

VIICHRISTOLOGY AND SEXUALITY--AN ANGLICAN CONTRIBUTION

C. P. Price
Virginia Theological Seminary

Papers submitted
to ARC/USA
as an Anglican
response to Fr. Keefe.

I have been turning over in my mind since last June what should be said from an Anglican perspective on the matter of Christology and the ordination of women. It has been clear to me that this paper should endeavor to sustain two affirmations: first, Christ the Logos is the sole mediator between God and the creation; second, the incontrovertible fact that Jesus the Christ was male does not bear on the continuing mediation of God through Christ and the church in such a way as to preclude the ordination of women to the Christian priesthood. However, it was not until I read the two papers by Donald Keefe circulated in preparation for our up-coming meeting that I really understood where the issues lie between some Roman Catholic and much Anglican thought. Fr. Keefe's papers have roused me from my dogmatic slumbers. I am grateful for them.

Fr. Keefe claims that the question of the ordination of women as priests is "a standing dispute between Catholicism and the Christianity of the Reformation" (SGC, p. 16). I hope and pray that his assessment of the situation will not be permanently true. In this paper I shall state a christology which I believe to be within the roomy perimeter of Anglican theology and which I hold to be fundamentally catholic. I obviously do not presume to speak for all Anglicans. But I speak out of a position congruent to Anglican norms: "One canon..., two testaments, three creeds, four general councils, five centuries, and the series of Fathers in that period..." (L. Andrewes, Sermon on Isaiah lxii.5). In the second part of the paper, I shall raise some of the points which I perceive to be at issue between Fr. Keefe and the position articulated here. I fear that the number of such points is legion. If Fr. Keefe speaks for Roman Catholicism, there is indeed a wide remaining gulf between us, to which the question of the ordination of women merely points.

I.

Notes on a Christology

As indicated by the epigram of Bishop Andrewes, the intention of theologians operating within the Anglican tradition is to be faithful to Scripture and the developments of the early church, including the Council of Chalcedon. The Articles of Religion which bear on christology are as follows:

II. Of the Word or Son of God, which was made very Man.

The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took Man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance: so that two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God, and very Man; who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men.

VIII. Of the Creeds.

The Three Creeds, Nicene Creed, Athanasius's Creed, and that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed: for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture. (BCP, pp. 868-869.)

N.B. The American Episcopal Church recognizes only the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed in this article.

A. A Christology Proposed.

1. The basis for christological assertions: Christian faith arose out of a profound experience of liberation and reconciliation: liberation from guilt and reconciliation to God and neighbors. Without wishing to accept Schillebeeckx's view of the resurrection in its entirety, I should be willing to say that the primary aspect of the resurrection was the restored relationship between Jesus of Nazareth and his disciples. "He renews for them the offer of salvation; this they experience in their own conversion; he must therefore be alive. In their experience here and now of 'returning to Jesus,' in the renewal of their own life, they encounter in the present the grace of Jesus' forgiving; in doing so they experience Jesus as the one who is alive. A dead man does not proffer forgiveness. A present fellowship with Jesus is thus restored." (Schillebeeckx, Jesus, p. 391.) This restoration involved the overcoming of guilt involved in the disciples' desertion and betrayal of Jesus. To the members of the earliest community—all Jews—such liberation from the power of sin and death could originate only in God. The quality of that liberation and reconciliation was divine. It required the establishment of a communion between God and his people in which God remained God and the human community remained human; it was an ecstatic experience of cosmic at-one-ment. "In an ecstatic experience the concrete picture of Jesus of Nazareth became indissolubly united with the reality of the New Being... Death was not able to push him into the past. But this presence does not have the character of the appearance of an individual soul; it has the character of spiritual presence. He 'is the Spirit' and we 'know him now' only

because he is the Spirit." (Tillich, Systematic Theology, vol 2, p. 157.)

Such a relationship between God and the people was the goal of the OT cultus, and represented its culmination and fulfilment.

Thought about the proper way to express the relationship between Jesus and God takes its rise in and depends upon this experience. In Melancthon's well-known words, "Cognoscere Christum cognoscere eius beneficia."

2. Articulations of this relationship within the NT. Who, then, was Jesus of Nazareth, through whom this reconciliation was achieved? In particular, since only God could bestow the new life (New Being) which the church knew and in which it participated, what was the relation between Jesus and God? The NT represents a number of attempts to address that question.

a. In its various writings, Jesus is called the Christ, or the Messiah, the title of the anointed kings of Israel. He was called Son of God, also a messianic title (Pss. 2, 89), but radically qualified in the NT by the account of the Virgin Birth. The kings of Israel became sons of God at their coronation. Jesus became son of God at conception. ("He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary.") Jesus, in other words, was related to God in a decisive, intimate, and ultimate way from the moment life began.

b. He was also called Son of Man. There is ample evidence in the Gospels to suggest that Jesus used this title to refer to himself. The difficulties of interpreting it are notorious. It may be a synonym for 'self,' as in his question "Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" Or it may be a generic for 'humankind' -- "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of man that thou visitest him?" Or it may be a representative figure, standing for Israel, or even for the whole of humanity, as in the figure which ascends to the throne of the Most High in Daniel. Or it may refer to the apocalyptic figure who, as in Enoch, descends from heaven at the last day to win a victory over the enemies of God and establish the kingdom of God. It is probably most useful to let this whole range of meanings to be attached to the title as in different contexts it refers to Jesus in the NT: God's chosen one, the representative of the human race, the bringer of the kingdom of heaven. "The Son of man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

c. The profoundest identification of Jesus with God within the NT is found in the prologue to the Fourth Gospel: the word made flesh.

