THE SACRAMENTS IN REFORMING THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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This thesis traces the changes in the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist from 400-1215 and posits that Innocent III’s Fourth Lateran Council solidified and clarified these sacraments from diversified practices and customs to a single Catholic orthodoxy in order to reclaim centralized papal power to the Roman Catholic Church. Tracing the history of the Catholic Church’s baptismal and Eucharistic rites encounters a number of logistical obstacles because they were not administered by means of a Western Church-prescribed ritual until the early thirteenth century, primarily because such a prescription did not exist. Even after the First Council of Nicaea where Christian doctrine was better defined, an allowable margin of license remained within Latin orthodoxy, specifically when it came to the practice and administration of the sacraments.

Before the establishment of a finite canon the sacramental procedures of the Western Church relied heavily on the local bishops and monks who openly adopted their own preferential liturgies and ritual practices. This fragmentation took the power away from the Holy See in Rome and instead fostered the idea that regional practices were superior. The foundation of their varied interpretations can be traced back to a number of theologians ranging from the early second century tracts of Justin Martyr to Augustine in the late fourth century. Upon the inauguration of Pope Innocent III in 1198, however, the Church adopted a policy of zero tolerance for practices, rituals and individuals that it deemed heretical. Through a series of papal bulls that even began in the first months of Innocent’s reign, he initiated an attempt to eradicate regional inconsistencies and to create a more streamlined orthodoxy.
This movement was fully realized in the year before Innocent’s death with the creation of the 1215 Canon in which Catholic Church leaders from around the world defined, explained and mandated sacramental ritual, as well as the expectations for the priests and clerics who administered them. The canon was a compilation of reformed laws for the Church of the Latin West, almost all of which can be directly traced to Innocent’s own decretals and papal bulls. This canon used Biblical references as well as Roman Church and apostolic tradition to define these rites and the role of those who administered them. The goal of Innocent’s reform was to redirect and update the canonical practices within Catholic orthodoxy, while at the same time it helped to identify and extinguish, Christian sects and princes who refused the divinely ordained and irrefutable power of the Catholic Church in Western Europe.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Canon law or Church law has existed since the establishment of Christianity itself, but was gathered together as a formal code by Johannes Gratian in the eleventh century, while studying at Bologna. Its journey toward a consolidated document, one both recognized and practiced by all Western Catholics was, until the thirteenth century, labyrinthine, at best. Because I am suggesting that the Fourth Lateran Council emends the variety of sacramental practices that preceded it, it is necessary to trace the nature of the canons that preceded it. Initially written law was not the focus of early Christian communities. As early as Paul, oral tradition and spiritual goals tended to outweigh the concern for secular law. To illustrate the superiority of spiritual law over that of civil law, Paul reminds the Galatians that law could not make a man more worthy of God, and that His approval was awarded through salvation alone.¹

The Christian faith actually went without a formal system of norms for more than five centuries due to the precedence of Roman law, which had legislated religious practices in the Empire, even after Constantine.² This marriage between the Church and the state would remain until the latter part of the eleventh century when the Western Church began to identify itself as its own governing entity, complete with judicial and legislative power. In the first three centuries, the Church drew most of its traditions, rituals and norms from those of the New Testament; this explains why the early traditions of baptism and the Eucharist look, at least in part, like the baptism of Christ and the Last Supper, respectively. These traditions naturally evolved to regional tastes; in fact some communities in early Christendom carefully organized

¹Galatians 3:10-13
their rules about the liturgy, customs that surround public worship, the sacraments and lay practices in handbooks.

These handbooks included, but are not limited to the Didache, which was likely written in Greek for a Syrian audience, the Traditio apostolica, which was mostly concerned with Roman ritual and was written in 218 A.D. by Hippolytus, and finally the Apostolic Constitutions, which were written in the late fourth century.³ All of these texts primarily concentrated on Christian discipline, worship and relatively pure Biblical doctrine, but one thing they were not, was a set of binding, comprehensive laws for a growing Church.

FIGURE 1.1. Portion of The Didache. The Didaché is the authentic ‘Gospel’ for Gentiles—as opposed to both the Gospel that the Lord proclaimed only to Israel, and the pseudo-gospel that was dispensed to Gentiles by false apostles (Rev. 2.2).⁴

⁴Portion of the Didache http://didachegospel.wordpress.com/
As the Christian movement progressed there is evidence of councils or synods that would often gather to discuss their practices as well as their own congregations’ norms; however, it is almost certain that the purpose of these meetings was not to establish a law for them to bring back to their local communities.\textsuperscript{5} Ecclesiastical assemblies, on the other hand, did meet with the purpose of establishing law.

These assemblies, which became quite prevalent in the early third century in both the Western and Byzantine churches, met to debate the norms of the Church and furthermore to make decisions about what was considered prudent for Christian communities, especially in light of the fact that at this point there was no decided centralized power of the Church to establish and distribute formal rituals, nor one centralized power that was appointed to rule over all Church landholdings.\textsuperscript{6} Tertullian was one of the first bishops to establish an ecclesiastical assembly, which most theologians and Christian leaders at the time deemed necessary to help navigate the best interest of the “whole Christian name.”\textsuperscript{7} The first Western assembly, the Council of Carthage, met between 220 and 230. The focus of this assembly, led by Bishop Cyprian of Carthage, was the issue of baptism; in fact, in 251 Cyprian brought together sixty seven bishops to discuss questions surrounding reconciliation and baptism. While some scholars argue that these assemblies laid the foundations for the Church’s future structure, the plethora of opinion surrounding what exactly that would look like and how it would function created the potential for a factious and warring force comprised of everyone from the Pope himself to


crowds of local bishops.\(^8\) The reason for the friction was one of historic tradition; necessary to the establishment of almost any new governing entity was the decision concerning how to delegate power.\(^9\)

Reminiscent of the quandaries faced by the Continental Congress, Church leaders went back and forth concerning whether powers should be centralized or whether they should reside in local communities. At this time and for centuries following, regional trends came to dominate everything from liturgies to sacramental rites. Cyprian, as an example, was highly opposed to what Pope Stephen called “heretical baptisms,” however Cyprian did not necessarily deem them heretical, but simply different than the prescription Bishop of Rome Stephen (256 A.D.) wished to enforce. Cyprian’s objective was therefore not to establish a law, but rather to allow every appointed leader within the Church to exercise his own will and judgment, and that the Lord himself would decide whether these methods were contradictory to the means for salvation.\(^10\) Legislative decrees would eventually become a major facet of the Church, particularly around the early fourth century.

By this time the church’s bureaucratic structure was quite apparent. Local bishops were no longer just patrons of the faith, but more so they were the keepers of its ever growing list of decrees. While there was still no definitive, centralized Church law, local bishops and councils continued to organize themselves to consider and establish the norms of the growing Christian faith. The sacraments, while they remained a popular topic of debate, were not the only matters

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discussed. For instance, at the Council of Elvira in 306 A.D. clerical celibacy and apostasy were the focus.\textsuperscript{11} Still, even with the agreements among established councils, other clerical leaders chose not to recognize their decrees; this is significant because their varied practices and unwillingness toward a hard-nosed consensus only perpetuated the inconsistencies of the faith. This would change when Constantine the Great took the imperial throne; whereupon the central Church did begin to issue authoritative mandates that were then recognized as such by Christian communities.\textsuperscript{12} He not only gave more power to the centralized Church in Rome, but to all of its subsidiary bishops and clerics whom he considered the custodians of all Christians. This often allowed clerics to intervene in matters between Christians, including civil matters.\textsuperscript{13} However, while Constantine was a catalyst for the permeation of canon law into civil law during the early fourth century in the West, Eastern influences from Councils of Ancyra and Neocaesarea proved that there was still a large degree of decentralization when it came to the power of the Roman Church.\textsuperscript{14}

Regardless, by 325, it appeared that for all obvious reasons the Church was gaining some momentum in terms of reaching a consistent set of beliefs; however while there was still much discussion about details surrounding items like the sacraments, one thing that had reached full consensus was the rejection of those individuals or groups who opposed what had become non-negotiable items, like the recognition of the Trinity. The excommunication of Arius of Egypt, who for all other reasons was considered an ascetic practitioner of the faith, illustrated this newfound conformity. While a devout Christian, Arius, the father of the Arian movement did not


believe that God and Christ were consubstantial, or one in the same essence. The Arian movement promulgated the idea that the Trinitarian church was wrong, and that Christ was, because he was material, subservient to the God that created Him. The Arian movement was antithetical to everything that the Roman Catholic Church held dear, especially when one considers how many aspects of the Church were dependent on the notion that God and Jesus Christ were one in the same. This conflict between the Arian movement and the Church would result in what was the first set of fully agreed upon Catholic beliefs and Church traditions, the Nicene Creed.

Ironically, as cohesive as the Eastern and Western Church seemed at Nicaea, their ambivalence toward one another at subsequent ecumenical councils would create a clear divide between the Byzantine and Roman Churches. While both churches maintained the New and Old Testament, Apostolic traditions (both real and apocryphal), custom and synodal canons, the influence of inconsistent regional practices and the prevalence of writings by local bishops and church fathers were commonplace aspects of Christian custom that contributed to the divide.\footnote{Charles Guignebert, \textit{Ancient, Medieval, and Modern Christianity: The Evolution of a Religion} (New York: University Books, 1961), 1-542.}

The Eastern fathers were actually revered in the Latin West by local churches, which might explain why during the fourth and fifth centuries, in an effort to establish a solidified Western Church, papal decrees, or mandates, were enforced and considered to be law; perhaps suggesting to the East that the Western fathers and theological submissions are just as good as Eastern. For instance, the letters from Pope Siricius helped to better define baptisms in the Latin West, specifically how certain baptisms were considered invalid depending upon who was performing them as well as the formula of the ritual itself.\footnote{Opposition to Monasticism. from the \textit{History of the Church Volume III Nicene and Post-Nicene Christianity 311-600 A.D.} \url{http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/hcc3.iii.vii.xix.html?highlight=siricius,baptism#highlight.siricius.baptism} (Accessed July}
without apostolic justification, now had the self-ordained power to identify heresy, and furthermore heretics. In addition, this man’s opinion was not to *just* be considered tradition, but immutable law.\(^{17}\)

The validity and the authority of a papal decretal, or edict of law, depended upon the popularity of the Pope, as well as the support of the Christian community. However, similar to modern political party conventions, politics and likability were just as much forces of influence as was perceived power. Almost immediately after the responses of Siricius started to permeate regions of the Iberian Peninsula, letters began to increasingly circulate within the Church, the canon in each considered no less refutable to their owners and those that agreed with their posits, than those canons which had reached consensus in an ecumenical council. This trend was taking place in the East and the West, although the Eastern letters were easier to compile given that they were almost all written in Greek and could easily be translated to Latin, on the other hand the letters of the West were written in a number of languages. In the late fifth century Pope Gelasius initiated a huge campaign to translate and compile all of the canons that existed in the West into one streamlined collection available in both Latin and Greek - the result was the *Corpus canonum* or the *Collectio Dionysiana*.\(^{18}\) However all-encompassing and apparently universal in its intent, this compilation was considered inferior to private collections of manuscripts, letters and liturgical records considered legitimate and adequate to their owners. The preference was likely due to the owner’s familiarity with both the language as well as the regional custom therein.\(^{19}\) In


an attempt to make the Collectio Dionysiana more user-friendly, an Italian cleric named Cresconius attempted to organize it according to topic around the seventh century, but it eventually suffered the same fate as many of the private canonical collections before it---alteration.

These attempts at canon compilation in the West also took place in regions like Gaul, Spain and areas north of the Alps, but there was still too much power exercised by local councils that continued to ignore a centralized prescription in canon and ritual from Rome. By 900 A.D. the canon of the East and the West, save the written decrees of individual clerics, looked very similar, but many Western fathers refused to regularly endorse Eastern decretals. Consequently, there were still a number of marked inconsistencies in the West. However, the power of the centralized Roman church was growing as the preeminent authority, even if that meant disregarding the traditional, regional practices that might have previously defined one’s local church. This continued fight for a unified Western church met another obstacle at this time as well. As Kenneth Pennington points out in his piece, “A Short History of Canon Law from Apostolic Times to 1917” the positive, or statutory, laws of men like Charlemagne and his son Louis the Pious, grew less significant as the leaders experienced a number of tribal uprisings, redirecting Church issues to those of a more immediate threat---war. While Charles is recognized for his attempt to help consolidate canon and redirect Rome as the central authority of the Catholic Church, he was also committed to the very fragmented, tribal and secular concerns of the Carolingian empire.

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As a result, this canon was aimed more at reforming the political atmosphere in France than it was at creating a clearer, more Roman Catholic orthodoxy. In fact, most of the work that Charles compiled was neither read, nor endorsed, by members of the church. Some scholars call this compilation the *Pseudo-Isodorian Forgeries*, as many of its decretals contained therein were, like the name suggests, falsified.

![FIGURE 1.2. Portion of the Pseudo-Isodorian](image)

Modern historians who have observed the fraudulent document note everything from varying sentence length to mismatched translations to confirm the forgery. 23

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This was certainly not a new practice, canonical forgeries were discovered prior to this, nonetheless the development of this document did very little to help the unification efforts of the Roman Church itself. The document’s evolution into what can only be explained as a giant machination for political reconsolidation of the Carolingian territory went uncontested as actual canon law until the sixteenth century. In this case religion essentially served as a convenient tool for manipulating power. Going back as far as Bishop of Rome Clement I (A.D. 92), Analectus (A.D 79) and Melchiades (A.D. 311), the *Pseudo-Isodorian* (between 847-852) became one of many falsified document collections of the Middle Ages. Fake collections, like this were characterized by fake or fragmented letters, many of which were falsely attributed to papal leaders, theologians and clerics whose names often inflated the sense of their legitimacy.24 Ironically the forgers of this collection were bishops themselves who, in addition to their secular leaders, felt as if they were exempt from Roman authority.

