurities and hidden by the arbitrary claims of the moment.”²⁴

Ecclesial Honesty and the Need for Repentance

Radner rejects anything he views as an attempt to avoid identifying the church with its concrete history. All such moves are an evasion of reality and of responsibility, which ultimately work against the church’s unity. Hence, the Roman Catholic distinction between the church’s sinful members and the church “as such” will not do. Nor will it work to soften the reality of division by seeing churches divided from Rome as no longer truly church.²⁵ The same would apply to any attempt to refuse to take the ACNA seriously because it is not truly a part of the Anglican Communion, or to suggest that ACNA is now the true Anglican Province, while the Episcopal Church is simply apostate. Either of these ways of conceiving things is an evasion of the fact of schism.

Similarly, Protestant appeals to an undivided “invisible church,” prove to be evasions. Indeed, such an appeal tends to unchurch the Protestants because the true church is the invisible church and not any particular visible church.²⁶ Furthermore, we cannot simply appeal to an ultimate eschatological unity, because to do so severs the church from its concrete history.²⁷ That it all works out in the end does not change the facts of division here and now.

Ecumenical ecclesiology comes under similar fire. Given my argument above, that ecclesial division is a failure of catholicity, it would seem, *prima facie*, that the ecumenical way forward would be an embrace of diversity. As we learn to appreciate one another’s vitality and

²⁴ Ephraim Radner, *Hope among the Fragments: The Broken Church and Its Engagement of Scripture* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos, 2004), 172–173.

²⁵ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 130–131. See also *End of the Church*, 57–133. Whether or not this fairly represents contemporary Roman Catholic ecclesiology is another issue altogether.

²⁶ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 132–133.

²⁷ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 139–140; *End of the Church*, 270.

integrity, the wounds of schism can be healed in diversity's embrace. This, however, Radner will not allow, at least not in so straightforward a manner. This is because he insists that we acknowledge the "genuine *aporia*" of a divided church—a divided church stands in contradiction to the gospel.²⁸ This is the other side of the argument I outlined above. Division is incompatible with evangelical truth. To the extent that the ecumenical project fails to grapple with this reality, its efforts are doomed. The problem with learning to recognize the diverse charisms and integrities of the divided communions is that division undercuts integrity. Our bodies are not integral but sick unto death.²⁹ As Radner scathingly puts it: "Individual churches in their plurality are defined by what is ecclesially good and obedient, if incomplete or limited, not by what is disobedient and sinful. Everybody gets a prize, for each separated church carries a special 'charism' that complements the others, and hence ecclesial distinctiveness (and to this degree the separations that upheld them) is a good."³⁰ Therefore, merely affirming the good of diversity is insufficient because it short-circuits repentance, and thereby grace.

Of course, no serious ecumenist would deny the centrality of repentance in the quest for renewed unity. The need for the churches' ongoing conversion is a commonplace in ecumenical documents. However, repentance is tricky in this connection, because for Radner the divided church is a dead church. A dead church can no longer heal itself, and has lost the ability to repent.³¹ Indeed, repentance for schism is impossible almost by definition. In order to repent of a sin, one must have left it behind. We cannot reconcile without repentance, but we cannot repent without leaving behind our dividedness.³² This accounts for why, despite achieving doctrinal consensus, the churches remain divided. The problem is not that ecumenical theology fails to call for repentance, but that the ecclesial malformity caused by schism remains operative. The church stands dead, passively in need of God's intervention, in need of resurrection, in order to be healed

²⁸ Radner, *End of the Church*, 23. Radner gets the phrase "genuine *aporia*" and the specific way of framing it from Bruce Marshall, "The Disunity of the Church and the Credibility of the Gospel," *Theology Today* 50 (April 1993): 86.

²⁹ Radner, *End of the Church*, 278.

³⁰ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 137.

³¹ Radner, *End of the Church*, 277–333.

³² Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 140.

of division. Repentance is the result of divine mercy, not the cause.³³ While *The End of the Church* closes with a “maddeningly antiprogrammatic” passivity,³⁴ *A Brutal Unity* offers more concrete suggestions for ordering the lives of divided communions to allow the sort of proximity to the other to allow for renewed conciliar proceduralism.³⁵

As the church learns to recognize itself as a community of enemies, enemies who have been caught up in the gracious grip of a Savior who loves his enemies to the bitter end, refusing ever to turn away, new possibilities for the shape of unity arise. The shape of unity is cruciform:

The Church looks like Jesus. When she does not, yet still he is true to himself (2 Tim 2:13), and such truth is always this: that he gives himself to the godless, even this Church that does not look like him. While our “denials” elicit his “denial” (2 Tim 2:12), it is a denial that speaks its truth in self-giving just into the midst of such blasphemy. That is the most important thing a Christian can understand about ecclesiology, about commitment and discipleship, and about truth.³⁶

The tortuous argument of *A Brutal Unity* wends its way to this point: “To live is to give up and give away parts of ourselves . . . and to live fully is to give ourselves away fully.”³⁷ We cannot “agree” our way to unity.³⁸ The notion that agreement produces unity misunderstands what Christian unity really is. Christian unity, founded upon the event of Jesus Christ, is a unity that embraces even that with which it does not agree.³⁹ This is neither a watered down compromise which winks at sin or heresy, nor is it a decision to refrain from embrace, because such a refrain contradicts the gospel upon which it is founded.

³³ Radner, *End of the Church*, 282.

³⁴ Radner, *End of the Church*, 352.

³⁵ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 462–463.

³⁶ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 447.

³⁷ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 1.

³⁸ See also Radner’s earlier realization that ecumenism by consensus can only produce tendentious results. If reunion is predicated upon attaining agreement, all that it will take to undo that reunion is the emergence of a new disagreement (*End of the Church*, 170). Therefore, some other basis for reunion must be found.

³⁹ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 428–429.

Unity demands sacrifice, the sacrifice of oneself, which is itself a figural participation in the sacrifice of Christ. This is Radner's solution to the simplistic ecumenical embrace of diversity. It is an embrace of diversity, but not necessarily an affirmation of that which is embraced. How can division be embraced? By refusing to regard it as acceptable even as one refuses to let go of those from whom one is divided. How can sin be embraced? By refusing to endorse that sin even as one refuses to forgo the embrace of the sinful.⁴⁰ Moreover, such unity is "asymmetr[ical]" and "unilateral."⁴¹ In other words, its embrace is not dependent upon the one whom it embraces. Rather, it holds them fast, independent of the other's worthiness, lovability, integrity, or disagreeableness. Such an approach to unity rules out both the glossing over of genuine difference, and any attempts to coerce agreement. The enemy who is so embraced may change his or her mind in time, but the embrace does not depend upon that, nor does it attempt to eliminate the difference.

This is the challenge we face: to find ways to embrace one another, across the lines of divided communions, while still acknowledging the horror and sinfulness of our division and its ill effects. We must find a better basis for unity than either simplistic affirmations of diversity or the achievement of consensus, which in addition to probably being impossible offers only tendentious unity. This new basis is the mutual recognition that we belong to Christ. And Radner's theory of unity as the embrace of enemies seems like the only viable form that unity based upon such a criterion can take. If we wait until we are agreed, unity will never be achieved. Instead, the call of the gospel is to unilateral and asymmetrical embrace. Such a task is tremendously difficult—personally, spiritually, intellectually, and politically. It is indeed a brutal unity. Nevertheless, if a way were found to negotiate its contours, such unity could also actually be achieved. In my final constructive section, I attempt to begin such a negotiation.

The Fractured Body: Unity Imagined

"What if they are, division and unity, in a sense the same thing, only lived in different ways?" wonders Radner.⁴² In this section, I take up this question and gesture toward what the beginnings of healing

⁴⁰ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 443–447.

⁴¹ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 412–416.