The Word was in the beginning with God and was God. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. The influence of this passage on subsequent Christian theology can not be overestimated.

--God is understood as having a Word, or a means of self-expression. 'At the beginning God expressed himself,' as J. B. Phillips translates the first verse. As the theological tradition developed, God as such was considered to be absolute, absolutely mysterious, unapproachable, either surrounded by clouds and thick darkness or hidden in light inaccessible.

"Formless, all lovely forms
 Declare his loveliness;
 Holy, no holiness of earth
 Can his express." (Jewish doxology, Hymn 286,
 Hymnal 1940.)

3. Word and Wisdom as mediatorial figures. The problem for thought which is raised by conceiving of God in such a way is precisely one of mediation. How can such a God have contact with a finite, sinful, world. The need for intermediaries between God and creation was felt already in inter-testamental times. Angelic figures appeared in the literature, and in particular, the Word and the Wisdom of God were late Jewish attempts to deal with the question of mediation between God and creation. In Proverbs 8, wisdom is presented as the first of the creatures. She was present at creation, "beside him, like a master workman" (Pvbs 8.30). In Apocryphal books, the Word or Wisdom is similarly the agent of creation, and the mediator between God and creation. Neither God nor Word has essentially sexual character. ("There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions;..." Art. I.) Word is grammatically masculine and wisdom feminine in both Hebrew and Greek. The figure of Wisdom in Proverbs, the Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, and presumably elsewhere in this literature, is frankly a creature, frankly female, and of course, mythological. In this pre-Christian literature there was no attempt to identify Word of Wisdom with any historical figure, male or female.

In the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel, of course, the full equality of Word and God is asserted; and the necessities of Christian theology in establishing God as the sole source of redemption and the sole author of the good creation required that the status of the mediatorial figure be expressed in the Johannine form. To be sure, Wisdom passages were used with christological

reference for quite a while. Paul had spoken of Christ as 'the Wisdom of God' (I Cor 1.24, 30). A comparison of Mt 23.34 and Lk 11.49 suggests at least the possibility that in some quarters, Jesus was regarded as having spoken as Wisdom. A number of early fathers identify the Logos and Wisdom. (H. Wolfson, The Philosophy of the Church Fathers, pp. 245 ff). Although, as we learned in our last meeting, this kind of language never completely disappeared, the resolution of the Arian controversy (which disallowed the language of creature as applied to the personae of the Trinity) and the use of Sophia in gnostic circles made the equivalence of Word and Wisdom less attractive and less prominent in orthodox circles.

4. The role of the Spirit. As Trinitarian thought developed, the Word and God were understood to be one in the Spirit. At least in the Augustinian understanding of the Trinity, it is precisely the third person of the Trinity who achieves the unity of the first and second. The point comes to expression as the doxology of innumerable collects, and is articulated often in the various analogies of Book XIV of Augustine's De Trinitate. The Spirit does not obliterate the identities of Father and Son as he unifies them. All remain distinct. Nevertheless, there is a sense in which it is true to say, with the Fourth Gospel, that God is Spirit, for it is Spirit which has the property of uniting and differentiating at the same time.

5. The role of the Spirit in the Incarnation. The Spirit, proceeding from the Father through the Son (I intend an irenic formula!) is present in creation from the beginning, inspiring the acts and words of God's chosen messengers. Throughout the history of Israel, and indeed in the history of the world, God is continually present through his Spirit by his Word. As some of the early fathers realized, it is a mistake to consider YHWH as the first persona of the Trinity. YHWH is always God in relation to his people; YHWH is his own mediator, so to speak. His presence involved the unutterable mystery of the infinite and holy God, the intelligible mediating Word, and the unifying Spirit. Once the doctrine of the Trinity has been worked out, God must be acknowledged in his three-fold selfhood wherever God is recognized at all. YHWH is undifferentiated Trinity.

Through the Spirit, God "spread out his hands all the day to a rebellious people," working through the freedom of human structures to bring forth an obedient response. At last, in the fulness of time, the Spirit overshadowed Mary, and the Word was made flesh in the life of Jesus her Son. Jesus is the incarnation of the second persona of the Trinity, the Word or Wisdom of God. Incarnation is possible, formally, because in the creation,

each human being is in the image of God. (It is an inadequate exegesis of Gen 1.27 to maintain the imago dei occurs only in the sexual relation between man and woman. (Viz: "God created man (ha-adam) in his own image, in the image of God he created him: male and female he created them.") The verse clearly blesses sexuality and recognizes it as good. One form of the image of God may surely be realized in the relation between male and female. But it is insupportable to hold that the sexual relation is the only form of the image of God in the human race. Each individual is also potentially in the image of God; otherwise the individual Jesus of Nazareth could not have represented the image for us. (Cf., "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation..." Col 1.15.)

Jesus of Nazareth, the incarnate one, always by the power of the Holy Spirit, is obedient to God from the moment of conception. He was baptized in the Spirit, driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to resist temptation, enabled to preach and teach and heal by the power of the Spirit, and so to reconstitute during his incarnate life in and for the human race the image of God so drastically impaired by the Fall. The role of the Spirit in the life of Jesus, it should be emphasized, does not impede but rather establishes his freedom. The Spirit enables free obedience in the sense that love makes the lover do what the beloved desires, not out of constraint, but in order to please the beloved.

Moreover, Jesus is "designated Son of God in power by the Holy Spirit (Spirit of holiness, AV-RSV) by his resurrection from the dead." Jesus hands over the Spirit to those gathered at the foot of the cross (kai klinas ten kephalen paredosen to pneuma, Jn 19.30 --a proleptic traditioning to be sure-- to the beloved disciple and Mary, a man and a woman); he breathes the Spirit upon those gathered in the Upper Room (Jn 20.22); and he sends it again upon those gathered in the "one place" in fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel that in the last days, the Spirit would be poured out on all flesh.