Other popular compilations include the *Panormia* (A.D 1090) and *The Collection in 74 Titles* (A.D. 1070), which were also all victims to alteration.25 While it was typical to alter church decrees at this time, it does not make it any less appalling that what was originally considered an apostolic creation was now a muddled buffet of doctrine, liturgical customs and papal opinion. How the questions concerning Church law were handled and eventually resolved via canon, was significant in order to establish a unified faith, particularly when it came to the sacraments, which were recognized as the avenues to Christ’s salvation on earth. Everyone including emperors, children and Jewish converts were required to participate in these rites, which ensured their devotion to Christ, his teachings and the faith that he endowed to his

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apostles forevermore. How the canon outlined these ceremonies, the souls’ “rites of passage,” was of the utmost importance, particularly when one examines their promise—eternal salvation.

Deriving from the Greek word μυστηριον, the Latin word mysterium would come to define the most fundamental rituals of the Catholic Church, the sacraments. In Roman law the word sacramentum had several different meanings. One interpretation meant the “sum that the two parties to a suit deposited—so called perhaps because it was deposited in a sacred place.” Another meaning assigned to the words was civil suit or process. Sacramentum was also a military oath of allegiance as well as any other solemn obligation. Believers were obligated to these rituals, which would develop into a necessary aspect of the Christian faith; in fact, by the early thirteenth century, participation in these rituals grew into a divisive tool, distinguishing themselves as the only acceptable rituals to obtain Christ’s salvation with all others considered to be false and even heretical.

The Church, which consistently claimed its apostolic lineage as irrefutable (Petrine Commission), used the sacraments as an avenue to proclaim their monopoly on Christ’s salvation. While all Catholic sacraments are considered blessed acts of the faith, baptism and the Eucharist were the most frequently practiced and furthermore the most effective means of recruitment and conversion to Catholicism. These rites were by no means exclusive to the Catholic Church; however the Church did consider one’s participation as a mark of faith, allegiance and obedience to its orthodoxy once the rites were completed. Clerics also had a responsibility to the sacraments; in addition to their administration, bishops and priests were

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required to recruit participants and uphold a consistent schedule of these events. But the rituals, like the doctrine that supported them, were anything but consistent. What baptism and the mass, the celebration of the Eucharist, looked like in one region may have varied greatly in another. The lack of uniformity led the sacraments to suffer the same fate as the canon, whereby they became molded less by a central church and more by regional interpretation and preferential practice. Unlike the canon, however, which was primarily recorded, most scholars find that exploring and furthermore hoping to find a linear history of the sacraments is tantamount to tracing any human ritual back to one pure formula.

Paul F. Bradshaw, in his book *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, provides an accurate and candid explanation of research regarding the early years of Christian ritual. He says that in exploring the Church’s order it is advised that one not consider the evidence as if it were a simple jigsaw puzzle, each of the pieces fitting perfectly together, but rather as a kaleidoscope, which allows one to arrange the patterns in a variety of ways. As Bradshaw points out, a number of things can be considered when one looks at these rituals, particularly when one considers that they were just as much a part of religious orthodoxy as they were actual law. Tracing the history of the Catholic Church’s baptismal and Eucharistic encounters creates a number of logistical obstacles. Shrouded in mystery and incomplete evidence these sacraments were not administered by means of a Church-prescribed ritual until the early thirteenth century, primarily because such a prescription did not exist.

Even after the First Council of Nicaea where Catholic doctrine was better-defined, an allowable margin of license remained within the orthodoxy, specifically when it came to the practice and administration of the sacraments. Sacramental procedures relied heavily on the local

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bishops and monks who openly adopted their own preferential liturgies and ritual practices, none of which were born from true Church consensus. The foundation of their varied interpretations can be traced back to a number of theologians ranging from the early tracts of Justin Martyr to Augustine in the early fourth century. Sacramental procedures found in the Gelasian Sacramentary as well as the Missale Gothicum provided models for administration, which, like canons, were in demand by the clerics who preferred them. Even among devout Catholic theologians, there was some differentiated interpretation about the role of God in these rituals, particularly when it came to the Eucharist, which sparked a century’s long dispute between proponents of transubstantiation and those of consubstantiation. From 900 until the early thirteenth century there was a clear divide between those who believed, like Ambrose, that during the Eucharistic ritual of the mass, God literally became the bread and wine, and those who like Augustine, who favored consubstantiation and felt the Eucharistic ceremony signified that God simply resided alongside the physical substances within the ritual.

This lack of a coherent interpretation demonstrates another aspect of the Catholic Church that leant itself to the nebulous and suggestively disorganized nature of this sacrament, which was the cornerstone of the faith, and furthermore of the Church. By the twelfth century Christianity was certainly present, and even accepted, by the majority in Western Europe, but to say that all Christian sects were faithful to the Catholic Church, would be generous at best, particularly in regions of southern France, northern Italy and Germanic regions just north of the Alps. These former lands of the Church began to sway in their allegiance to Rome and instead

33 Bradshaw, The Search for the Origins, 97.
34 James F. McCue, “The Doctrine of Transubstantiation from Berengar through Trent: The Point at Issue.” The Harvard Theological Review 61, no.3 (July 1968):386.
35 McCue, 388.
relied heavily on their own homespun Christian customs. Many regional peoples started to reject the church altogether and perform their own sacraments and preach their own sermons, like the Cathars. However, in 1198 a new Pontiff came to the helm of the Catholic Church. Innocent III made it his mission to reclaim the power of the Catholic Church, his clerics and the laws and rituals left to Peter by Christ himself.

Innocent III, who is consistently likened to his predecessor Gregory VII, is often referred to as a lawyer pope, and while there remains no proof that he actually ever attended law school, he was insatiably devoted to creating a streamlined, unified Church canon. From the earliest days of his induction he released a number of papal decrees that made recommendations and stressed consequences for everything from usury to heresy. Innocent, like Gregory claimed that his power proceeded from God and that it was his duty and his right to use whatever device necessary to reclaim his flock.36 Diplomacy, politics, preaching campaigns and even crusades would define Innocent’s methods, but the magnum opus of his reign was the 1215 Canon of the Fourth Lateran Council, the largest ecumenical council in the world. As a collective whole, bishops, abbots, princes and patriarchs met together to remedy the inconsistencies of the Catholic Church, including the sacraments. Scholars argue that Innocent used law to justify the calling of the Albigensian Crusade, and while this proved a failure at reclaiming former Christian territory for Rome, it certainly demonstrated the consequence to those that objected Church orthodoxy.

For Innocent the goal was to redirect and update the practices and orthodoxy of all parishes, while at the same time it helped identify, and furthermore extinguish, Christian sects that refused his mandates.37 While some scholars view Innocent’s solution as harsh and

antithetical to the forgiving and benign nature of apostolic ways, specifically when one observes his eradication of the Cathars, others consider these reforms as one of the most efficient decisions of the Medieval Church. Regardless, what came from this meeting was a new perspective concerning the role of Church law in the lives of Western European Catholics, as well as on civil courts and Christian princes. This study will focus on the canonical as well as the customary evolution of the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist and will establish how the Church justified these sacraments as a means of Christ’s salvation. This discussion will include explanations of how the church’s monopoly on the delegation as well as the definition of God’s grace is not only present in the Canon, but furthermore how this application of power is justified in the reason of law.

The paper gives a pan-regional summary of the evolution of sacramental practices throughout Western Europe from the early Roman tradition to the twelfth century. This section demonstrates the obvious presence, and furthermore the growth of inconsistency and regional interpretation of both the sacraments as well as the canon itself. English practices are omitted, and instead the study focuses on Rome, Northern Italy and France. This discussion examines to what degree these inconsistencies contributed to the overall digression from Roman Catholic orthodoxy, if at all. It also suggests how the lack of a unified orthodoxy surrounding fundamental ideas like Christ’s presence in the Eucharist, left the Church without a formidable argument against Gnostic practices that denied the sanctity of this cornerstone of the Catholic faith. The piece concludes with an examination of Innocent III’s papacy where I argue that the convening of the Fourth Lateran Council and the creation of the 1215 Canon provided a necessary and, at least in his interpretation, justified means to reclaim his flock and to establish the papacy of the Latin Church as supreme to all other powers, both civil as well as ecclesiastical. It will also
reexamine the Cathars who were directly targeted by Innocent III in the Albigensian Crusade. These groups, many of them established due to the desire for reform within the Roman Catholic Church, illustrate a factious group of believers for which Innocent and the 1215 Canon was the resolution.
CHAPTER 2

BAPTISM

It is this one Spirit who makes it possible for an infant to be regenerated . . . when that infant is brought to baptism; and it is through this one Spirit that the infant so presented is reborn. For it is not written, ‘Unless a man be born again by the will of his parents’ or ‘by the faith of those presenting him or ministering to him,’ but, ‘Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit.’ The water, therefore, manifesting exteriorly the sacrament of grace, and the Spirit effecting interiorly the benefit of grace, both regenerate in one Christ that man who was generated in Adam.

Letters 98:2 [A.D. 412]

Jesus said to his disciples, “All power is given to Me in Heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” Baptism and the Eucharist are the only sacraments instituted by the Catholic Church that were also received, sanctioned and performed by Christ himself in the gospels. Derived from the Greek βάπτισμα, or “washing,” baptism was the accepted initiation rite of a number of ancient religions, including pagan sects as well as Judaism. The universal nature of the rite made it clear that it did not solely belong to any one creed, and certainly not one region. However, to promote the idea that Christ solely endowed Peter with perpetuating his church, it was important for the church to rid the world of baptisms that were not ordained by the Catholic Church in which Peter was crowned by Christ himself as Cephas, or the rock, of the faith.

In order to do this, the Church would have to adopt a consistent procedure for the rite, and ultimately create a law that discounted baptisms that operated outside of Church orthodoxy,

38Matthew 28:19-20
40John 1:42
including those of the Greeks and the Jews. As with other canons, procedures and customs of the Church there was no definitive recommendation for baptism, particularly how and by whom the rite could be performed. As a result different theologians and Christian leaders essentially designed their own methods that drew from the fundamental traditions of the sacrament, as well as their own opinions and self-selected liturgies. In addition between 200 C.E. and the late twelfth century no penalty existed for baptisms that were performed by lay people in non-Catholic Christian faiths so long as they observed the Trinity.

And as long as the Church had no canon to clearly identify these alternative sects, it would continue to share its exclusive access to Christ’s salvation. The Waldensians are an example of one of these groups. While this sect recognized the Trinity, and by all other measures upheld apostolic tradition, they did not recognize that the Catholic Church was the “one shepherd” of the faith. From baptism to marriage the Catholic Church’s monopoly on Christ’s grace made the institution a very powerful entity, one in which many felt invested in Christ both symbolically as well as in their everyday life. The fate of the rite determined the fate of the progression of the church, as it was this sacrament that officially welcomed one’s soul into the Church, and furthermore into salvation itself.

Whether one was fully submerged or sprinkled with holy water, this sacrament was designed to wash away original sins and to prepare one’s spirit for a life devoted to the ways of Christ. It was also the first phase of submission to the apostolic authority held by the Catholic

Church. Baptisms were of such vital importance that they were often done en masse during the Easter celebration when qualified clerics were accessible to otherwise obscure communities. Visigoth and Celtic converts during the time of Charlemagne were even unaware of what they were committing, many of them being ignorant of Latin. Mass conversions were often characterized by mass baptisms, and whether the converts were entirely privy to the ritual was a second-tier issue to the conversion itself, which aimed at winning over as many new followers as possible.

However, because the practice was so widespread and because it was carried out indiscriminately, it was also one of the sacraments that was most likely to be influenced by regional tradition, which may or may not have agreed with the formalities of the Roman Catholic Church, and more specifically with the initiatives of the Fourth Lateran Council and the 1215 Canon. This portion of the study examines baptism in Early Christianity as well as the progression of the sacrament in specific regions of Western Europe until the early thirteenth century in order to support the argument of regional inconsistencies in the sacraments. It also establishes how the 1215 Canon validated the necessity and the legitimacy of the baptismal sacrament, which in turn establish irrefutable power of the Latin Church and to the Pope in matters both civil and ecclesiastical.

2.1 Baptism in Early Christianity

Paul F. Bradshaw in his piece *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, provides an accurate and candid explanation of research regarding the early years of Christian baptismal

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ritual. *The Search* is easily a handbook for liturgical and sacramental developments of Christianity and the early Church. As I discussed above, Bradshaw recommends a jigsaw, rather than a linear study of the sacraments.  

From the first century to the Council of Trent, the Catholic Church consistently returned to the apostolic tradition as framed in the New Testament to justify its power, however, it was clear, especially in its earliest years, that its rituals, baptism in particular, were still laden with pagan and Eastern undertones. It is generally accepted that the Christian baptismal model stems directly from the baptism of John as found in both the New Testament as well as in a portion of Josephus. However, the similarities to earlier, Jewish models are obvious and included: the laying on of the bishop’s hands, the acknowledgement of the unction of the Spirit and the anointing with oil. This Syrian model was certainly apparent in the *Didache*, an early catechism that outlined baptism, the Eucharist and Christian ethics for Gentile converts. On baptism the *Didache*’s model is very similar to the model that both the Eastern Church and the Latin Church would later adopt. In terms of baptism the model is very similar. *Did* 7 clearly stipulates the steps of the baptismal ritual as so:

1. The community gathers in the place of the baptism (many have been fasting)
2. Candidates are lead in by their spiritual mentors and all grow silent
3. Mentors recite the “Way of Life” and the “Way of Death” with appropriate refrains
4. Each candidate is immersed, dried off, and re-clothed in a dry tunic
5. New members are embraced by and kissed (same sex only) by their new family (spiritual community)
6. Lord’s prayer is prayed for the first time facing east
7. All retire to the home where the fast-breaking Eucharist has been prepared

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Various versions of the baptismal rite in the early Christian church, particularly those of Bishop Ambrose, resemble this model. However the “Way of Life” and the “Way of Death” are uniquely Jewish, and come directly from the Old Testament. Jeremiah 21:8-13 was part of the “Way of Life” and Way of Death” recitations and said

And to these people you shall say: Thus says the Lord: See, I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death…To the House of Judah say: Hear the word of the Lord, oh House of David! Thus says the Lord: Execute justice in the morning and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed, or else my wrath will go forth like fire, and burn, with no one to quench it because of your evil doings.51

Another look at Did 7:1c-3a provides a recommendation for baptizing gentile converts.