⁴² Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 427.

might look like. I do so through an analysis of the eucharistic fraction. As we have seen, the eucharist is a privileged locus for reflection on the church's unity. It is the sacrament of the unity of the church. It is where Paul and Augustine turned in considering the unity of the ecclesial body of Christ. Radner gives significant attention to it and its properly caritative end.⁴³ The themes of unity, love, and sacrifice are bound together here in the sacrament which memorializes Christ's own great act of sinner-embracing love. If the eucharist is a privileged locus for considering the church's unity, then the fraction rite is the privileged locus within the eucharist for considering the church under conditions of schism, for it is here that we see the body of Christ broken and divided.

Christ Our Passover Is Sacrificed for Us

The 1979 *Book of Common Prayer's* fraction rite is a fairly simple affair. After the consecration and the Lord's Prayer, the priest breaks the bread and announces "[Alleluia.] Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us"; to which the people respond, "Therefore let us keep the feast. [Alleluia.]"⁴⁴ Here we see this body of Christ broken, torn asunder, divided: just like our churches.

Whatever distortions it has suffered through the ages, part of the point of the doctrine of transubstantiation is to avoid crude realisms. What we do to the eucharistic species is not done to Christ. Move the chalice and Christ is not moved. Chew the host and Christ is not masticated. Break the bread and Christ remains whole.⁴⁵ While not all in the Anglican Communion hold to transubstantiation, and most do not, the same principle ought to apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to other formulations of eucharistic presence, which, if anything, will tend to be less realistic. The point is this: while the fraction cannot break the body of Christ, schism does. We have done what ought to have been impossible. The fraction affords us the opportunity to see what we have wrought. Ecclesial division is, of course, not itself part of the fraction's intelligibility. Even in a united church the loaf would be broken. Nevertheless, in a fractured church, the fraction of the sacramental species proves an important locus of reflection.

⁴³ Radner, *End of the Church*, 200–274.

⁴⁴ *The Book of Common Prayer* (New York: Church Hymnal Corporation, 1979), 337, 364.

⁴⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 3.q.76 a.3–6.

Though the manner in which the eucharist is sacrificial is variously understood, the fact that it is a sacrifice is assumed by the prayer book's liturgies and catechism, which teach that in the eucharist Christ's sacrifice is made present to the church, and the faithful are joined to his self-offering.⁴⁶ This coheres with the basic Augustinian notion of eucharistic sacrifice I sketched above. The crucifixion, the presentation of the church to the Father, the ethical lives of Christians, the unity of the church, and the eucharist are all one sacrifice: Christ's own.⁴⁷ Understanding all these instances of sacrifice as bound together in union with Christ's steers us clear of any Pelagianizing of the Christian life, of the eucharist, or of our own striving for unity. All that we have is the result of Christ's sacrifice, and all that we can claim for ourselves is that same sacrifice.

While the fraction's original force was not sacrificial (a point to which I will return below), the addition of a more sacrificial understanding of the rite came about quickly.⁴⁸ Similarly, while the prayer book's fraction is not *explicitly* sacrificial (that is, the statement that Christ is sacrificed is not necessarily tied to the action of breaking the bread), there is a clear and close association between the sacrifice of the cross and the breaking of the bread. I want to suggest that under conditions of schism, this sacrificial dimension of the fraction ought to be at the fore of our minds. The divided church corresponds to the crucified Christ, to the dead and broken body of Christ: still his body, but still dead.⁴⁹ Our dividedness is among the sins for which Christ died so that we might be forgiven and healed. In the eucharist this moribund ecclesial body communes in the risen and glorious body, in hope that we too will be drawn into Christ's resurrection.

In the fraction we behold the cost of our schism and its cure, and are ourselves caught up into the latter. The church itself as the *totus Christus* is part of the offering. It may appear that we are offering Christ, but even more truly Christ is offering us.⁵⁰ As we have seen, this self-offering is a unilateral and even asymmetrical gift of self. The true sacrifice which unites God and humanity in a holy society is

⁴⁶ 1979 BCP, 335–336, 342, 363, 369, 371, 373, 859.