6. The Spirit is love. I emphasize the Spirit in this account of Christology because, as we have already noted, the character of the Spirit is to achieve unity and enhance differentiation at the same time. The unity of the Father with the Son or Word or Wisdom is a unity in which Father and Son are one without confusion (Cf. Jn 1.1). The unity of the divine and human natures in Jesus of Nazareth is a unity "without confusion, without change, without division, without separation." The possibility of such unity belongs to the Spirit, who is love.

B. Some Implications of this Christology.

1. The Church and the Spirit. The church abides in that Spirit, which is love, and in that love achieves its unity and peace. (All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them... Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are one" (Jn 17.10-11, 21). "The glory which thou hast given me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one..." (Jn 17.22-23) "... that the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them" (Jn 17.26). These passages from the Fourth Gospel make no distinction among the unity of the Son with the Father and the unity of the Son with the Church, and the unity of Christians with each other. This unity is unity in the Spirit, unity in the love that comes from God and is God (agape).

2. Media of the Spirit. The Spirit is "distributed individually" to Christians through a number of channels: sacraments, the reading of the Scripture, preaching (cf. Lk 24.27-35), and perhaps the greatest of all, the lives of individual Christians (cf. Mt 18.20).

It would be difficult for me to sustain out of either scripture or tradition an argument for the logical or chronological priority of sacraments--or any of these media for that matter--over the church. When the Spirit came, sacraments were celebrated, scripture was read, preaching occurred. I particularly like Felix's reply to Anulinus, recorded in the Acts of St. Saturtinus and Companions: "As if a Christian could not exist without the Eucharist, or the Eucharist be celebrated without a Christian. Don't you know that a Christian is constituted by the Eucharist and the Eucharist by a Christian?" (quoted in M. Shepherd, The Worship of the Church, p. 4).

3. The Concurrence of Spirit, Church, Media

The point is that the church and the sacraments are given together, in strict interdependence, when the Spirit comes, or when, as some like to say, we are given to the Spirit. The relation between church and sacraments is dialectical (as is the relation between church and scripture).

a. Scripture. The Scriptures are constituted as the Word of God, and so are media for God's self-communication, by the Spirit. They are at the same time recognized as the Word of God by the "internum testimonium Spiritus Sancti" (Calvin, Institutes, I. vii. 4). They are made to be God's Word objectively by the Spirit, but can be seen to be such only by the subjective operation of the Spirit.

b. Sacrament. The Eucharist is constituted as the Body of Christ by the Spirit of God, the priest functioning as the servant of the Spirit. The eucharistic species is recognized as the Body of Christ by the inward operation of the Spirit. The epiklesis in the ecumenical prayer of consecration, based on the prayer in the Liturgy of St. Basil, is explicit on this score: "Lord, we pray that in your goodness and mercy, your Holy Spirit may descend upon us, and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ." (BCP, p. 375)

c. Jesus. We have already observed a similar pattern of operation in the case of the incarnation. On the one hand, Jesus was the incarnate one by the objective action of the Spirit. By the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary." At the same time, "no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (I Cor 12.3), operating on the hearts and minds of believers. The significance of the proleptic and ambiguous tradition of the Spirit by Jesus to Mary and the beloved disciple in John's account of the crucifixion is probably to enable them to witness the resurrection on Easter morning.

d. The Church. I hold the same pattern to be true of the church itself. The church is created to be the Body of Christ by the Spirit, and endowed by the same Spirit with its possessions of Word and Sacrament. But this odd assortment of men and women, General Booth's army entering heaven, can be seen to be the body of Christ, or the Bride of Christ, or the branches of the true Vine, or the sheep of the fold, or the people of God, only by the power of the Holy Spirit working in the hearts and minds of Christian believers.

e. Holy Orders. The same pattern of operation of the Spirit can be perceived in the case of Holy Orders. The church and its ordained ministry appeared together. It is futile to establish the precedence of either over the other. "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit (I Cor 12.4)... Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it (I Cor 12.27)... And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers..." (I Cor 12.28). This proto-ministry, virtually a charismatic ministry, gave way in the course of a generation or two (cf. Didache) to the ordained ministry of bishops, presbyters, and deacons. These orders of ordained persons have been established by the church, in obedience to the leading of the Spirit, and by the power of the Spirit, for all purposes of leadership in the church, including

the celebration of sacraments.

Bishops and later presbyters have been called priests because of this relation to the Eucharist, which in the course of time came to be recognized as a sacrifice because it was known to make present to the community the crucified Christ, whose death, already in the NT, was identified as a sacrifice because it had accomplished what the ancient sacrifices were supposed to accomplish: the communion between God and his creation (Cf. J. Millenbourg, The History of the Religion of Israel, IB, vol 1, p. 344). Bishops and presbyters are called priests in the Christian church because the church acknowledges the Eucharist as a real sacrifice, and not the other way around. (That is, the Eucharist is not a sacrifice because bishops and presbyters are "real" priests.) This reversal is an aspect of the work of the Spirit.

C. Some notes about Priesthood.

Our consideration of mediation must now include some remarks about the nature of priesthood. The basic function of priesthood is mediation.