The Jews felt that in the case of the gentiles, baptism was just as much a literal cleansing, as it was a spiritual cleansing.

Baptize in running water. If you do not have running water, however baptize in another kind of water if you cannot do so in cold water, then do so in warm water. But if you have neither pour water on the head thrice.

Note for instance the way that the running water is listed as the most efficient means for the baptismal rite, as it is the “living” water and one from which the convert is most cleaned. The “living water” has historically been greatly valued by Israel and this water was preferable.52 While the Didache clearly laid some foundations for Christian baptism, it was not completely recognized by the Christian Church, and the model falls into disuse. Why it was eradicated is not certain, but is likely due to the obvious Jewish undertones.53 At a time when Christianity was working to increase its popularity, relying on traditions that appeared Jewish was contradictory to Christian efforts to convert followers to the teachings of Christ and His Church. The continued use of Jewish prayers and ritual would only reaffirm for Jews that their faith was indeed superior.

52Flusser and van de Sandt. The Didache,281.
In North Africa, around 200 CE, Tertullian weighed in on the Christian practice. His tracts reveal that while he agreed that there were similarities between the Syrian model and the baptisms of the New Testament, the Syrian model excluded the invocation of the Spirit, the post-baptismal laying of hands (accompanied by his own interpretative prayer) and the three-fold interrogatory profession. As a result Tertullian created his own model that re-introduced these elements. All of the elements of Tertullian’s model could be directly linked to New Testament writings, leaving very little argument against it from the Church and later theologians; even the models of Cyprian and Ambrose reflect that of Tertullian. When the early Catholic church moved toward consistency in its rituals around 500 CE, the singular *Didache* was lost, but to a few local bishops primarily in regions of North Africa.\(^{54}\) This means, while it was diminished, it certainly was not lost entirely, supporting Bradshaw’s recommendation of a non-linear approach to studying the sacraments; as we do know the *Didache* at least in some sense reflects the model of Tertullian and in turn the Milanese model that was later established by Ambrose, specifically when it comes to the recognition of the Trinity as listed in “Did” 7 of the *Didache*.\(^{55}\) Another major change to baptism around 350 CE actually resulted from the growing bureaucratic structure within the church. The new ranks of bishops called for the addition of new elements to models like Tertullian’s, including the requirement of a pre-baptismal exorcism.\(^{56}\) The Syrian model that influenced Tertullian’s model, and in turn Ambrose’s model was not the only influence on early baptismal practices, however. Rome had also developed its own model, which even though its history is limited, sheds some light on the origins of the factious state of baptismal practices in the Latin West between 400 and 1215.


While there is evidence of the baptismal rite in other places like Syria and even Greece, there remain no fourth-century catecheses for Roman baptism. While there is evidence that the First Apology of Justin Martyr and the Apostolic Tradition supplied an outline for its administration, these models present some interpretive issues. For instance, Justin notes that baptism was done “in the name of Christ,” which in fact ignores both God and the Holy Spirit. Justin’s non-Trinitarian formula suggests that the acknowledgement of the Trinity was optional, and not necessary in order to properly perform the rite, even though we know it was widely accepted at this time. Besides the confusion in orthodoxy surrounding the Roman model there are also a number of inconsistencies in the actual administration of the rite before the fourth century. These inconsistencies include post-baptismal anointing and post-baptismal laying-on of the hands. Paul Bradshaw notes Maxwell Johnson’s suggestion that alterations to these two elements “appear to be innovations designed to enhance the prestige of the Episcopal office.”

Johnson’s assertion concerning papal power deserves attention, especially when one considers that Ambrose, whose model clearly showed links to the early Syrian model, objected tirelessly about suggestions that his model was not Roman enough, possibly to squash the idea that he was being insubordinate to Rome.

However, while Ambrose’s response appeared to suggest that Rome had secured a monopoly on the formula for baptism, it was quite the contrary. In fact, in terms of diversity the practices of the baptismal rite in early Christianity very much resemble the practice of this rite until the late twelfth century. And while “preparatory instruction, renunciation and act of the faith, anointing, immersion and laying-on of the hands” had all been established as the most common practices within the ritual after 400, they were all executed differently and in a

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58 Bradshaw, The Search for the Origins, 165.
different order in Gaul, Northern Italy, regions north of the Alps and even in Rome.59

2.2 Baptismal Formulas from Charlamagne to the Medieval Era

By the seventh century the churches of the West had worked to give the sacrament of baptism a definable shape, which included the catechumenate, confession of the faith and the baptism in water.60 Also the foundation of all baptismal models at this time, specifically those practiced in Rome, could easily be traced to the *Gelasian Sacramentary* or the *Vaticanus Reginensis* of 316, which was collected in Gaul in the first half of the eighth century.61 However one thing that can be safely said about the initiation rite around the eighth century was that the administration of the sacrament, while similar throughout the West, was not uniform, and therefore still allowed for a wide application of regional variations, particularly when it came to the calendar and the formula surrounding the ritual.

Rome, the center of Christendom, had decided on the season of baptism as far back as 385 when Pope Siricius excluded the Christmas season, and determined that the Pentecost was the appropriate time for the celebration, which was supported in the New Testament.62 In Acts 2:1-41 Luke speaks about the coming of the spirit, and stresses the importance of baptism to the Gentiles. As the account testified, during Pentecost Paul urged the Gentiles to save themselves from a corrupt generation by participating in the baptismal ritual, and as a result three thousand persons were added to the flock of believers during the celebration.63 Paul’s mass baptism from

63 Acts 2:1-41
Acts is key in that it provides a possible explanation for Pentecost’s adoption by the early Church as the most significant time to baptize. The early Roman tradition required infants to receive the sacrament, and parents or guardians were required to present them during the Lord’s Paschal. This responsibility was mandated in the canonical law by the monk Dionysius Exiguus who imbedded it, along with a number of like papal decisions, within his corpus of canons.64

The most interesting aspect of Dionysius’s work and the Gelasian rubrics as well, is what is meant by infant; the word infant could be used for any person, regardless of age, who had been spiritually reborn in baptism.65 The Gelasian rubrics were highly consulted for the Roman administration of the baptismal rite beyond their designation of the age of the subject, including their exposition of the seven exorcisms, the inclusion of introductory readings of the four gospels, and finally the consecration of the water.66 The consecration of the water through the invocation of the Holy Spirit was an absolute in the instructions, as was the status of the administrator; bishops or popes were the only candidates to perform the rite, except in the case of an emergency, in which case local priests or monks could substitute.67 Acknowledgment of the Holy Spirit in this ritual can also be traced back to Acts and Paul who testified “repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”68 The most noted contradiction between the Gelasian tradition and the Roman tradition was the Roman model’s use of chrism, or consecrated oil, in

65Opera, ed. G. Morin, Turnhout, 1958, p.533: “or all we know that all who are baptized, whether they are young or old are called infants.”
66Fisher, Christian Initiation, 92.
68Acts 2:38
the water, which was applied directly to the head.\textsuperscript{69}

From the eighth century to the twelfth century baptism underwent but a few changes in Rome consisting of: a mass catechumenate during the last three weeks of Lent and blessing of the font (the Baptismal vessel), the three-fold confession of the faith, the dipping and anointing of the head by a high ranking presbyter, episcopal laying on of the hands and consignation of the forehead with chrism. After the baptismal rite the new member received communion at the mass of the Paschal Vigil.\textsuperscript{70} Waiting to perform mass baptisms during the Paschal Vigil and then the Lenten holiday eventually dissolved. One explanation for this that the development of “the fall” and the acknowledgement of original sin, which was presented in the Bible in both Romans and Paul’s Letters to the Corinthians, which likely prompted the administration of more baptisms closer to birth. The Roman model was by far the most recognized baptismal rite in early Christendom, and it should be established that it was diligently founded in true apostolic tradition however it was not the only model. To further address the diversity of ritual in the early Christian church we must observe the presence and popularity of other models. While Rome defined its baptism by the writings of the Gelasian rubrics and the writings of John the Deacon the Baptismal rite in Northern Italy relied on the Bishops Ambrose and Odilbert, who endorsed a mildly different methodology, one that was insistent on Christian morals and the recognition of Original Sin and less on Pauline doctrine.

Bishop Ambrose was a well-known figure in the Milanese Catholic community during the late fourth century. He often preached about Christian morals, and emphatically advocated the renouncing of sin, especially to baptismal candidates, who Ambrose called Christ’s athletes,

\textsuperscript{69}Fisher, \textit{Christian Initiation}, 15.

or those who, after anointing, would have to “wrestle in the fight of this world.”71 To eradicate not only the Original Sin of Adam and Eve, but rather any semblance of Satan’s influence, Ambrose and the Milanese adopted a more elaborate initiation rite than the one in Rome. Some notable differences were the prayers used during the ceremony. In Milan, as in Rome, candidates for Baptism were required to renounce Satan in a series of exchanges with the priest or bishop, however, in the Milanese tradition the candidates were also required to literally face Satan by turning towards the West and spitting at him.72 There was also the addition of the washing of the feet. Ambrose saw this ceremony as a washing away of original sin, and interestingly enough, hereditary or family, sin as well.

In Baptism all guilt was washed away. Guilt therefore vanishes. But because Adam was tripped by the devil and poison was poured over his feet, therefore thou wastest thy feet; that at that point where the serpent made his treacherous attack a stronger reinforcement of sanctification may be applied, that he may not be able to trip thee up afterwords. Therefore thou wastest thy feet, to wash off the poison of the serpent. It is a help towards humility also.73

Ambrose’s approach to the initiation rite, for adults at least, combined Baptism, Confirmation, and First Communion. This ceremony, which was held during the Easter celebration, could only be administered by a bishop, as he was the only Church representative, aside from the Pope who could perform the unction, in Milan referred to as the “spiritual seal.” There is still some controversy about the unction and its relationship to the spiritual seal, and whether the seal was simply a part of the unction ceremony or, because it could only be administered by a bishop who traditionally was necessary for confirmation, was actually part of

the confirmation portion of the celebration and not the baptismal portion itself.\textsuperscript{74} Another addition to the ceremony was the cloaking of the candidates in white robes after the sprinkling of the Holy water and the washing of the feet as a sign that they had washed away their sins, and covered themselves in chaste garments of innocence.\textsuperscript{75}

Ambrose’s methodology then consisted of preparation of the \textit{competentes} during Lent; unction and renunciation of Satan; blessing of the baptismal font; threefold confession of the faith and dipping; anointing of the candidates by a bishop; the \textit{pedilavium}, vesting of the baptized in white robes; the “spiritual seal” and finally the communion of the baptized. This model was temporarily altered under Charlemagne who, under pressure from the Church, attempted to enforce the Roman model.\textsuperscript{76} However, the Milanese continued to refer back to Ambrose until the twelfth century, when the Catholic Church, in an effort for further consolidation, refined the practice of the sacraments, eliminated the right of Confirmation and altered the unction in the Ambrosian model.\textsuperscript{77} How the Milanese were able to avoid Charlemagne’s request is unknown, but the fact that they maintained their tradition in spite of it speaks volumes about their regional pride, as well as the dedication of individual clerics to their regional traditions and customary applications. Other areas of Europe, specifically those north of the Alps were more influenced by the Roman model; however their formula was not a perfect replica, either. Like Northern Italians, French and German Catholics used different liturgies and missals, or outlines for the mass as well, which further supports that customary practices were inconsistent, and as illustrated by the Milanese, even dismissive of papal, canonical power.

\textsuperscript{74}Fisher, \textit{Christian Initiation}, 34.


By the eighth century three Missals appear in Gaul and Germany that influenced the ecclesiastical traditions and sacramental rites in these regions. The Missale Gothicum, Missale Gallicanum vetus and the Missale Bobbiense were all unique to these areas, but notably Roman in that aspects of their dialogue are clearly derived from the Roman model. The influence of the Roman technique, particularly in Germany, can also be explained through clerics and monks who, after pilgrimages to Rome during Roman Holy Week and Easter, brought the model back with them in an attempt to conform their churches to the same administration. This further supports the claim that many clerics were at liberty to use the ritual models that they preferred, and it certainly solidifies that at least through the eighth century that the Church had yet to put any specific parameters on baptism save some broad details.

In fact, the fundamentals of the rite were markedly similar to those of the Roman model, and even more so to those of the Milanese model; the Gallican model, practiced in both France and Germany, consisted of the catechumenate, baptism, anointing of candidates, pedilavium (washing of the feet), vesting in white robes and communion at the mass of the Paschal vigil. The most noted difference between the rite in Gaul and Germany and the Roman model was the variety allowed by the Missals listed above for use in these regions. Albeit they were small differences, depending on which Missal was used, everything from the dialogue between the officiate and the candidates to the physical administration varied from one missal to the other; for instance, in the final portion of the rite in the Gothicum Missale the pedilavium is immediately followed by the vesting of the neophytes, in the Bobbiense Missale the order of the

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79 Fisher, Christian Initiation, 47.
ceremonies was inverted, and in the *Gallicanum vetus* pedilavium was omitted all together.\(^8^1\)

This administration, while flexible, was not authorized by a centralized church and its lax use of presbyters in the place of bishops led to confusion concerning who could and could not perform the rite.