⁴⁷ Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 10.6.

⁴⁸ Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1949), 80–81, 132–133.

⁴⁹ Radner, *End of the Church*, 195.

⁵⁰ Rowan Williams, *Eucharistic Sacrifice: The Roots of a Metaphor* (Nottingham: Grove Books, 1982), 21–23.

definitively realized in the cross, plays itself out in the piety and sufferings of Christ's members, expresses itself in ecclesial unity, is recollected in the eucharistic synaxis, and will be consummately perfected in the eschaton.⁵¹

It is crucial to realize that sacrifice as unilateral self-gift is not a negative reality (for example, giving up or losing something), but a positive reality (giving of oneself, and in that self-gift, finding life).⁵² This reorients our understanding of the notion that unity requires sacrifice. This may include forgoing certain desiderata, but this forgoing is not essential to what sacrifice is. What is essential is the unceasing gift of oneself. Contingently, this may involve certain losses, but these losses are not the sacrifice of unity as such. It may involve some measure of suffering, but the suffering itself is not essential.

As we suffer alongside one another in our divisions these sufferings are integrated into the offering of the whole Christ by way of the eucharist. As we suffer alongside one another in our embrace of one another, these sufferings are likewise integrated. "The Church does not suffer for the redemption of humankind; it suffers Jesus' redemption because, as Church, the Church itself still sins, concretely in time, even though it is also joined to his flesh. In other words, the Church suffers Jesus' suffering for the Church."⁵³ In the face of this suffering love, it may be that we will find the will to suffer one another for that love. If we do not find it here, we likely will not find it at all.

Therefore Let Us Keep the Feast

But sacrifice is not the sole dimension of the fraction rite. Initially it was a utilitarian act. The bread is broken so that more can share in it.⁵⁴ This lay behind the original acts of bread breaking in the Gospels—the multiplication(s) of fishes and loaves in Matthew 14:13–21, 15:32–39, and parallels.⁵⁵ Were the bread not divided, it could not

⁵¹ Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 10.5, 6, 20.

⁵² On this see Jennifer Newsome Martin, "The 'Whence' and the 'Whither' of Balthasar's Gendered Theology: Rehabilitating Kenosis for Feminist Theology," *Modern Theology* 31.2 (April 2015): 211–234.

⁵³ Radner, *End of the Church*, 317.

⁵⁴ See Dix, *Shape of the Liturgy*, 80–81, 131–132, and David Stancliffe, "The Fraction and the Shape of the Rite," in *Living the Eucharist: Affirming Catholicism and the Liturgy*, ed. Stephen Conway (London: Darton, Longman, & Todd, 2001), 101.

⁵⁵ See Geoffrey Wainwright, *Eucharist and Eschatology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 25–42.

be shared. This is an integral aspect of the sacramental action: the fraction exists, like the communion it renders possible, for nourishing the faithful. Bread is meant to be shared, and the fraction is for the purpose of the communion⁵⁶—therefore let us keep the feast.

This, by the way, short-circuits unhelpful distortions of eucharistic sacrifice. The purpose of the sacrifice is communion with Christ, and the sacrifice of Christ is also the sacrifice of the faithful. Eugene F. Rogers helpfully integrates the sacrificial and sharing motifs of the fraction:

The broken bread is the broken body of Christ, . . . the body by the breaking of which on the cross the Son was forsaken by the Father and the Trinity risked its unity, the persons threatening to come apart. Better: for humanity's sake the persons *promise* to come apart, their unity restored in the same way that human unity with them begins, in the Holy Spirit. . . . The body's grace is first of all what identifies the Trinity by the crucifixion and reunites it in the resurrection. At the eucharist, secondarily, the fraction breaks open the Trinity to let the body in. The Trinity is entered by the body of a believer through the broken body of the Lord, and the body of the Lord is also broken to enter into the bodies of believers.⁵⁷

The two dimensions of the fraction belong together: sacrifice and communion. It is because the bread is broken that we are able to share in it. It is because of Christ's death that we are reconciled to God and one another. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast.