1. The meaning of priesthood. Priests in the ancient world were on the one hand diviners. The Hebrew word kohen comes from a verb whose root means 'to divine.' Priests sought to determine the will of God and communicate it to their people. On the other hand, they were intercessors: they stood before God to plead for their people, as the High Priest of Israel did each year on the Day of Atonement in the Holy of Holies in the temple. A priest stood between God and the people, interpreting each to the other, seeking to achieve that communion, that union in differentiation which has been at bottom the subject of this whole essay. Israel learned to think of herself as "a kingdom of priests" (Ex 19.6), because she learned to understand her mission in history as being to mediate the will of YHWH to the nations. The work of Second Isaiah represents the culmination of this interpretation, because in those prophecies, the suffering of Israel is comprehended as making her a covenant sacrifice for the nations. The priestly nation is itself the sacrifice; so the will of God is communicated to the nations of the earth (Isa 49.5-6; 8-9).

2. Priesthood in the Christian tradition. In the NT, the only individual called a priest--aside from the priests of Old Israel--is Jesus himself. The risen and ascended Christ is the great High Priest, because by his sacrificial death he brought about that communion between God and the world. He is the one mediator. The church is called "a royal priesthood"

because the church's mission is the continuation and fulfilment of Israel's mission to the world.

Priesthood has everything to do with the mediation of the communion of God and the world made possible through the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth. And only him. He and only he lived and died to achieve this end. Union with God is solo Christo.

3. Priesthood and sexuality. The sex of the priest has nothing to do with the priestly act. Sexual symbolism has a great deal to do with elaborating it, illuminating the character of the communion achieved by the atoning work of Christ. The representation of Christ as Bridegroom and the church as bride is familiar in the NT (Eph 5.23-30, Rev 21.2, et al).

It is true that the ordained ministers of the church have been male, presumably because in the world in which the church formed its institutions, only males were accepted or recognized in leadership roles. Now, for whatever mysterious and providential reasons, women are taking leadership in all institutions in Western society. There is no reason why they should not do so in the church, also, and there is no theological reason why they should not, in the exercise of that leadership function, be the celebrants of Eucharist and all sacraments, as well as readers of the scriptures and preachers. I can most easily amplify this argument in reference to Fr. Keefe's papers.

II.

Some Comments on Fr. Keefe's Papers

When I try to put my finger on issues which separate Fr. Keefe's world and mine, I have to take a deep breath. They appear on every page, and between almost all the lines. He speaks from a strange context. I am not at all sure that I fully understand what he has written. Certain matters strike me as particularly worth comment, however, since, to the extent I do understand it, the point of view which Fr. Keefe espouses will stand in the way of Anglican-Roman Catholic rapprochement.

1. Rejection of the historical-critical interpretation of the Scriptures. "Scarcely any reasoned advocacy of such ordination (of women) exists," he writes, "... which does not presuppose the nullification of the Catholic tradition by the higher, non-historical truth of the historical-critical method" (SGC, p. 14). This point is not elaborated. It seems to say that the historical-critical method produced non-historical truth. I gather that means, in turn, that the historical truth of a text is the

meaning which the Roman Catholic tradition has accepted for it in the course of the historical development of that tradition.

From an Anglican point of view, on the other hand, the historical-critical method is precisely and merely a tool to understand what the text meant at the beginning of the historical development. This original meaning has been found to shed decisively important light on the text itself. It is no substitute for the theological interpretation of a text, but it is an indispensable preliminary for theological work. I know perfectly well that this point is widely understood and accepted by Roman Catholic biblical scholars.

"People who are not familiar with the methodological side of historical research and are afraid of its consequences for Christian doctrine like to attack historical research generally and the research in the biblical literature especially, as being theologically prejudiced. If they are consistent, they will not deny that their own interpretation is also prejudiced or, as they would say, dependent on the truth of their faith. But they deny that the historical method has objective scientific criteria. Such an assertion, however, cannot be maintained in view of the immense historical material which has been discovered and often empirically verified by a universally used method of research. It is characteristic of this method that it tries to maintain a permanent self-criticism in order to liberate itself from any conscious or unconscious prejudice. This is never completely successful, but it is a powerful weapon and necessary for achieving historical knowledge (Paul Tillich, Systematics, Vol. II, p. 103).

Luther's interpretation of Galatians 3.28 has in fact been misused in the way Fr. Keefe indicates, for example; but there is now an awareness, based on historical-critical methods, that the text should not be so used-- which is not to say that it should not be used at all!

2. Rejection of the primacy of faith over history.

a. Underlying this point about historical criticism lies a deeper point about history itself. I believe that Fr. Keefe holds that history is an account of the course of events 'wie es eigentlich war,' or better, 'was eigentlich geschah.' With that stance I should want to agree. The crucial point, however, rests in one's understanding of 'eigentlich,' really!

b. I further understand Fr. Keefe to hold that the account of what really happened--and happens--is the account given by the Roman Catholic Church, under the power of the Holy Spirit. In its official utterance, including statements about historical occurrence, the church cannot err. He does not make this point of view explicit; but I believe that a full statement of traditional Roman Catholic doctrine would affirm it, and I can make

sense of Fr. Keefe's position only in the light of it.

c. From this point of view, Fr. Keefe is able to affirm a different kind of reality in the sacraments, --Eucharist and Christian marriage, to be specific--that would be perceived merely "by faith." If something is "reduced to faith," it has a lower status of certainty than what the church declares to be 'true,' or historically real.

d. This point of view, and in particular the notion that anything--but especially the sacraments--could be reduced to faith, will constitute a formidable stumbling block to anyone who comes out of the Reformation tradition. Although we would gladly affirm what I have learned to call the 'indefectibility' of the church ("The gates of hell shall not prevail against it"), we would not find it possible to agree that the church does not err in points of doctrine. "As the Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch have erred; so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith" (Article XIX of the Articles of Religion, BCP, p. 871).