On the one hand, there was the idea that the administrator needed to be someone who was sanctified by the Church, however, on the other hand, there was the idea that conversion should be more accessible. In a letter from Pope Boniface to Zacharias written in 742, the Pope complained of the chaotic conditions prevailing in the Frankish Church, saying specifically that “the Franks had no synod held for over eighty years, no archbishop, no regard for Canon Law, Episcopal sees were held by covetous laics or adulterous clerics and bishops who, if not immoral were drunken or lazy.”\(^8^2\) Charlemagne was charged with ameliorating the situation, and after a visit to Rome at Easter of 774 Adrian I gave him a copy of a newly instituted code of canons. This compilation was called the *Dionysio-Hadriana*, and was originally assembled by the Roman monk, Dionysius Exiguus who was considered one of the most learned scholars in ecclesiastical canon law. The *Dionysio-Hadriana* restricted baptism to the vigils of Easter and Pentecost save in cases of danger, when bishops could attend to larger groups of converts.\(^8^3\) This mandate urged the necessary carrying out of the sacrament, as issued in the canon law, as well as a feasible way to make sure that the baptism, and more importantly the confirmation at the conclusion of the ceremony, was carried out by a bishop, and not a lesser ordained minister.\(^8^4\) The Frankish Church accepted this at the Council of Aix-la-Chapelle in 802, however this model was not

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\(^{8^1}\) Fisher, *Christian Initiation*, 56.


\(^{8^4}\) Ibid.
endorsed by all churches, or by all clerics.

The greatest difference between regions south of the Alps and those north of the Alps, however, was the influence of earlier tribal traditions on baptism. Within the Germanic regions were groups that vowed their allegiance to Christ, and even the Church, but still conformed to traditions established long before canon law had officially found its way into the everyday lives of the people. And although Adrian I attempted to reorganize the initiation rite under Charlemagne, even some French peoples continued to oppose the church’s stringent doctrine, in favor of older, more familiar traditions, particularly the Cathars in Southern France. The Cathars were a Gnostic sect that grew out of the Paulican movement set forth by the Bogomils from the Byzantine Empire. This group’s baptismal rite, the Consolamentum, in terms of choreography, greatly resembled the techniques used in the Old Testament. And because there was no immediate civil consequence enforced by French nobles for practicing their traditions the Cathars, and other groups like them, continued to ignore the Church’s recommendations into the thirteenth century.

Innocent the III, in an effort to consolidate the Church’s power, both spiritually and diplomatically, outlawed the acceptance of any baptisms from outlier groups, as well as their traditions; these communities were targeted by the Fourth Lateran Council, which issued a revised canon that eliminated their performance of the rite, and furthermore required their full conversion to Catholic orthodoxy. In order for the Church laws to spread and to be recognized as law, however, they would have to themselves be considered just as consequential as civil laws. This meant that that local princes, feudal lords and furthermore legalists would have to acknowledge the Roman papal power as well as the rituals that they endorsed and in the form in which they wanted them administered. (See Figures 2.1 and 2.2 and commentary.)
FIGURE 2.1. Baptism of Christ, Arian Baptistery, Italy, 550 CE. The baptistery was originally erected by Theodoric the Great. It was a Byzantine monastery whose artwork reflected a number of themes that conflicted with the Western Church. Note the figure of Christ is fully submerged, which was a practice that was omitted from the ritual after the 1215 Canon. In 1543 the church was renovated by the Catholic Church at which time many of the mosaics were altered to support its orthodoxy.85

85Baptism of Christ, Monastery at Ravenna, Italy 550 C.E. Permission is granted to copy, distribute and/or modify this document under the terms of the GNU Free Documentation License.
FIGURE 2.2. *The Baptism of Christ by John the Baptist in the Jordan River*, Neonian Baptistery, Ravenna Italy, 451-75 CE. The most significant portion of the mosaic is the right arm of John the Baptist, which was added during an eighteenth Century renovation. The arm was added to hold the holy water vessel used to sprinkle the initiated, reasserting how baptismal practices had changed since the monastery’s opening. The dove, which represents the Holy Spirit was also a later addition, and reiterates the presence of the Trinity. This renovation, like the one at The Monastery in Ravenna, adopted new Catholic orthodoxy in place of the Arian.86

2.3 Canon Law Secures Christ’s Charism for the Church

The early canons of the Catholic Church drew a great deal of influence from Roman law. In fact many of the first canonists were trained in both types of laws. The parallels can be found in a number of legal categories including: obligation; contract; delict; fraud; surety; prescription;
rules of law and technical vocabulary. Although regional secular courts and regional ecclesiastical courts were separate in their practice, including their administration, their power often seemed indistinguishable. During the twelfth century, for instance, it was very common for bishops to routinely preside over their own courts as well as secular courts, considering themselves professionals in the faith and in the law. At the same time many of the Italian law schools, specifically Bologna, were glossing the Justinian Code and Roman law in order to establish a stronger civil system. The parallel growth of both canon and civil law at this time, not to mention the fact that they were both essentially stemming from the same, earlier law codes, poses an interesting paradox; in civil matters, where Catholic initiates are being tried, what role would the Church play to monitor that justice is served? For legalists the answer could be found in Gratian’s *Decretum* which, while it was not created by the papacy did provide law students with a well-organized collection for which they could glean a better understanding of canon law, and furthermore what role it played in civil courtrooms. The *Decretum* began with specific *Distinctiones* each of which defended “natural law” as having just as much, if not more power, than canon law in moral issues. *Distinctio 10*, furthermore claimed that canon law was superior to civil law. Ironically Gratian’s work was not endorsed by the Pope, even though it is clear that his work most likely encouraged legalists to consider both the significance and the power of canon law. A possible explanation can be found in *Distinctio 17*, where Gratian poses that just as legalists endorse the power of the emperor, they should also endorse and uphold the power of the Holy See. The problem here was that many legalists argued that because the Pope’s power “was endorsed by Christ himself that subsequent councils could only have conferred

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89 Brian Tierney, *Church Law and Constitutional Thought in the Middle Ages* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1979), 353.
authority ‘secondarily’ or have made manifest authority that already existed.” Consideration of councils and councilor authority called into question the Pope’s authority, and is likely why Innocent III did not give it direct attention. Nonetheless many legalists maintained that canon law was not superior to civil law.

In Italy, some legalists felt that canon law should blend with civil law to create a formal code, instead of the canon law operating as a separate code. Cino da Pistoia, a Justinian Code expert and author of *Lectura in codicem*, despised his canonistic colleagues and consistently voiced his contempt for what he considered a second-rate branch of law. Cino denied the “false and erroneous understanding” of the canonists and warned fellow legalists not to desert the treasure of stores of civil law in order to beg the crumbs from the impoverished table of the canonists. North of the Alps canon law received a bit more respect from civil lawyers, as Roman law was taught later. The discussion surrounding the validity and importance of canon law, especially in its relation to civil law, deserves sincere consideration as it paints an indelible line between the power and authority of the church and that of the secular world.

The adoption of canon law was, at its inception, designed to protect the Church and its followers in moral matters, in particular those matters that were specific to the carrying out and the observation of orthodoxy. In these matters the Church felt that civil law, or man-made law was inappropriate. Regardless of their emphatic dissimilarities however, by 1160 thoughtful law teachers reminded their students that civil law must be informed by the same moral values like those recognized by theologians. The idea of the Church as a formidable representative of the

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90Tierney, *Church Law and Constitutional Thought*, 354.
people was undeniable in the medieval Christian West. *Repraesentatio* is a term commonly used to understand the dynamic between the church’s legal status and the otherwise secular field of law. This term, according to Brian Tierney, could have three different meanings. The first is a symbolic representation or personification as when a whole community is taken to be figurally present in the person of its head. The second meaning of the term can be defined as *mimesis* which is considered to represent a whole society because it faithfully mirrors in its composition all society’s varied element. The third meaning of representation is delegation or authorization.94 The Church recognized each of these representations as described by Dr. Tierney, however Popes like Innocent III would argue that Church power transcended all of these because after all the Church was given its power by God, not by man.

The greatest symbol of the Church’s representative power was most noticeably seen in the diocese as a juridical unit. Within this jurisdictional body the executive body and the governors can easily be identified as the Pope and the bishops respectively, but understanding the role of the community, or furthermore the laws by which they should abide first and foremost, is hazy. Considering the way in which the church stationed itself throughout Western Europe by the eleventh and twelfth centuries, it is understandable that the community viewed the church as just as much a judicial body as they did a spiritual body.95 Bishops established their sees into capital cities throughout the Roman Empire before any secular ruler set up his domain. The bishops built massive houses of worship that represented Christian power, Episcopal authority, and urban pride throughout Europe; these compounds housed the bishops themselves.

95Kenneth Pennington, “Representation in Medieval Canon Law,” Discussion, Sam Miniato International Workshop, London, UK, October 13-16, 2004. [http://faculty.cua.edu/Pennington/PenningtonRepraesentationRevised.htm](http://faculty.cua.edu/Pennington/PenningtonRepraesentationRevised.htm)
and their canonical collections and were beacons for juridical and economic affairs. The overwhelming presence of the Church and its Episcopal power, and furthermore the bishop’s authority over local peoples, often brought them into conflict with secular rulers in Italy, Germany, France and England. This created a dichotomy of issues for the populace in that they were, in essence, forced to evaluate their relationships with both powers— the secular and the spiritual.

As a result the canon law’s function in the life of the church and the continuing issue of the unity produced two interrelated principles: “theology without law leaves the ecclesiastical community bereft of an ordered life, yet law without theological meaning surrenders its moral persuasiveness and deteriorates into rigid legalism.” In a study of theological anthropology, John Coughlin of Notre Dame University proposes that there is an irreducible unity of the body and soul, and that the body intellect defines a person as “spirit in flesh.” So in essence the legislative power that has dominion over the soul, then has dominion over the body. For the Catholic Church the sacraments were the avenue through which the soul was saved, and through which the Church claimed power over individual worshipers by granting its followers with Christ’s charism, or grace.

In Book IV of his collection, Four Books of the Sentences, Peter Lombard discusses the sacraments, specifically baptism, which supports the church’s claim to faithfulness and devotion of the initiate and the reward of God’s grace. The method of baptism, universally represented

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97 Tierney, Church Law, 319.
99 Ibid, 4.
in the “washing with the water,” was only one aspect of the rite, according to Lombard, for without the administration by the church, and the use of the words that invoke the Holy Trinity, the act is without significance, and the baptized without salvation.\textsuperscript{101}

Wherefore Pope Zacharias says to Bishop Boniface: It was most positively declared in the Synod of the Angels, that whoever was immersed without the invocation of the Trinity, did not have the sacrament of regeneration; a statement which is entirely true, because if anyone is immersed in the font of baptism without the invocation of the Trinity, he is not a complete Christian, unless he is baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{102}

Here, Lombard secures the Church’s monopoly on grace and forgiveness of sins, or rather its right to bestow God’s grace unto its followers. To further validate Church power, the Bible itself endorsed the institution of baptism. Christ said, “Go ye, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit.”\textsuperscript{103} The act of baptism, or the responsibility rather, was one of the last tasks that Christ requested of his disciples. The mere fact that Christ felt it necessary to note this sacrament in the gospels makes the role of baptism all the more important, and furthermore gives the Church the right to determine the purpose as well as the method of administration of baptism. Peter, being the “holder of the keys” to the Church, and the first Pope, secures not only the Church’s power over the initiation rite, but the power to determine its meaning and necessity. As a result, initiates baptized into the faith were eternally endowed to the Church, and its laws.

The populace of Western Europe in the medieval era was subject to two bodies of law, one civil and one spiritual. While councilors of civil law often objected to the validity of canon law, they could not deny its moral significance. Furthermore, Roman Law and the Justinian

\textsuperscript{101}Rogers, \textit{Peter Lombard and the Sacramental System}, 89.

\textsuperscript{102}Elizabeth Frances Rogers, \textit{Peter Lombard and the Sacramental System} (New York: Columbia University Press, 1917), 89.

\textsuperscript{103}Matthew 28:19
Code, which were both highly regarded by these legalists clearly endorsed the Church as a compulsory power in civil matters. Through the sacraments the Church acquired followers that shared this view. The power to define and more importantly to administer the sacraments meant that an individual’s allegiance was not defined by his region, but by the universal Church, and in essence God himself. The 1215 Canon and the Fourth Lateran Council was convened to create more specific guidelines for baptism. The new concrete rite caused believers and administrators of the rite to identify with one Universal Church, invoke each person of the Trinity, and partake in the sacrament of penance to restore his soul. In addition Catholic clerics were instructed not to condone the performance of the sacrament by any groups deemed heretical by the Church.

As we will establish in chapter four, while the 1215 Canon does not mention previous canonical collections by name, nor does it discount specific liturgies, it is enforced as the only canon of the Catholic Church by 1216, which should be maintained by all Catholics so as not to perpetuate an orthodoxy that was un-tethered from Rome, nor one that was dismissive of pontifical authority. The 1215 Canon also secured this power in its stance on the Holy Eucharist; in particular, it established Christ’s presence in the host, as well as the Catholic Church’s sole right to determine both its symbolism, as well as the heretics who disregarded its significance.


CHAPTER 3
THE EUCHARIST

When therefore the mingled cup and manufactured bread receives the Word of God, and the Eucharist becomes the body of Christ, from which things our flesh is increased and supported, how can [anyone] affirm that the flesh is incapable of receiving the gift of God, which is Life eternal which [flesh] is nourished from the body and blood of the Lord, and is a member of him?

Contra Haereses

Between 900 A.D. and approximately the mid-1200s the Catholic Church was the leading author of the moral code. Its recommendations for a pious life, one worthy of salvation, helped create an indelible line between the faithful and those they considered heretics. While many of the sacraments had their roots in earlier Roman, Jewish and even Greek ceremonies, the Church’s mandate of how and unto whom these sacraments were executed evolved greatly from the time of Charlemagne, a time when the church itself was operating as much as a political, organizational tool as it was a continuing mission of the teachings of Jesus Christ, to the time of Pope Innocent III and the convening of the Lateran IV Council when more stringent canons were established, ones that would lead to the Albigensian Crusade and the elimination of those who did not adopt the more refined prescripts for the sacraments.106 The sacraments, all of which the church could reference as a direct sanction of Christ himself via the gospels, were accepted by followers as divine rites of passage, in which participation would qualify one’s soul for eternal life. From baptism to marriage the Church’s monopoly on Christ’s salvation made the institution a very powerful entity, one where many felt invested in Christ both symbolically as well as in reality.