This dimension of the fraction affords the opportunity to reimagine the divided church in a way that can tend toward healing. Just as the eucharistic bread is divided so that the many can partake, just as Christ's body was broken to welcome redeemed humanity into the life of God, through the various divided communions women and men are brought into Christ's redemption. This does not make it good

⁵⁶ Louis-Marie Chauvet, "Le pain rompu comme figure théologique de la présence eucharistique," *Questions Liturgiques* 82.1 (2001): 23–33.

⁵⁷ Eugene F. Rogers, *Sexuality and the Christian Body: Their Way into the Triune God* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 241.

or acceptable that these churches are divided from one another. The good of introducing others into the life of Christ does not depend upon the evil of schism for its realization. Nevertheless, it is imperative to recognize that this good is indeed occurring, even if the context in which it occurs is objectively deplorable. Furthermore, this deplorability can refer *either* to the state of division that obtains, *or* to the presence of what one regards as the other church's falsehood, or to both. Still, though, Christ is at work, uniting his members to himself and presenting them redeemed to his Father. Keeping the sacrificial dimension of the fraction in view prevents a triumphalist view of the communion dimension, for the cost of our sharing in Christ is the cross.

As we have seen with Radner, a simplistic gesture toward diversity will not do. Simply put, in many areas the positions are mutually exclusive. Either one side is right or the other is, but not both. Therefore, my argument should not be understood as a species of the idea that the different positions represent a complementary witness. It is, further, not a call for anything like "continuing Indaba," a practice which has stoked the ire of the Global South, and become emblematic to them of soft-pedaling the issues. Nor does it silence dissent. Instead, I am gesturing toward a recognition of grace *even in positions one out and out rejects and with which no dialogue or consensus is possible*.

When one sincerely believes that the other position is wrong, talk of diversity simply does not work to solve the problem. Nevertheless, the criterion for unity is membership in Christ. Only by refusing to recognize each other as Christ's members can we let go of our union with each other. Moreover, since the unity I propose is unity grounded at the cross, we must tread very lightly here. At what point does this refusal to recognize each other as Christ's own render salvation impossible? Perhaps not yet at this point, but who is to say? Do we—whether "conservatives" or "liberals"—really want to draw a hard and fast line across which the grace of Christ no longer reaches? Do we really want find that situation wherein he no longer clutches sinful people to his bosom? Are we really so sure that we will not find ourselves on the wrong side of the divide (if not on this issue, then perhaps some other one)?

Of course, what I have articulated is not sufficient to produce ecclesial reunion. We cannot simply celebrate the eucharist, think about how bad division is while we do so, and watch the wounds marring

the church instantly heal. Ecclesial reunion remains “maddeningly antiprogrammatic.”⁵⁸ My proposed reading of the fraction rite does, however, accomplish several salutary ends. First, it promotes recognition of and gratitude for divine grace in contexts where, because of our divisions, we have trained ourselves to not expect it. Second, by recognizing the operation of grace in those from whom we are divided, we are forced to a recognition of their ecclesiality. Third, in concert with the Augustinian *totus Christus*, this recognition of ecclesiality views division as unacceptable. Fourth, by highlighting the sacrificial dimension of the fraction, we are kept from passing too quickly into the “positive” territory of recognizing divine grace. We are, all of us, desperately sick. This prevents us from falling into the trap of “Everyone gets a prize.”⁵⁹ Fifth, then, this maneuvers us into the mental space within which reunion might begin to seem possible, both because we see its necessity and because we are learning to be grateful for those who are our enemies.