e. As the Fourth Gospel declares, the Spirit "guides us into all truth" (Jn 16.13). Yet the Spirit is not to be identified with the institutional church. The Spirit of God fills the world (Wis of Sol 1.7). The power to correct error may reside in the church itself, and we may pray that it usually does. But if the church does not bear witness to the truth, God does not leave himself without witnesses. He raises up from the very stones children to Abraham. The Christian movement itself once stood in such a stony relationship to Israel (Lo, turn we to the Gentiles!). The sixteenth century Reformation was such a movement of the Spirit. The Wesleyan revival in Anglicanism was such a movement of the Spirit. In each case, the Spirit operated beyond the expected limits to accomplish God's purposes. In each case, people were called by the work of the Spirit subjectively to a new decision about the work of the Spirit objectively, in the church and in the world. In each case, the church has been renewed--both in its old and in its new segments--but, alas, fragmented. Can we step toward reuniting it?

f. The writing of history always presupposes knowledge in the writer regarding the goal of history. Such knowledge is the corollary of faith, and is inseparable from faith. Or, to say the same thing in the language of the Spirit, which the first part of this paper attempted to provide, it is the Spirit operating subjectively which reveals the goal of history and so determines the way history is written. Some examples: the J-history of the OT is written to illuminate the Davidic monarchy as the goal toward which

past events had tended; D history is written to illuminate the exile as the work of a righteous God; P history is written to show that the establishment of the people in the land is the end toward which all the previous events had tended. It ends with the crossing into Jordan. All beyond that is realized eschatology. Stephen's sermon in Acts (Acts 7) rewrites Israelite history in the light of Christ as its goal. Hence the rage of the Sanhedrin.

g. In this sense, all history is the work of faith. The issue can never be put, as Fr. Keefe does, in terms of history vs. faith. It must be put in terms of faith vs. faith; or if faith is shared, in terms of history vs. history. What do you understand God to have been doing in the world? What is really going on?

3. Confusion regarding the sacraments. When the work of the Holy Spirit is identified with the Church, there are consequences for understanding the sacraments. In particular, the ex opere operato character of the Eucharist is emphasized to the exclusion of its ex opere operantis character. In the language of Part I of this paper, the objective action of the Spirit is emphasized to the exclusion of the subjective action.

It is perhaps true that Reformation theologians in trying to redress the balance emphasized the subjective action of the Spirit to the exclusion of the objective. Richard Hooker has occasion to say, for example, "... they (sacraments) contain in themselves no vital force or efficacy, they are not physical but moral instruments of salvation, duties of service and worship, which unless we perform as the Author of grace requireth, they are unprofitable. For all receive not the grace which receive the sacraments of his grace." (Hooker, Eccl. Pol. V. lvi.4.) But compare Augustine on Ps lxxvii (AV 78).2: "Cum essent omnia communia sacramenta, non communis erat omnibus gratia, quae sacramentorum virtus est." Augustine illustrates this point by saying that heretics (Donatists) have the same baptism, but not the grace of baptism. Hooker is similarly concerned not to deny the objective act of God in the sacrament, but to affirm its personal quality (hence it is a moral rather than a physical instrument) and to affirm the necessity of response in the subject. What we have said earlier about objective and subjective action of the Spirit seems to me to obviate the difficulties involved in talking about both objective act and subjective response in the same breath; and to articulate a point of view from which there can be no talk of sacraments "reduced to faith," but understood as the work of the Holy Spirit throughout.

Fr. Keefe writes, "The marital dialectic of the Eucharistic 'one flesh' is eliminated with the elimination of all concrete somatic presence of the sacrificed and sacrificing Christ to his Body, to the Bride for whom the sacrifice is offered and by which she is created through the gift to her in her history, of the Spirit. That dialectic falls within the condemnation of ex opere operato historical efficacy of all sacramental signs, whether marital or Eucharistic. Head and Body are now blended in a unity transcending all masculinity and femininity..., a unity which must become a logical identity as soon as the inability of any historical and intrinsicly differentiated symbol to signify it sacramentally is seriously accepted."

As suggested in the comment on Hooker, the elimination of the "concrete" (physical, in Hooker's words??) does not eliminate the historical efficacy of all sacramental signs. The church's experience of the Eucharist is of a unity which maintains the differentiation of Head and Body. One begins with that experience. The metaphor of Bride and Bridegroom then becomes useful to describe the experience because it does indeed provide intrinsically differentiated language. That language applies to the quality of the union, and is independent of what one considers the role of male and female to be in producing the union. The idea of the male as the giver exclusively and of the female as the receiver exclusively appears to be inadequate in the light of today's historical knowledge, which, in this respect (if necessary) must be regarded as the work of the Spirit beyond the limits of the church, correcting the original historical insight of the church.

4. Confusion regarding eschatology. Fr. Keefe's statement, "Once the sacrifice of the Mass is dismissed by the reduction of the presence of Christ in the Church to a presence by faith, all concrete qualification of historical human existence loses religious value, because every such qualification stands in contradistinction to the ineffable Una Sancta, the Church which has no immanence in the historical humanity it utterly transcends: absent the Head, absent also the Body," (SSOW, pp. 240-241), seems from the point of view represented in this paper virtually meaningless. Consider:

--Christ can be present in the church only through the grace of God, that is, through the power of the Spirit, known by faith.

That is his historical presence, since the church is present in history. To be sure, both Christ and church also transcend history, since there is a spiritual reality of both Head and Body, perceived by faith.

--Any historical qualification of historical human existence continues to be significant as long as history endures. The realm where "they neither marry nor are given in marriage," and consequently where there is "neither male nor female," is eschatological. As long as history endures, the historical relation of man and woman provides apt symbolic language for the relation between Christ and the church, in terms of union and differentiation. At the same time, the experience of union with Christ redeems and enhances (and sanctifies) the sexual relationship of union and differentiation. However, on the ground of the scriptural texts just cited, one must deny the eschatological significance of the historical relation between man and woman. Eschatologically, all persons, male and female, in the presence of Christ, will be as close to him and to each other in history as persons united in Christian marriage.