Governments, like individual believers, incorporated its mandates; in fact, many of its punishments actually included both a secular, as well as a spiritual, penance for crimes.\(^{107}\) Of all of the sacraments that the Church fostered, the Eucharist and the preliminary penance that it required, was the most embraced; the rite of Eucharist, after all, was recognized as the singular embodiment of the Catholic Mass itself. Within the Church the sacrament of the Eucharist was manufactured, and was at least textually nothing more than a propitiatory sacrifice. Even with the model of the Last Supper, the ritual’s liturgies and the penance that was required before reception of the host were inventions of men who came after Christ.\(^{108}\) When followers observed the Eucharist in this light, as many did before 400, it provided very little discernment from pagan rituals of sacrifice. It was imperative that the Latin Church’s administration, and even more so its orthodoxy surrounding this sacrament, was consistent. Unlike baptism, however, the symbolism in the Eucharist initiated an ongoing debate, particularly when one considered that many clerics and theologians, particularly those within the Carolingian Church, had differing views on God’s inherent presence in the bread and wine. In the Carolingian Church this literally sparked an event referred to as the “Eucharistic Controversy.” By the twelfth century the debate over transubstantiation was over a century old, and still there were proponents of consubstantiation and annihilation. Consubstantiation was a doctrine which claimed that when the Eucharist was consecrated that Christ’s presence existed alongside the physical host, while annihilation posed that consecration completely annihilated and replaced the bread with the spirit of Christ, literally annihilating its substance.


Without a definitive purpose and consideration for the Eucharistic sacrament as a necessary means for salvation within the Church, it would simply be seen as no more than a representative act of thanksgiving, not the physical invocation and reception of Christ into one’s body. But like baptism, rituals of sacrifice and thanksgiving had long preceded the Latin Church, and even Christ himself, so it was imperative that Rome establish a uniform orthodoxy that recognized the Eucharist as the highest form of sacrifice, and furthermore the only one for which Christ truly sanctified the host.109 This chapter will examine the societal and ideological implications of the Eucharist as well as its role in the canon. It will begin with a brief look at the ancient influences on the Catholic sacrament and will then discuss the contests surrounding the Church’s endorsement of transubstantiation. It will conclude by reiterating the importance of the Eucharist and the mass, suggesting that the 1215 Canon’s rationalization of the Church’s stance on this sacrament was not only necessary for organizational purposes, but also as a means to further reassert the Roman Catholic Church as the one true shepherd of the faith.

3.1 Early Influences on Eucharistic Liturgy and Ritual

According to the New Testament, on the night before his crucifixion Christ broke bread with his Apostles, and told them: “take and eat, this is my body,” and with the wine said “drink of it, all of you for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. 110 As with baptism, the Church acknowledged that the Eucharistic sacrament had but one streamlined, apostolic lineage. However unlike the baptismal sacrament, the actual routine of the Eucharist was in every way a uniform ritual. The Last Supper of Christ and his apostles was physically carried out via four major actions: the offertory, a prayer of

109Ibid.
thanksgiving, the actual breaking of the bread and finally the distribution of the bread and wine.\textsuperscript{111} However, even with a uniform Christian procedure the Eucharist, like baptism, reflected non-Christian influences, particularly when it came to the offertory prayer. According to scholar Josef Jungmann there is evidence that in its earliest years the Eucharistic liturgy observed at least two prayers that existed outside of the \textit{Apostolic Tradition}, one of which was derived from the synagogues.\textsuperscript{112}

The oldest source of the Christian Eucharistic rite comes from the \textit{First Apology} of Justin, however, which primitive ritual most influenced that model is still up for debate. According to scholar E.C. Ratcliff the ritual, as observed by Justin Martyr, was most similar to the \textit{Sanctus} or the \textit{Tersanctus}, which was uniquely Western.\textsuperscript{113} Justin’s opinion of the Eucharist and his writings on its purpose were:

\begin{quote}
We give thanks to God for having created the world with all that is in it for the sake of man, and for having freed us from the vice in which we lived, and for having completely brought to naught the principalities and powers, through Him who became subject to suffering according to his will.\textsuperscript{114}
\end{quote}

The language suggests a purely Christian orthodoxy, and furthermore that the Eucharist was nothing more than a celebration of thanksgiving. However scholars like Louis Bouyer, argue that the liturgy here was actually a hybrid of the first century Jewish formula and later Christian content which elevated the ritual to a sanctified ritual.\textsuperscript{115} The ramifications of this are immense, especially when one considers, not only how the church ostracized Jews during its early years

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{115} Bradshaw, \textit{The Search for the Origins}, 128.
\end{footnotes}
but furthermore how they were heavily persecuted in the centuries after for practicing rituals that were considered heretical, to the Church. There is an obvious irony when one considers the Church’s explicit claim that it is was in full compliance with apostolic sentiments, yet it illustrated a clear denial of Jewish undertones in its orthodoxy.

Even the Apostle Paul attempts to reach out to the Jews in his message to the Corinthians, with acceptance and understanding:

Brothers and sisters: As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.116

The scholar Louis Bouyer reiterates the indelible relationship between Jewish rites of sacrifice and thanksgiving to their Christian counterparts by pointing out that some of the most Jewish aspects of the Sanctus took place late in the evolutionary process of the Christian ritual, a time when one might have assumed it would wane due to the Church’s desire to eliminate anything but the broadest of Jewish references.117 This raises an interesting point and supports Professor Bradshaw’s thesis that tracing the sacraments fully to any one origin creates a number of possible derivative sources, which themselves are often inconclusive. As a result, a significant and diverse Jewish anaphora, or reference, within early Christian liturgies existed before the third and fourth centuries when common prayers began to circulate.118 It did not help that before written versions of the prayers were distributed, many local priests and church leaders relied completely on an oral tradition that was expectedly inconsistent. However it was the fourth century movement towards a Christian standardization that began to abandon the primitive

116 1 Corinthians 12:12-13
norms founded in the Jewish traditions. Similar to baptism the liturgy of the Eucharist relied on past decretals and models, like the rubrics in the *Gelasian Sacramentary*. This particular missal, written in a number of languages, outlined not only the words of the ceremony, but the staging, as well as the choreography of the cleric who was administering the sacrament. (See Figure 3.1)

3.2 Theology and Symbolism of the Eucharist: Transubstantiation vs. Consubstantiation

In addition to creating the central celebration of the Catholic mass, the Eucharist opened a virtual Pandora’s Box of theological interpretation. In early Christian symbolism, the *mystery* within the Eucharist had a very wide application. According to Origen Adamantius, the Alexandrian Christian scholar, *semeions* or *signa* that take place in the scripture are something  

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that exists beyond the realm of sense and experience. Origen’s explanation, and more importantly the abstract nature of it, was one of many theories that surrounded the Eucharist, and furthermore that encouraged multiple interpretations, and practices of the sacrament. Popular interpretations aside, the Catholic Church’s definition and interpretation of the Lord’s Supper did not exist in a vacuum and how and furthermore if, Christ actually entered into the bread and wine was highly debated. Early Christian writers defined the Eucharist as a communal celebration of Christ’s sacrifice or a time to offer thanksgiving, literally “eucharitize,” with a sacrifice of offertory praise. This is no surprise as feasts of sacrifice and thanksgiving were already established and celebrated in communities ranging from the Romans to the Celts. Different from baptism, which united one’s soul with the Holy Spirit, the sacrament of the Eucharist and the consecration of the ritual, even as early as the fourth century, was seen as uniting one with the spirit of the Risen Christ. In his argument against the Arians, Hilary of Poitiers wrote in *De Trinitate* that, “accordingly, this is the cause of our life, that we, who are carnal, have Christ dwelling in us through His flesh, and through Him we shall live in that state in which He lives in the Father.” This work would be referenced by a number of future theologians concerning what was real, and in fact merely symbolic, about the Eucharist; two of the first and most outspoken on the subject were Augustine and Ambrose of Milan.

While their writings on the Eucharist dated to the fourth and fifth centuries, the core opposition in Ambrose and Augustine’s interpretations of the Eucharist would divide Christians

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until the mid-thirteenth century. This central conflict however, was crucial—did Christ in fact enter into the bread and wine physically changing their composition into the Divine, or was the consecration of the Eucharist simply a symbolic gesture in the form of a community celebration, aimed more so at helping maintain the church as a communal institution?

Although neither term had been coined yet, the terms consubstantiation and transubstantiation would come to brand the theories of Augustine and Ambrose respectively. At the core of this apparent feud is the idea of mystery and symbolism within the faith.

According to Augustine:

Instead of many signs there are now but a few signs, simple when performed, inspiring when understood, and holy when practised, given to us by the teaching of our Lord himself and the apostles, such as the sacrament of baptism and the celebration of the Lord’s body and blood.

But while Augustine recognized the significance of the sacrament of the Eucharist, his interpretation agreed with later advocates of consubstantiation who felt that the bread and wine used in the sacrament did not, in fact, become the actual body and blood of Christ, but rather it represented these. As Augustine explains in his work *Explanations on the Psalms* (A.D. 392) this representation was only valid when one allowed his faith to say it was so, as it was obvious that the bread and wine were not literally the flesh of Christ.

Unless he shall have eaten My flesh he shall not have eternal life. [John 6:54-55] [Some] understood this foolishly, and thought of it carnally, and supposed that the Lord was going to cut off some parts of His Body to give them ... But He instructed them, and said to them: 'It is the spirit that gives life; but the flesh profits nothing: the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life' [John 6:64]. Understand spiritually what I said. You are not to eat this Body which you see, nor to drink that Blood which will be poured out by those who will crucify Me. I have commended to you a certain Sacrament; spiritually

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understood, it will give you life. And even if it is necessary that this be celebrated visibly, it must still be understood invisibly.\textsuperscript{127}

Augustine continues to support this stance in A.D. 400-416 in his work \textit{The Trinity}, where he posits that

Paul was able to preach the Lord Jesus Christ by means of signs, in one way by his letters, in another way by the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood; for when we speak of the Body of Christ and of His Blood, certainly we do not mean Paul's speaking, nor his parchments nor his ink, nor the meaning of the sounds issuing from his tongue, nor the signs of letters written on skins. By the Body and Blood of Christ we refer only to that which has been received from the fruits of the earth and has been consecrated by the mystical prayer, and has been ritually taken for our spiritual health in memory of what the Lord suffered for us.\textsuperscript{128}

Here Augustine argues that it is almost preposterous to consider the host and wine of the Eucharistic sacrament to be anything other than earthly creations which stem from the “fruits of the earth” itself, and not from the actual body of Christ. In addition he refers to the sacrament as a representation of the sacrifice of Christ, as opposed to Ambrose who saw the Eucharist as the sacrifice itself. In his work “On Mysteries” Ambrose writes

\textit{Let us be assured that this is not what nature formed, but what the blessing consecrated, and that greater efficacy resides in the blessing than in nature, for by the blessing nature is changed. . . . Surely the word of Christ, which could make out of nothing that which did not exist, can change things already in existence into what they were not. For it is no less extraordinary to give things new natures than to change their natures. . . . Christ is in that Sacrament, because it is the Body of Christ; yet, it is not on that account corporeal food, but spiritual. Whence also His Apostle says of the type: 'For our fathers ate spiritual food and drink spiritual drink.' [1 Cor 10:2-4] For the body of God is a spiritual body.\textsuperscript{129}}

If there is one aspect of the sacrament that both of these theologians actually agreed on it was the ritualistic prayer that was necessary to transform, whether through transubstantiation or consubstantiation, the host and wine into something beyond the material world. And it is

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{127} St. Augustine, \textit{Explanations on the Psalms}, \url{http://www.columbia.edu/cu/augustine/a/eucharist-q.html}, (Accessed July 12, 2013)
\item \textsuperscript{128} St. Augustine, \textit{The Trinity}, \url{http://www.columbia.edu/cu/augustine/a/eucharist-q.html}, (Accessed July 12, 2013)
\item \textsuperscript{129} St. Ambrose of Milan, “On Mysteries”, \url{http://www.columbia.edu/cu/augustine/a/eucharist-q.html}, (Accessed July 12, 2013)
\end{itemize}
important to consider the semantics surrounding the sacrament of the Eucharist as the lack of a uniform definition divided writers and scholars of early Christianity long after Augustine and Ambrose. For instance, in 1079 Berengar of Tours composed a pro-Ambrosian discourse that for the next several centuries would put transubstantiation at the forefront of Catholic orthodoxy, where it would consequently receive an immutable endorsement by Innocent III and the Fourth Lateran Council.130 Ironically Peter of Capua, a contemporary of Innocent III, wrote about transubstantiation and consubstantiation as if they were “two sides of the same coin,” and while he personally preferred transubstantiation to explain Christ’s presence in the sacrament, he did not discount consubstantiation or annihilation, which were considered by Thomas Aquinas just years later.131

As explained earlier, annihilation was the theory that once the hosts, the bread and wine, were consecrated with the words of the cleric their physical presence was completely destroyed and fully replaced by Christ’s body. Multiple interpretations gave way to varied practices, and in earnest, muddied the waters of all established sacraments; this poses an interesting question to the Church that if God was not present in the bread and wine, then was the Holy Spirit indeed present in the baptism or was God present in the covenant of marriage?

Peter Lombard understood this dilemma, and like the Church itself referred to scripture, specifically the Gospels, to secure the idea that the Eucharist was more than a symbolic gesture, and that there was indeed a divine interchange that took place during the mass.132 Lombard was aware that there was no philosophical or logical way of proving the real presence of Christ’s

body in the sacrament on the altar, but Matthew 26:26 supports his argument, “Take ye and eat. This is my body.”\textsuperscript{133} This, as well as other biblical references, helped support what Lombard and most Catholic followers accepted as the mystery of Christ.\textsuperscript{134} The inexplicable unknowns in the sacraments, however, made it difficult for the Roman Church to establish, and furthermore ensure, that the faith on which it was founded was immutable. And a fractured orthodoxy could disassemble the Church community even further, and needless to say it would certainly undermine Rome’s power over its parishes.