Within this “mental space,” we are in a position for the eucharist to do its work of building up Christ’s body, the church. If Christ in his sacrifice is truly present in this meal; if we are bound to one another by sharing in the death by which he has drawn humanity back into one body in order to present us to the Father, we should not be surprised if, over time, the will to reunion emerges. It might be that some of the reasons for our division are such that we cannot at this time be reunited. In that case, we need this outlook to hold us in proximity to one another in the midst of our division, a proximity which acknowledges that while we cannot at this time be together, we should be. This is crucial to realize: my argument does not directly advocate for reunion. It does not even directly advocate for the *will* to reunion. Frankly, I think that such an argument would be rejected out of hand by both sides. Instead, I am attempting to provide a framework within which the will to reunion *could emerge*.

What if such a vision of the eucharist took hold in parishes, dioceses, and even provinces of the Anglican Communion? What if the Episcopal Church immediately dropped all lawsuits against ACNA parishes, or if ACNA churches gave up the contested property rather than engage in fractious disputes? What if rather than disputing the Primates’ juridical right to suspend the Episcopal Church from voting

⁵⁸ Radner, *End of the Church*, 352.

⁵⁹ Radner, *Brutal Unity*, 137.

in matters of doctrine and polity for the next three years, the Episcopal Church graciously accepted this restriction? What if rather than boycott meetings where they fear the Episcopal Church will be given voice and vote (effectively refusing the gift-of-self to the Communion), GAFCON provinces continued to participate in the life of the Communion? What if the Episcopal Church determined that it was more important to keep GAFCON actively involved in the Communion than to have their own influence? None of these actions in themselves would comprise reconciliation or reunion, but they would be movements toward a state of affairs where reunion could be imagined. Sadly, none of these potentialities seem likely. But there is absolutely no reason, other than willfulness and the refusal to give of oneself, that they could not. The exigency of self-gift applies to traditionalists and liberals alike.

As Radner notes, the continued celebration of the eucharist under conditions of division makes a mockery of its unitive and caritative character, even if its continued celebration has never been seriously called into question.⁶⁰ Our eucharistic celebrations need to acknowledge the objectively deplorable reality of our divisions, and learn to discern the body of Christ as a body that suffers from its divisions, even as it suffers them in Christ.⁶¹ This could be fostered by a renewed use of the eucharistic liturgy's Exhortation, which reminds would-be communicants of the unity of Christ's body, the benefits of communion, and the need for penitent self-examination before communion. In particular, it directs its auditors to be reconciled with their enemies, to ask for and to grant forgiveness, before coming to the table.

This practice could be coupled with preaching and catechesis aimed at owning our schismatic condition, and applying the Exhortation's directives to us as churches and not just individuals. More to the point: eucharists celebrated in seminary chapels, where clergy are formed, or in diocesan conventions, provincial gatherings, Primates' meetings, Lambeth Conferences, and so forth could and should adopt this practice. It is important to stress: such a practice does not enact reunion. Nor does it even directly aim for reunion. Instead, it simply acknowledges the fact that a lamentable division has occurred. It

⁶⁰ Radner, *End of the Church*, 200–201.

⁶¹ This idea was suggested to me by Ephraim Radner in personal correspondence.

attempts to foster mourning for division, and gratitude for the grace found among those from whom one is divided.

Conclusion

My argument has been simple, and yet for all that seems impossible. Divided Christians, and particularly divided Anglicans, belong to one another and need one another. The eucharist, whose purpose we subvert when we celebrate it in isolation from one another, provides a framework for reimagining one another. This framework does not endorse those areas upon which we disagree, even as it recognizes the grace that operates *even in* those areas. The body of Christ is broken by our sinfulness. Yet the breaking of Christ's body allows the many to share in the life of God through Christ. This framework holds us in proximity to one another, demands the recognition that we belong together, and recognizes the danger of remaining apart from one another, even as we remain apart for the time being. As we wait, though, we must realize that no one's hands are clean. By tearing asunder the body of Christ, whether for the cause of truth or not, we all have blood on our hands. This blood testifies against us. This blood also testifies for us, crying out, "Father, forgive them."