--In history, the Head is present, to the faith of the church. In history, the Body is present, to the faith of the church. Apart from the faith of the church, all of this language--and the whole realm of discourse connected with it--is nonsense.

5. Remarks on the Sacred Marriage. Fr. Keefe's chief concern is to maintain the biblical doctrine of the goodness of creation. "The cosmic religions," he writes, "expressed their ambivalent experience of the universe in terms of an ambivalent relation between the sexes, a relation whose liturgical expression variously required priests who were kingly and priests who were castrate; virgin guardians of the temple and temple prostitutes. The metaphysical expression of this experience oscillated between a dualist alienation of the principles of transcendence and immanence, and their monist identification." (SSOW, p. 229.) At this point a footnote refers us to Tillich's Systematic Theology I.231. To cite Tillich in support of an interpretation of "cosmic religions" as involving an experience of the universe which oscillates in the way described constitutes a misreading of Tillich. In the passage of the Systematics to which we have been guided, Tillich is proposing a typology of religions which contrasts polytheism of several different types/ Each type of religion is associated with a type of classical or modern philosophy, the idea of God in the several religions being compared with the idea of esse ipsum in the several philosophies. It would be true to say of this whole picture as Tillich develops it that "the metaphysical expression of this experience (i.e., the experience of the universe)

ranged from dualist alienation of the principles of transcendence and immanence to their monist identification." But it would not be true to Tillich, and so far as I can make out, it would not be true in fact, to say that in those forms of pagan religion in which sacred marriage is known to have occurred and to have influenced biblical thought, such oscillation is found. As far as influence on biblical religion is concerned, the source of the idea of sacred marriage was Canaanite Baalism, which was probably a type of what Tillich would call mythological polytheism. ("The mythological gods are self-related, they transcend the realm they control, they are related to other gods of the same character in terms of kinship, hostility, love, and struggle.") Or, less probably, Canaanite Baalism might be a form of monarchic monotheism. ("The god-monarch rules over the hierarchy of inferior gods and godlike beings. He represents the power and value of the hierarchy... the conflicts between the gods are reduced by his power; he determines the order of value.") The philosophical transformation of the former Tillich represents as pluralistic naturalism, and of the latter as "gradualistic metaphysics," like that of Plato's Symposium and Aristotle's Metaphysics. Although dualism in its Greek form does result in an alienation of various metaphysical principles (not simply transcendence and immanence), and does comport with a doctrine of "immanent evil," there is no evidence known to me that this kind of split had occurred in Canaanite religion. The experience of the universe represented by Baalism is much more adequately described by "pluralistic naturalism." There is in it, so far as its lineaments can be discerned through OT polemics, no radical dualism. What is known of Baalism certainly allows us to speak of priestly kings (Gen 14) and temple prostitutes of both sexes (Dt 23.17), but to assert that castrate priests and virgin guardians of the temple were part of the cultic life out of which the biblical understanding of sacred marriage grew takes us far beyond known facts.

What one can affirm is the power of sexual imagery to express the union of the divine and the human. Among the Canaanite neighbors of pre-exilic Israel, this symbolism seems to have been common, and the liturgical expression of it through cultic prostitution well-known. It was a significant development when in Hosea, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, as well as by implication in the Book of Proverbs, the imagery of sexual union is used to express the relation between YHWH and Israel. It is a bold apologetic strategy to impress this language into the articulation of covenant faith. (As a natural correlate of the language of sacred marriage, Hosea and some strat. of the Hexateuch and

some of the Psalms use expressions like "whoring after false gods" to express the faithlessness of Israel.)

The Israelite affirmation of the goodness of creation is independent of this use of sexual imagery. The Israelite experience of the goodness of creation flows from Israel's experience of deliverance from the evils of slavery and tyranny. Historical criticism leads to the theological conclusion that the formative experience of Israel was the Exodus. The creation stories were added later in time, as were the affirmations about creation through Christ in the NT. Creation was believed good by the Israelites because it grounded and provided the arena for the encounter with the good God in an extraordinary event of salvation in history. "The world was made for this." Part of the belief that creation is good was the affirmation that sex is good (Gen 2.24--una caro; Gen 1.27--"image of God--male and female"). It was not the sexual symbol which led to or made possible the doctrine of the good creation. Quite the reverse. It was the doctrine of the good creation which redeemed the sexual practices of the temple and made them, in Hosea and elsewhere, able to express the relation between YHWH and his people. One really cannot sustain the proposition that it is "by the increasingly explicit marital structure of the Old and New Covenants, by which the goodness and beauty of the creation may alone be understood and appropriated" (SGC, p. 15). Per contra, it is by the goodness and beauty of creation, to which the OT and NT bear witness, that the marital symbolism attached to the covenants may be interpreted. It may be doubted whether this marital language is indeed "increasingly explicit." It is a continuing thread of interpretation, running through both testaments, nowhere very prominent.

Fr. Keefe emphasizes the male role of YHWH and of Christ in the NT, and the female role of Israel and the church. To be sure, YHWH was normally represented as male in the OT, and Jesus was undoubtedly a man. But it must always be remembered that,

"The absence of any sexual differentiation within the being of the covenant God and the fierce reaction against all the shamelessness which went with natural unaffectedness in the treatment of the sexual processes have already indicated that... Israel's sensibilities instinctively resisted the whole sexual-orgiastic complex which was bound up with magic and the divinization of Nature." (W. Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, Vol. 1, p. 151-2)

What Fr. Keefe calls the "maritally structured covenant," far from being a development of an idea implicit in the covenant, was a bold device, intended, like all poetic imagery, to provide a 'shock of recognition.'