By the late twelfth century the theology surrounding the Eucharist would remain elusive, in fact the order of events within the mass was one of the few things that saw little alteration during this period. The order was: Introductory rights, the Liturgy of the Word (Biblical Readings, the Homily and the Apostle’s Creed), Liturgy of the Eucharist (Preparation, Eucharistic Prayers, Communion Rite/Communion Reception) and finally, the Concluding Rite. Like other sacraments, whether baptism or marriage, the words used to consecrate the bread and wine in the Eucharistic covenant are of just as much importance as the ceremony itself. It is in the liturgy, the words, where the Eucharistic celebration faced its greatest evolution and the most division, until roughly 900.\textsuperscript{135}

Throughout the Middle Ages every province, indeed almost every diocese, had its local use, and while the order of the Mass was everywhere the same, the prayers in collections like the \textit{Ordo Missae}, and still more the \textit{Proprium Sanctorum} and the \textit{Proprium de Tempore}, were apt to differ widely in the service books.\textsuperscript{136} The Church’s desire to exploit the communal aspects of the

\textsuperscript{133}Matthew 26:26
mass, and to use it as a social device, would seem insincere and dogmatic if indeed it
marginalized the people’s traditions and customs, replacing them with a stringent pack of
ceremonies that, at least on the surface, appeared similar to their own.\footnote{137} This would send a
message of zero tolerance, which, until Innocent III, was avoided for the sake of both peace and
furthermore retention of the willingly faithful. In response the Church attempted to formulate a
more uniform liturgy for the mass called the “Sacramentary”.

The book used by the priest at the altar for the prayers of the Mass was known as a
\textit{Sacramentarium} or “Sacramentary” because all its contents were geared to the consecration of
the sacrifice. It is important to note that many believers thought that without the proper words
the consecration would be null and void, and therefore not “of the church” and furthermore not
sufficient for the proper execution of the mass; this fact was of grave concern for citizens and
parishioners in the Middle Ages.\footnote{138} The first step in the Word’s evolution seems to have been
furnished by the introduction of certain smaller volumes called \textit{Libelli Missae} intended for the
private celebration of Masses of devotion on ordinary days. In these, only one to three Masses,
were written; but as they were not used with choir and sacred ministers, all the services had to be
said by the priest and all were consequently included in the one small booklet. By the eleventh
century no one handbook was utilized by the whole of Catholic clerics. Still, the Eucharist’s
biggest issue did not appear to be the inconsistencies within the prayers and liturgies of various
Church regions, but more so how clerics, theologians and even congregations interpreted its
symbolism and furthermore, the exclusive power that it granted to the Pope and to the Church.

In a substantial portion of his \textit{Summa}, four hundred columns in fact, Thomas Aquinas
discussed the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrament as the “chief religious function of the

\footnote{138}{Bossy, 29-61.}
church,” and therefore posed that it should be celebrated with “greater solemnity than the other sacraments because it contains the whole mystery of our salvation.” Fortunately for Aquinas, by the time he wrote the *Summa* the Fourth Lateran Council had already confirmed transubstantiation as the official opinion of Catholic orthodoxy in Canon I of the 1215 Canon. Before the Fourth Lateran Council however, the transubstantiation debate roused some interesting questions about the physical host, some of which teetered on the absurd. If the Church indeed observed every part of the host as a piece of Christ no matter how small, like the shards of a broken mirror, what were to happen in the event that a spider confiscated a portion of the host and took it with him? If the host was reserved during the mass, by a congregate and was placed in a bee hive, would the bees somehow, under the auspices of the Holy host be more fruitful and produce more honey?

As ridiculous as these questions might seem they were considered by theologians, lay believers, and the clergy. The largest concern was that writing transubstantiation into the orthodoxy might also open the door to superstition, misuse and even desecration of the bread and wine. During the Middle Ages the misuse of the host was not uncommon, in fact some Church members would reserve the bread and save it for their own superstitious uses. Others would stave off consumption of the bread in order to sell it. Jews were suspected to be the most popular consumers of the “black market” hosts. In objection to the Church, Christians made false accusations that the Jews boiled it, pierced it with a knife and even burned it. Although there was no substantiated evidence to persecute the Jews for abusing the host, the Church had to consider

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that if it indeed endorsed transubstantiation as official doctrine. Still by the early thirteenth century in parts of the Latin West there remained an ongoing trend of disbelief about the sanctity of the physical host; for instance in France the remnants of the Carolingian Church maintained that transubstantiation was not immutable, nor was the power of Roman papacy who endorsed it.

3.3 The Debate Over the Eucharist Contributes to the Decentralization of the Latin Church

By the late eleventh century the interpretation of the Eucharist grew to very fractured state in the Latin West, particularly in France. The “Eucharistic Controversy” that developed under the Carolingian Church began in early 800, and perpetuated the varying sentiments of Ambrose and Augustine. While the theological debate concerning the Eucharist occupies a historical timeline that pre-dates Aristotle, the debate grew to sustainable proportions during the eighth and ninth centuries when the Latin Church was particularly vulnerable. Local custom, political conflicts and lay control at this time were the biggest contributors to the discordant state of its practices and it customs, particularly in France. In the French Provinces at this time archbishops were considered masters in their provinces. And while they honored the Christian faith, the Carolingian Church and the theologians that influenced it were not always committed to the requests and mandates of Rome, especially when it came to ideas like predestination and the sacrament of the Eucharist. This conflict would ultimately influence thousands of Christians

142Ibid.
that resided in France, and in addition it would further divide the power of the central Latin Church there until the twelfth century.

Charlemagne was highly devoted to his responsibilities to the Church. Along with his brother Carloman, Charlemagne was driven and even enthusiastic about the ecclesiastical dimensions of his duties and his leadership among his people.\textsuperscript{146} He was highly influenced by the Pope in Rome, which had been tradition in his family since his birth. Stephen II and Adrian I wrote countless letters to Charlemagne, which reminded him of his responsibility to protect and support the church of Peter.\textsuperscript{147} As a result Charlemagne was responsible for the conversion of thousands of Saxons and North men, who represented some of the largest pagan groups in Europe. The Carolingian kings also invested large amounts of money into the development of beautiful churches, libraries, monasteries and cathedrals. However, Charlemagne’s responsibilities were not entirely religious, in fact most were diplomatic and required a delicate balance of political, as well as religious concessions with the people under his immediate rule. For religious matters the Carolingian Church relied heavily on theologians like Gottschalk of Orbais, Ratramnus and Pascasius of Radbertus to help explain and expand on matters that came into question within the church, particularly those surrounding the Eucharist. However, what some of the Carolingian theologians had to say did not perfectly align with the Christian orthodoxy as it was seen in Rome by 1078, when transubstantiation became fully endorsed by the Latin Church.

One of the biggest conflicts stemmed from what is now referred to as the “Eucharistic Controversy.” While the history of the controversy is incomplete, it is clear that the debate came


down to the fundamental question—does Christ’s soul actually enter into the physical host consecrated during the mass? As established above the inconsistent nature of theologies surrounding this issue could raise questions about legitimacy of the sacrament itself. Rabanus of Maurus and Gottschalk of Orbais both wrote on the sacraments of the Church, however their letters are limited; while Gottschalk wrote extensively on predestination, his writings on the Eucharist are were not widespread. Hrabanus’ work on the Eucharist is actually limited to one letter. Most scholars agree that the most important work by Carolingian theologians concerning the Eucharist came from Ratramnus of Corbie and Pascasius Radbertus. These two theologians carried on the Eucharistic teachings and opinions of Augustine and Ambrose respectively into the ninth century.

Ratramnus was called on by Charles the Bald to answer the question, is Christ actually received by the people during the Eucharistic celebration? Like Augustine, Ratramnus posed that while Christ’s entrance into the host was mysterious that it was not “true.” He poses that, “for the bread is not substantially, Christ, nor is the vine Christ, nor are the apostles branches.” Like Augustine poses in the previous section, some four hundred years earlier, when he refers to Paul’s “ink,” “parchments” and “skins,” “Ratramnus parallels his thoughts in this section by separating what he feels is truly divine from what he knows to be earthly and material. In his most famous piece, *De corpora et sanguine Domini*, Ratramnus distinguishes between the "invisibilis substantia" and the "vere corpus et sanguis Christi," where he surmises that the even after the consecration of the host, it still remains simply a host and not the body of Christ.

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149 Radding and Newton, *Theology, Rehtoric and Politics*, 3-10.

While Ratramnus’ theory did not reside in the hearts and minds of all clerics within the Carolingian Church it did set precedence for ideas and practices that were directly in contrast with those.\textsuperscript{151}

As noted above, Carolingian works on the Eucharist are difficult to date, especially when one considers that many of their writers never wrote directly in opposition to their contemporaries.\textsuperscript{152} This is reminiscent of the \textit{Federalist Papers}, where Hamilton, Jay and Madison masked their direct response to those whom they debated in the written word. However, it is more than apparent that the author to whom Ratramnus was likely responding was Pascasius Radbertus, a monk from Corbie. Radbertus’ earliest writing on the Eucharist, dated at 830, was in response to a letter sent to him by the daughter of the Abbot of Corbie. Like Charles the Bald she wanted him to expand on his thoughts surrounding Christ’s presence in the host. His opinion, like that of Ambrose, argued that the host that believers consumed in mass was, “identical to the historical body of Christ that was born of Mary, sacrificed on the cross, and resurrected on the tomb.” \textsuperscript{153} Like Ambrose, he believed that the host was the true body of Christ posing that

\begin{quote}
It is no more to be wondered that the substance of the bread and wine (\textit{panis ac vini substantia}) would be changed invisibly to the flesh and blood of Christ, without alteration of external appearance or flavor, than it is that the Holy Ghost could create without regenerative seed, Christ the man in the womb of the Virgin.\textsuperscript{154}
\end{quote}

Still he was posed with the fact that the host did not, in fact taste or look like actual flesh and blood. His response, like Ambrose before him and Peter Lombard centuries later, was that


\textsuperscript{153}Radding and Newton, \textit{Theology, Rhetoric and Politics}, 24.

\textsuperscript{154}Radding and Newton, \textit{Theology, Rhetoric and Politics}, 4.
“nothing was impossible to God, and that natural world was nothing except the will of God.”

This trend fostered an environment in France that accepted local theology as superior. This is not surprising when one considers that the goal of the Carolingian Church was to create and convert extremely diverse groups of pagans to Christians and not necessarily Roman Catholics. For a time this varied opinion about the Eucharist escaped Rome’s attention. It was not until 1078 that Rome began to advocate solely for transubstantiation. However, the Carolingian Church’s flexibility during the eighth and ninth centuries paved the way for groups outside of traditional Christian belief to prosper in France long after its demise. For instance by the late eleventh century heretical groups like the Cathars and their sympathizers would relish in the open-minded nature of France and would further decentralize the power of Rome and the Pope.

To conclude, the most outstanding issue surrounding the Eucharistic sacrament until the early thirteenth century was a matter of Christ’s presence in the host. The mass, the celebration of the Eucharist, and an illustration of Christ’s sacrifice was a way for the Church to demonstrate its superiority to other faiths and, more importantly its own followers. Even Augustine recognized that the ritual of the Eucharist itself had been, from the earliest times the symbol par excellence of the unity of the Christian community. The power of the mass to showcase the sacrifice of Christ in the Eucharist, and in addition the willingness of its people to participate in penance, secured the souls of the devout and also helped identify those who were not so willing to submit to the ceremony. Still, even with the Church’s exclusivity to perform the mass, by


the beginning of the thirteenth century both the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist maintained some proverbial loose ends within Catholic orthodoxy.

The result was individual, local churches that continued to prefer their own regional tendencies and customs, over the Central Church in Rome, which in turn resulted in a portion of the clergy that felt exempt from the requests of the Pope, altogether. What resulted was a factious state of affairs within the faith and within the Church, at large. However there was a leader, a child of Rome in fact who was willing to reclaim the Church’s sacraments and the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. Innocent III was abreast of the issues facing the Church at this time and worked to resolve the unrefined nature of its orthodoxy. By enlisting the Fourth Lateran Council and establishing his own canon he hoped to make absolute the Church’s stance on the Trinity, transubstantiation, penance, protection of the sacred host and heresy. He also hoped to identify and eradicate opposition to the newly established canon from heretics, local princes and even his own brethren in the cloth.
CHAPTER 4
RECLAIMING ORTHODOXY

To princes power is given on earth, but to priests it is attributed also in heaven; to the former only over bodies, to the latter also over souls. Whence it follows that by so much as the soul is superior to the body, the priesthood is superior to the kingship... Single rulers have single provinces, and single kings single kingdoms; but Peter, as in the plenitude, so in the extent of his power is pre-eminent over all, since he is the Vicar of Him whose is the earth and the fullness thereof, the whole wide world and all that dwell therein.

Letter to Philip Augustus from Innocent III

By the late twelfth century the factious state of the Church’s ritual was reminiscent of the factious state of the Church itself. Decades of inconsistent and regional practices lead to division, and more significantly, the possibility of sectarian efforts to fundamentally alter some of the Church’s most beloved traditions.158 This created a very tall order for Innocent III, the “lawyer” Pope that made it his mission to resolve these issues and to reinstate the Catholic Church’s power, which he believed was ordained by Christ himself.159 A number of reasons explain the often nebulous sea of attitudes concerning the vicar, but for the sake of this study, we will focus on the pontiff’s reform of the Church’s canon and the papal letters and bulls that outlined his vision for the Catholic faith, and more specifically the fleeting synergy between ecclesiastic and civil agendas of the time. The culminating product of Innocent’s agenda for the Church and its traditions was of course the 1215 Canon; the seventy canons established by the Fourth Lateran Council, clearly influenced by the letters and opinions of Innocent himself, had but one purpose: to reclaim the power of the Church from the secular forces that were working to tear its power and its significance asunder.

First, it is important to note that many of Innocent's decrees were aimed at ecclesiastical reform. While internal corruption had plagued the Church since its inception, the spiritually distracted attitudes of many in monastic life toward the end of the twelfth century prompted Innocent to make these issues a major focus of his reform and ultimately the canon itself. Furthermore, a growing concern from the public, specifically in central and northern parts of Italy where clerical investiture was being abused, caused many to call for a return to apostolic tradition. As we established above, a number of traditions within the church had become inundated by inconsistent, and in many cases secular undertones, like the sacraments. Without a streamlined reform effort, however, different sects of even the most devout Church leaders continued to entertain their canonical collections, baptismal administration and interpretations of the Eucharist. By the end of the twelfth century religious orders began to rapidly multiply in the regions discussed above, each with its own devoted congregations. These orders included, but were not limited to: the Cistercians, the Praemonstratensians, the Gilbertines, the Order of the Grandmont, the Beguines and the Waldensians.

In addition to the large task of reconsolidating the sacramental mission of the faith and returning it to its apostolic roots, Innocent was also burdened with the task of reforming his Church amidst the increased political conflicts between the church and lay powers who were more focused on the establishment, and enforcement of their own local interests. However muddied the waters of positive law though, Innocent had one focus for which he was steadfastly devoted, reclaiming his flock and returning it to the faith and the rituals by which it was founded. This meant that for the first time since Gregory VII, a Pontiff would wholeheartedly reform the

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161 Ibid.
Church’s canon.162 And since Innocent had not lost sight of Christ’s primary mission to evangelize, the sacraments were an expressed concern; he particularly wanted to ensure that his bishops and clerics were, above all, available to perform them.163 With the growing trend of clerical corruption these sacraments were becoming a second-tier responsibility for many bishops, particularly in portions of Southern France and regions of central Europe, where many were impaired by their responsibilities to feudal lords, and in some cases their own personal wealth, power and esteem. These secular interests were keeping the clerics from what Innocent felt was their principal function- to preach and to perform the sacraments.164

FIGURE 4.1. The map represents the Languedoc territory around 1209, specifically the divisions in loyalty to the various feudal lords that reigned there. The secular distractions of these regions were a huge focus for Innocent III during the Albigensian Crusade. Of the Archbishop of Narbonne Innocent wrote: “…He knows no other god but money and has a purse where his heart should be. His monks and canons take mistresses and live by usury… Throughout the region the prelates are the laughing stock of the laity.”165

The sacraments of the Catholic faith worked, not only as recruiting mechanisms, but as traditional reminders of each Catholic’s connection with the Church, and ultimately his duty to practice and perpetuate the teachings of Christ. Baptism and the mass, which we have established is the celebration of the Eucharist, were vital elements of the faith so Innocent’s mission was three-fold: he had to squash the disobedience of his clerics, return their focus to the administration of the sacraments, and admonish any individuals or sects that refused participation therein. The aim of this chapter is to examine these issues and how Innocent III and the 1215 Canon worked to dissolve them.

4.1 Vicar of Christ: Innocent Establishes the Ordained Power of the Church

Innocent was, at his core, a reformer. When he came to be pontiff there was naturally a noted similarity between his initiatives and those of reformer popes who preceded him. Innocent was most often likened to Pope Gregory VII who reigned from 1073-1085. Like Innocent, Gregory’s primary mission was to reassert papal authority where it was diminishing, and furthermore to instill within the lay leadership the uncontested power of the Church’s patrimony in matters, both civil as well as ecclesiastical.166 Innocent’s reform started with his papacy, who he felt was contributing to the decline of the Church’s authority, or at least its piety. In one of his first bulls, addressed to the Bishop of Liege, Innocent illustrated his opinion:

> It is proper that the pope should be irreproachable and that he to whom the care of the souls falls should shine like a torch in the eyes of all by reason of his learning in doctrine and his example. Thus, every time one of our brothers in the episcopate does not exude the perfume of pastoral modesty and ruins or tarnishes his good reputation in some way, we experience deep sorrow and trouble; in order to track down such faults minutely and to correct them with the requisite severity, we force ourselves to apply the remedy of apostolic solicitude.167


More than his dissatisfaction with their growing lack of modesty, his brothers’ materialistic and secular allegiances were distracting them from preaching and performing the mass. Innocent felt that a cleric’s greatest role was to set an example of faith and doctrine as well as through the consistent administration of the sacraments. He was so committed to this that he was known to even retire ill clerics who, otherwise faithful to Church doctrine, simply could not perform the Church rituals. An example of this can be found in a papal bull dated, August 4, 1214, in which Innocent dismissed the Bishop of Brixen because he was too aged and ill to fulfill the most essential of his pastoral duties, preaching the mass. Innocent was not perceived to be cruel in his steps toward reform of monastic life; in fact it was quite the contrary. His goal was to return Church clerics back to their roles of charity, piety and teaching, and furthermore to protect them from secular diversions that might otherwise detain them. Ultimately the growth of feudalism and the increased power of clerics within this construct forced the church and the secular world to develop a relationship that, due to their often opposing standards, often caused the cleric’s role in one position to submit to the other. As the self entitled Vicar of Christ, Innocent worked to mold a new relationship between the Church and the secular world, one that would ensure the Church’s hegemony. In order to do this he would need to reduce the power of lay officials over the Church, specifically their power to elect Church officials.

Lay investiture was not a new issue for the Church by the time that Innocent became Pontiff. Pope Leo IX, Alexander II and Gregory VII all dealt with secular rulers who dominated the bishops and abbbacies in their regions and used them to obtain church land, control, and in

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many cases abuse tithe collection and for general council.\textsuperscript{170} In fact by the last quarter of the eleventh century the issue of lay investiture had become a central subject of reform within the Church. Like Alexander and Gregory, Innocent defended Episcopal liberty and opposed lay investiture, which allowed for kings, princes and feudal lords to appoint bishops to positions of secular power and priests to local churches. Innocent’s highest priority was to reclaim the Church’s sole right to elect, and transfer bishops, and to ensure that these vicars were disseminating the faith in a uniform fashion, one that was established and issued by the Holder of the Holy See himself. Bishops held a powerful position in their diocese, and returning to the discussion above, were considered leaders in matters of both a moral and legalistic nature. For lay individual’s ecclesiastical law, the law of the soul was determined by the Church’s, and in turn Christ’s, redemption.\textsuperscript{171} Therefore, the introduction of the clergy into local government roles meant that the clerics were essentially serving two patrons, one that was secular and one that was spiritual. The subject of lay investiture provoked confrontations all over Europe, particularly in Germany and in Northern Italy where Saxon emperors depended heavily on the loyalties of pro-imperial bishops who were often financially and militaristically supported by the lay aristocracy.\textsuperscript{172} Some scholars argue that the Church was responsible for this marriage of interests; after all it had crowned Charlemagne emperor. However, while it was clearly utilized for political measure, Innocent considered lay investiture a matter of ecclesiastical discretion. And he felt it was his responsibility to decide, in legalistic cases where it was uncertain, whether


\textsuperscript{171}James A. Brundage, \textit{Medieval Canon Law and The Crusader} (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 170-188.

\textsuperscript{172}Brundage, \textit{Medieval Canon Law and The Crusader}, 4.
the matter should be addressed by Church or secular authorities. In many cases Innocent offered up the decision of local bishops and even himself, in matters where he felt local courts did not provide justice.

By the early thirteenth century regional amalgamations of customary law and the canon law of the Church weakened the austerity of Catholic orthodoxy, particularly in France. Innocent found this unacceptable, and while he did admit that both temporal and spiritual power were of divine appointment, he advocated that Church law was ultimately supreme. He illustrated this by having temporal lords and princes take public oaths that assured they were fully committed to the initiatives of the Church and that, when asked, they would submit to its efforts. For example, in Germany, where Innocent admitted he did not have the power to choose the German princes, he did advocate for his own authority to approve their illegibility to represent the best interest of the Empire, and furthermore to excommunicate any figureheads who showed opposition to the Church.

Secular authorities, whatever office they may hold, shall be admonished and induced and if necessary be compelled by ecclesiastical censure, that as they wish to be esteemed and numbered among the faithful, so for the defense of the faith they ought publicly to take an oath that they will strive in good faith and to the best of their ability to exterminate in the territories subject to their jurisdiction all heretics pointed out by the Church; so that whenever anyone shall have assumed authority, whether spiritual or temporal, let him be bound to confirm this decree by oath.

Without participation in the oath a prince risked excommunication, and as a consequence

the people under his jurisdiction would suffer as well. The Church was known to withhold Mass and other sacraments in regions where princes refused to take the oath publically, therefore condemning the people’s leader as well as their own souls. It needs to be noted that Innocent was, without a doubt a child of Rome. He was born into a wealthy Roman family, was educated by Roman scholars and his respect for the papacy was beyond devout. He also believed that the essence of papal power was in the union of the priestly and imperial dignity. This dedication might help explain another defining element of Innocent’s agenda which was to eradicate any believers or community of believers that operated their faith outside of the auspices of the Church. Innocent did not think that it would be permitted to hold any truth that would not hold God as truth. As a result he felt that he was the man, the *chosen* man, to decide all ecclesiastical as well as all secular constitutional provisions.\(^{178}\)

On the day of his consecration Innocent proclaimed:

I have been put over the house of God so that my honor, like my office towers over all. Of me it has been said by the prophets: I will put you over peoples and kingdoms, I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The servant, who has been put in charge of the whole house, is the representative of Christ, the successor of Peter, the anointed of the Lord, the God of the Pharaohs; he is the mediator placed between God and men, lesser then God but greater than man.\(^{179}\)

He was convinced that his business was the business of God, and that any doubt about his intentions was a sin. In his house, there was no room for sinners, or any persons that argued with the power of his papacy.\(^{180}\) Those who did not observe the power of the Church and its teachings were heretics, and because they fell under the “whole” house (the world) of Innocent’s reign he focused on eliminating them, as well as the unorthodox rituals and preaching that bolstered their


\(^{179}\)Ibid.

\(^{180}\)Hauk, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, 684-691.
permeation in society. One region in particular, where Innocent felt his flock was abandoning his power and the observance of holy ritual, was France.

In the early years of the thirteenth century there was no larger group of heretics in Europe than the Cathars. As mentioned above France had long been under the radar for its disregard for institutional Catholic doctrine, specifically the sacrament of baptism and the accompanying sacraments of Confirmation and the Eucharist. The Carolingian Church started this trend in the eighth and ninth centuries when they used their churches and the sacraments for mass conversions of Anglo Saxon pagans. Carolingian Church leaders refused many aspects of Catholic Church doctrine for which they disagreed, particularly the observance of the Trinity in the Eucharist and the use of icons. Nevertheless, as a gesture of allegiance to the Catholic Church, Carolingian France did initiate a baptismal administration that was heavily aligned to the Roman model. Still, by the twelfth century there were a number of groups in France that chose to ignore, not only this baptismal model, but the idea of Church orthodoxy altogether.

The Cathars appeared in France at the beginning of the eleventh century. While a complete system of their beliefs remains elusive it is clear that they did not acknowledge the Trinity or that Christ was a physical man and they certainly did not observe the power of the Pope or the Catholic Church.\textsuperscript{181} They resided in Southern France, specifically in the region of Languedoc, a territory that previously belonged to the Carolingians, but they were not exclusive to that territory; in fact there is evidence that there were large communities in Northern Italy and Germany as well.\textsuperscript{182}

\textsuperscript{182}Ibid.
FIGURE 4.2. The map indicates the movement of Catharism along with a few noted approximated dates of adoption. The map also notes the most popular Cathar movements in each respective region. For instance the Bogomils were mostly concentrated in portions of Hungary while the Vaudois, better known as the Waldensians were concentrated in southeastern portions of France. It is important to note that during the 13th century the term Catharism, labeled any religious sect with dualistic practices.183

Their faith, while Christian maintained many of the pre-Christian aspects of Gnosticism which they preached about and practiced openly in weekly services as well as through their rituals.184 Regardless of the thin semblance of Christianity in their faith, however they were not considered to be part of the Church, nor were their rituals considered sanctified by Christ. One thing that can be said for this group however, was that it were growing in membership and if amassed enough followers the Church risked the loss of land and power in Southern France. As a result, Innocent gave these groups two choices, to convert to Catholicism, and be re-baptized into

the Catholic faith and, if applicable, remarried by an ordained Catholic cleric, or they could perish.\(^\text{185}\)

4.2 Extinction of Heretics and Heretical Ritual

The Cathars derived many of their teachings from the Bogomils, a Gnostic sect from tenth-century Bulgaria who were themselves influenced by an earlier group, the Paulicans. However, while there are some definitive aspects of their faith that were recorded, many scholars argue that a full understanding of their beliefs remains unknown.\(^\text{186}\) Bernard Gui, a Dominican inquisitor sent by Pope Clement V in the early fourteenth century as an administrator of the inquisition outlined their beliefs as such:

...they usually say of themselves that they are good Christians ... hold the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel as the apostles taught ... occupy the place of the apostles.....they talk to the laity of the evil lives of the clerks and prelates of the Roman Church......they attack and vituperate, in turn, all the sacraments of the Church, especially the sacrament of the eucharist, saying that it cannot contain the body of Christ...Of baptism, they assert that the water is material and corruptible ... and cannot sanctify the soul......they claim that confession made to the priests of the Roman Church is useless ... They assert, moreover, that the cross of Christ should not be adored or venerated...Moreover they read from the Gospels and the Epistles in the vulgar tongue, applying and expounding them in their favour and against the condition of the Roman Church...\(^\text{187}\)

If Gui presented here an accurate portrayal of Cathar beliefs than it is fair to say that Catharism disagreed with the most fundamental aspects of Catholic orthodoxy. Aside from the outward defamation of the clergy, they dismissed the power of the Church and the rituals that assured its promulgation of Christ’s salvation. This was not to say that the Cathars dismissed


ritual in general, in fact they recognized both sacrificial as well baptismal rites, just not those ordained by the Church. In fact, the Cathars considered their initiation rite, Consolamentum, to be the most important of all of their traditions, whereas Catholics believed in a series of sacraments, each laying the foundation for the next, the Eucharist, or the Mass, being the most significant. The purpose of multiple sacraments in the Church was two-fold. The first being that these rituals allowed the Catholic Church to maintain a tight grip on Christ’s grace and secondly it encouraged a lifelong devotion to the Church itself; perpetuating the idea that all rites were necessary and in many cases were, like with Reconciliation and the Eucharist, symbiotic in nature. In the Cathar church the baptismal rite was administered by a Parfait “the elite” and marked the moment when an ordinary believer became a Parfait themselves; and once they became a Parfait, they remained pure and sanctified, forever.