The very fact that in Eph 5 the Bridegroom-Bride imagery appears in a passage of ethical instruction should indicate that even there the language is not the fruit of long and systematic development.

If, then, one may say that the language of sexual relationship used to describe God's relation to Israel and Christ's relation to the church, is both symbolic and occasional, one should be cautious about drawing inference from its use. Caution should be infinitely multiplied in view of the "absence of sexual differentiation" within God himself. The relation between God and Israel (a corporate entity containing both women and men) is as close as the relationship between a man and a woman in the act of sex, in which ecstatic closeness and enhanced difference result simultaneously. Within the church, this experience is possible for both men and women, for the male character of God is not the significant item. God gives himself. The church receives the gift. The result is like the una caro of a man and woman committed to each other in body and spirit. The point of comparison is the una caro. One should not press beyond this point to identify what is proper to males and what to females and then draw further conclusions about what is proper to Christ and the church. On each side of the comparison, each does what is appropriate. The result is a mystical union which can be compared to a sexual union.

6. Confusion regarding symbolic language. Once the basis for comparison is established, it is to be observed that symbolic language mutually interprets both sides of the comparison. On one hand, the sexual symbolism of Eph 5, with its background in the covenant language of Israel, is one powerful way to represent the union of Christ and the church, or God and his people. I should think that any example of sexual union, which occurs in the course of history, would count as an "historical and intrinsically differentiated" symbol. A reader or hearer would bring to the passage whatever she or he understands of sexual union and marriage in order to understand better the mystical union of Christ and church. Each partner—male and female—becomes more completely a self because more completely one. Such is the mystery of una caro. On the other hand what we have come to know regarding the nature of the relation between Christ and church out of our continuous encounter with him through the various channels of grace feeds our comprehension of what ought to be involved in the sexual relation of male and female partners when they participate in it through the power of agape received from Christ.

I make this point in distinction from what I understand Fr. Keefe's position to be--that the application of symbolic language is a one-way process: one can from the sacrament of Christian marriage make analogous statements about Christ. Per contra, the depth and interdependence of the relationship between partners in Christian marriage has increased, and the freedom of each has increased because we have learned to interpret marriage through the nature of the union between Christ and his church.

7. Remarks about priesthood, sacrificium crucis and sacrificium laudis. Fr. Keefe maintains that the Eucharist as celebrated by priests ordained in episcopal succession is prior to the church. Their celebration of Eucharist makes the sacrificium crucis present in the Mass. They offer it to the church. The church receives this sacrifice, and responds with the sacrificium laudis. If there were not this differentiation between the two sacrifices, "then either Christ as risen is removed from history, so that there is no question of a sacrificium crucis in the Mass, or the Church's worship and Christ's sacrifice merge into a unity which has no relation to a marital symbol." (SGC, p. 12). This understanding involves recognition of the priest as alter Christus; sacramentally offering his Body for reception and communion by the church." (SSOW, p. 246.) It is clearly appropriate, Fr. Keefe argues, that the priest should be male. (Males are the givers.) It is also necessary that the priest should be male. "To assert such an integration of masculinity with the priesthood is to assert also that human sexuality, masculine or feminine, is integrated with the personal existence in Christ, which is personal participation in the Church's worship. This integration is the fundamental assertion of Ephesians 5.21-33, an assertion not in tension with that of Galatians 3.28." (SSOW, p. 246.)

It is hard to sort out the various levels of affirmation which are presented here.

- a. I should want to agree that human sexuality is integral with our personal existence in Christ, realized and expressed in worship.
- b. I should want to agree that one learns what it is to be man or woman in marriage through Christ's relation to the church. (See above.)
- c. I should want to agree that in this passage, Paul's language is not "governed by ordinary usage or by ordinary common sense." (SSOW, p. 249.)

- d. I should want to disagree, however, that "we do not know what this language means in an adequate sense." To think so is to make intelligent discourse impossible. We do know the common-sense meaning of words like 'head,' 'body,' 'obey,' 'love,' 'give.' We do know to some degree what the force of Christ's love, sacrifice, and death is. We are able in some degree to let this force modify the initial (i.e. "cosmic," or "pagan") idea of marriage. When Christ's self-giving agape is enjoined upon both men and women in marriage, the result is a radically qualified relationship, in which mutuality is increased, and the deepest meaning of masculinity and femininity experienced. This experience of Christian love has developed through the centuries, and increasingly qualifies the love of men and women for each other in Christian marriage. (See the note of symbolic language above.)
- e. Both men and women in worship experience the reality of being "in Christ." Both bring to the Christian marriage relation thereafter something of Christ's self-giving love. Both receive love from each other, as the church receives love from Christ. There is indeed qualitative differentiation between male and female, but now, at the end of this long development, it is a far cry from what it was when Paul wrote.

Both this unity in difference and this dynamic development of a religious symbol are characteristic of life in the Spirit. The situation is something like the development of Christian thought about slavery from Philemon to the nineteenth century. Philemon is a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother... both in the flesh and in the Lord (Philemon 15-16). Such teaching did not end the institution of slavery, but in the course of time made it impossible. In Ephesians, Paul's teaching did not end the subordination of women to men in marriage, but in the end has made it impossible.

The logical connection between these teachings in Ephesians and the institution of the male priesthood, is, I confess, hard for me to grasp. "The only paradigms," he writes, "by which the mystery, the meaning of masculinity and femininity may be approached are those provided by the marital relationship between Christ and his Church..." (SSOW, p. 250.) "One enters this relation to Christ through worship, as either man or woman. The meaning of masculinity is complete in Christ's sacrificial relation to the church, and the sacramentality of every masculine existence is tested by its conformity

to that model. The meaning of femininity is complete in the Church, and the sacramental truth of all feminine existence is tested by its conformity to that model." (ibid.)

The Head-Body relation of sacrificing and sacrificed Christ to the church, Fr. Keefe continues, has historical reality. It is not a matter of faith. (But see paras. 2 and 3 above.) The consecrating priest in the Eucharistic celebration makes an act which cannot be reduced to the worship of the historical Church. They are different as they approach each other. The former is essentially male, the latter female.

Granting for the moment what I shall later deny, that the priesthood has a separate and prior existence, distinct from that of the church, it is not at all clear why the church can make its "feminine" response though it contains both male and female members, while the priesthood can make its "masculine" act of sacrifice only through male priests. Why does not the logic of Fr. Keefe's argument require the Church to consist wholly of females if individual priests are necessarily male?

But the notion of the church as "ontologically posterior to the sacrificium crucis," and therefore of the priesthood as separate and distinct from the church, and prior to it, represents a different understanding of priesthood from that of the Canterbury statement, at least in my reading of it. In the Canterbury statement, we read, "Not only do they (priests) share through baptism in the priesthood of the people of God, but they are--particularly in presiding at the Eucharist—representative of the whole church in the fulfilment of its priestly vocation of self-offering to God as a living sacrifice. Nevertheless their ministry is not an extension of the common Christian priesthood but belongs to another realm of the gift of the Spirit." I have in Part I interpreted the "other realm" as neither prior to nor exclusive of the gift of the Spirit in creating a priesthood representative of the whole church. In fact, in line with the whole thrust of this paper, it is the potency of the Spirit to accomplish both things simultaneously. Do we in ARC need to explore further what is involved in this "other realm," and the relationship of the "other realm" to the church? Meanwhile, we note at least that the Canterbury statement provided for the self-offering of the church as well as the sheer reception of the sacrificium crucis by the church and the resulting sacrificium laudis. The position taken in Part I (p. 8), holds that Holy Orders, like all the channels for the communication of the Spirit were created by the Spirit in strictest interdependence with the church, and not prior to it. It belongs to the grace and power of the Spirit that the two are neither separated nor confused.

8. Remarks about Mary. I take Fr. Keefe's exposition of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception to be the traditional pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic doctrine. Anglicans will want to understand it 'from below,' as we attempted to do in Part I. One must begin with the fact of Christ's reconciling work, known and acknowledged by the church. Christ died for us. Cognoscere Christum cognoscere eius beneficia, as we said earlier. One asks, 'Who was he by whom such mighty works were done,' and one is driven, as we saw, to the affirmations that he is Word of God, incarnate by the power of the Holy Spirit from the Virgin Mary. Who then was Mary, his mother? Must one not also say, cognoscere Mariam cognoscere eius beneficia? She did not die for us. She therefore cannot be considered to have mediatorial status. But she was theotokos, we say, in order to avoid the recognition of two personal centers in Christ. The Second Persona was incarnate as Jesus, not in Jesus, as William Porcher Dubose like to say.

On the analogy of OT texts like "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you," (Jer 1.4) and "For thou didst form my inward parts, thou didst knit me together in my mother's womb," (Ps 139.13) and "Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb," (Isa 44.24), one might say that the annunciation to Mary was Jesus' election to be the Son, as more than once God in the OT elected persons to be prophets 'from the womb.' And if Jesus was elect and predestined to be the Christ, prior to any action or motion of the will on his part, so it seems reasonable and graceful to conclude that Mary was elect and predestined to be the mother of the Christ, and to affirm that her graceful and free obedience was the work of the Holy Spirit in her. She too may be said to have been formed 'from the womb.' Beyond such an affirmation of election and grace, however, it is neither useful nor possible to press sexual language. If it could be agreed that the immaculate conception of Mary refers to her gracious election by God, and the operation of the Holy Spirit in the whole prior history of Israel to produce her, and in her as she "worked out her own salvation in fear and trembling, knowing that God was at work in her" from her mother's womb, we could perhaps achieve a breakthrough. To talk about virginal motherhood and freedom from sin in a more mechanical and literalistic way, as Fr. Keefe does, raises severe problems from at least this Anglican.

III.

Conclusion

Fr. Keefe concludes his paper on The Sacrament of the Good Creation by saying that the issue of women's ordination "is not really a theological one, freely disputable within the Catholic tradition." (SGC, p. 16.) He adduces the lack of such discussion on the one hand as evidence for his statement, and, on the other, "the entirely Protestant conclusions as to the Church, the Eucharist, the nature of Orders, the meaning of apostolicity, and the religious value of history which have been explicitly associated with the advocacy of women's orders." (ibid.) In this paper I have at least tried to give serious consideration to his statement on the other side.

It is my hope that by appealing to a doctrine of the Spirit as centrally as I have done in this paper, I will have pointed to a common ground on which discussion may take place. As an Anglican, I believe that the positions taken here are within the catholic tradition as our church has received the same. I suppose it is inevitable that one regards one's own positions as catholic, and the alternatives as deviant; but I hope that at least at the points which I have developed in Part II of this paper, at which I think Fr. Keefe's positions are most seriously at variance with my own, ARC can agree to an account of the catholic tradition which is more comprehensive than Fr. Keefe's account of it. But if, as he says, "we have to do here with a standing dispute between Catholicism and the Christianity of the Reformation," (ibid), it is good to acknowledge that fact now.

C. P. P.