Therefore the Cathar belief that sins were washed away for good, once one had become a Parfait, made Reconciliation or Penance, appear superfluous. The Cathars were also not shy to admit they did not believe that the Church’s bishops or the Church itself were the benevolent mediums of God’s grace, and that they were endowed with the sole right to allocate forgiveness. On Cathar baptism, the Catholic Church felt the idea that an ordinary believer could, after one ceremony, be considered part of the Cathar elite completely rebuffed the reverence and sacrifice required of its own clerics. In fact, Catharism dismissed the hierarchical structure of the church entirely as well as the many offices that formed its power, including the

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role of the Pope. Innocent’s response to the Cathars was this:

> We excommunicate and anathematize every heresy that raises against the holy, orthodox and Catholic faith which we have above explained; condemning all heretics under whatever names they may be known, for while they have different faces that are nonetheless bound to each other by their tails, since in all of them vanity is a common element. Those condemned, being handed over to the secular rulers of their bailiffs, let them be abandoned, to be punished with due justice.\(^{192}\)

The Cathars were not the only group targeted in Southern France; Innocent also opposed Jewish traditions as well.\(^{193}\) However Cathar esteem, at least in France, was growing at a much faster rate, and had also begun to acquire political power, especially in the territory of Languedoc.\(^{194}\) Ironically their popularity did not have to do with their actual growth in numbers as much as it did with the growing of number of sympathizers, who felt that the Cathar traditions and those who practiced their faith were “goodmen, who led lives above suspicion.”\(^{195}\) Cathar sympathies were also prevalent in Provence, Northern French trading towns, and in Germany. There were also important Cathar settlements, organized as churches, in Italy especially in Lombardy near Milan and near Lake Garda, and two Tuscan churches at Florence and Spoleto.\(^{196}\)

These “good men,” who were trusted by their communities, were naturally nominated to hold political offices. There were even Cathar bishops in Lombardy and Florence, even in Rome itself. Innocent’s initial response was diplomatic and began with letters, decrees and even preaching campaigns throughout portion of southern France. In a letter written June 25, 1198, he did not threaten death, but did make it known that all Cathars were to be excluded from local


\(^{196}\)Ibid.
governments and stripped of all of their civil rights.\textsuperscript{197} While some regions took this to heart, others ignored the mandate, and instead held to the preference of their regional king or lords. In 1199, Innocent directly targeted the city of Viterbo, Italy, where Cathars continued to serve in civic offices, but in 1205 they responded by electing two Cathars to the posts of city consul and chamberlain.\textsuperscript{198} In September 1207, Innocent visited the town himself and ordered “all Cathar houses to be destroyed and for all of their goods and possessions to be confiscated.”\textsuperscript{199} This precedent lead to a series of attempts by Innocent to destroy heresy in the Latin West, however no territory expressed a complete unwillingness to cooperate with this mission as did southern France. In this region, the unfettered response from the Cathars and their sympathizers lead to most stringent reaction to heresy of Innocent’s career- the Albigensian Crusade.

In the early thirteenth century the political situation in southern France was complicated (see Figure 4.3); while the count of Toulouse was considered the nominal lord of the region, France, England, Aragon and the German empire all shared power in these lands. Innocent’s After they won their trust the legates were supposed to work diligently to bring them back to the “one faith.”\textsuperscript{200} In 1207 Innocent wrote to Phillip (II) of Augustus of France, directly and asked him intervene, but he was detained by his campaign with King John over territories in Normandy. Innocent’s efforts momentarily were fleeting, but then in 1208, after the murder of Peter of Castelnau his cause redoubled in strength. approach to squash heresy in this region was, at first, well calculated. He started his efforts by sending in Cistercian legates who were ordered to mix among the heretics and imitate their ways.

\textsuperscript{198} Sayers, \textit{Innocent III}, 158.
FIGURE 4.3. The map shows Cathar concentration in France, Northern Italy and sparse movements in Sicily and Bulgaria. Note that the Cathar concentration in the Alps suggesting that this region may have been a safe haven for accused heretics simply for geographic regions.\(^\text{201}\)

FIGURE 4.4. *The Albigensian Crusade*, Chroniques de Saint-Denis, British Royal Library, 14\(^{\text{th}}\) Century. The first portion depicts Innocent III excommunicating the Cathars. Note his right index finger held up as if correcting their behavior. The second portion illustrates the initiation of the Albigensian Crusade.\(^\text{202}\)


\(^{202}\)The Albigensian Crusade, Chroniques de Saint-Denis, 14\(^{\text{th}}\) Century, British Royal Library (Permission is granted to copy, distribute and/or modify this document under the terms of the GNU Free Documentation License).
In 1199, Innocent had sent Pierre de Castelnau, a bishop of the church, to suppress the Cathars and to promote the conversion of Languedoc. In January of 1208 Castelnau was assassinated, serving as the thirteenth century equivalent to Arch Duke Franz Ferdinand on the eve of World War I. In response Innocent devised a comprehensive crusade, on what he declared a heretical stance in Southern France. Phillip II offered up his barons to the Church to suppress the identified heretics which guaranteed him a two-fold reward- the Church’s favor as well as the promise of all the heretic lands and political titles.\textsuperscript{203} The military forces destroyed all of the zones identified as heretical including Carcassone, Pamiers and Albi.\textsuperscript{204} Then in August of 1209, Catholic crusaders marched into Sivian and began a mass slaughter of the Cathars. According to the Cistercian writer Caesar of Heisterbach,

> While discussions were still going on with the barons about the release of those in the city who were deemed to be Catholics, the servants and other persons of low degree and unarmed attacked the city without waiting for orders from their leaders. To our amazement, crying "to arms, to arms!" within the space of two or three hours they crossed the ditches and the walls and Béziers was taken. Our men spared no one, irrespective of rank, sex or age, and put to the sword almost 20,000 people. After this great slaughter the whole city was despoiled and burnt, as Divine vengeance miraculously...\textsuperscript{205}

Cistercian wrote of a victory for the Church, however as we will discuss later it did not extinguish Cathars as much as it caused them to relocate, only to return back to Toulouse as soon as four years after Innocent’s death. The question remains however, was it the Cathars lack of reverence and observation of the sacraments that caused their defeat, or was it matter of politics between temporal lords?\textsuperscript{206} As far as Innocent was concerned, the measures taken at Languedoc


were entirely justified on the basis of religious piety and the protection of the faith. His interpretation was that the Cathars were a threat to the Church, and for a Pope that was intent on consolidating that body, they added to the confusion and nonconformity that had run rampant in the empire.

FIGURE 4.5. Cathars being expelled from Carcassonne in 1209

This event also served as an example to outlying clerics who had come to tolerate Catharism, or any form of heresy for that matter, whether it was by the request of their feudal Lord, or simply because secular interests had deterred them from their duties to the Church.208

Excommunication for clerics was both a spiritual threat as well as a financial one, and regardless of how well their feudal lords may have compensated them, the reign of Innocent III

207 Cathars Being Expelled from Carcassone Permission is granted to copy, distribute and/or modify this document under the terms of the GNU Free Documentation License.

and the new mission of the church to reclaim its flock, clerics included, could not be denied. As far as his mission to eliminate heresy and to reestablish the Church’s power lost to secularism, and to what he felt were abominations of the sacraments, Innocent physically illustrated the consequences of dismissing Church authority.209 The Albigensian Crusade would not prove to be the magnum opus of Innocent’s reign, however. He knew that in order to permanently reform the piety, and the authority of the Catholic Church he would have to rewrite its laws.

4.3 The 1215 Canon Reasserts the Role of Faith

As mentioned above, throughout the first millennium of the Church, no official papal compilations of Church law existed before Innocent; the authority of earlier collections depended essentially on the authority of their owner and subsequently their secular legislators.210 So that the secular world could align more closely with an ordained law of the Church a revised canon was necessary. It was Innocent’s initiative to streamline Church law via the glosses of his canon writers, and more importantly to enforce their authority. Innocent’s numerous Papal Bulls expedited his initiatives; in the Papal Bull issued April, 19 1213 Innocent convened the meeting of the Fourth Lateran Council.211 The goal of the meeting was to promulgate Canon Law to all Church territory, which by the early thirteenth century included Germany, France, Rome, Northern Italy, and eventually Sicily. The Fourth Lateran Council was the largest ecumenical council to ever caucus. In order to consolidate church power, law was vital; for a people to convert and to abide, they must first understand what that entails, and an evolved canon

increased the likelihood of, not only membership in the Church, but obedience to its laws over all other laws and secular leaders.

St. Thomas Aquinas defined law as an “ordinance of reason for the common good, made by him who has care of the community,” in this case the Pope.212 Innocent defined canon law and its relationship to temporal law as having a relationship much like the sun and the moon; “as the moon receives its light from the sun, so the splendor of the royal power and authority is derived from the pontifical.”213 Canon law and customary law existed side by side in the early thirteenth century, but it was clear that Innocent felt that Church law took precedence, and furthermore that the courts should observe this hierarchy.214 There is debate concerning whether Innocent actually had a great deal of experience with previous canons. Kenneth Pennington poses that Innocent’s decretals provide evidence that, although Innocent is perceived to have trained at Bologna, the language in his decrees suggests he was never a trained law student.215

The school of Bologna had reached its pinnacle in the early thirteenth century, in fact, according to Pennington, the opinions and laws produced there caused Northern canonists to all but stop writing. Bologna’s Northern counterparts ceased opinions on the Gratian collection as well as commentary on any new papal decretals by 1225.216 The type of education that was provided at Bologna, particularly the language of the law taught there served as a fingerprint that could have identified its students, however according to Kenneth Pennington and Brian Tierney,

this language was lacking in Innocent’s decretals.217 Perhaps that is why he enlisted the help of Petrus Beneventanus. Beneventanus was identified on the roster of the Fourth Lateran Council as a Cardinal. He was a Roman from a noble family, who studied and taught canon law at Bologna; he had also created an authenticated collection of all of Innocent’s decretals, which Innocent fully endorsed.

This was the first time in history that a pope had adopted a private canonical collection.218 It was called the *Compilatio tertia*, and it would serve as the basis for the Fourth Lateran Council when they met to create the 1215 Canon. On April 19, 1213, Innocent issued a papal bull that convened the twelfth ecumenical council of the Church. Also known as the “Great Council,” it was the largest council convened to discuss church doctrine with over 1350 participants including abbots, cardinals, bishops patriarchs, priors and monarchs.219 Under the leadership of Innocent this body promulgated seventy Canons, all of which were justified in Biblical theology and apostolic tradition.220 The canon approached every matter of reform that Innocent addressed in his decretals which included the sacraments, lay investiture and most importantly a description of the Church’s place in secular courts. All of these matters leant themselves to the re-establishment of papal power, as well as the Church’s rightful place as *mater omnium Christi fidelium*.221

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220 Romans 6:10 and Matthew 28:19
The sacraments, while a major point of contention, were only directly mentioned six times throughout the whole body of the canon, save the two canons that discussed marriage. However the discussion and the rationale surrounding these 6 canons was clearly a commentary on a wide range of issues that Innocent felt contributed to the abuse and misdirection of these rituals, particularly when one considered those who practiced the ritual without recognition of the Trinity, like the Cathars.

Canon I states:

the sacrament of baptism, which by each Person of the Trinity, namely the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is effected in water, duly conferred on children and adults in the form prescribed by the Church by anyone whatsoever, leads to salvation…and should anyone after the reception of baptism have fallen into sin, by true repentance he can always be restored.

The language here is interesting in that it suggests that anyone can be baptized in the Church, but furthermore anyone in the church can baptize. It is important to note what was briefly mentioned above when discussing the baptismal right; the administration of the rite was previously granted only to the bishops, but on a logistics level, the more representatives that could perform the act, the greater the likelihood of an influx in membership. Bishops continued to bless fonts, as well as the oil used during the unction, but since their administration of the rite was no longer required, this allowed for a more expedited growth in Church power. The liberty to baptize in other faiths, however, was outlawed and considered heresy. While the canon did not mention the Cathars by name, Canon I and Canon II placed a great deal of emphasis on the Trinity, and clearly dismissed any baptism that did not invoke all three names. Peter Lombard, a twelfth century theologian

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who had won Innocent’s favor and for whom Canon II awarded for his interpretation of the Trinity said this concerning the baptism:

Wherefore Pope Zacharias says to Bishop Boniface: ‘It was most positively declared in the Synod of the Angels, that whoever was immersed without the invocation of the Trinity, did not have the sacrament of regeneration; statement which is entirely true, because if anyone is immersed in the font of baptism without the invocation of the Trinity, he is not a complete Christian, unless he is baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and the holy spirit.’

Without the recognition of the Trinity, Consolamentum, as well as Jewish initiation rites were outlawed and deemed heretical. In addition to Canon I, Canon IV and LXVI discounted Latin and Greek attempts to re-baptize their members in place of penance as well as the Jewish initiation rite, respectively. On the Jewish tradition, the canon alluded to the book of Ecclesiastes where it states that “man should not goeth on two ways,” in other words one cannot observe two different traditions. If a Jew received baptism into the Christian church, he was forbidden to return to his Jewish faith. The elimination of dualist, Greek and Jewish ceremonies left the masses with no option outside of the Catholic Church, by penalty of excommunication, or being labeled a heretic. Princes and monarchs who were baptized in the Church were expected to both observe as well as enforce these mandates as well, which ensured spiritual as well as secular penalty for insubordination. The same reverence was applied to the sacrament of the Eucharist.

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226Ecclesiastes 2:14
Like baptism, the 1215 Canon did not always directly focus on the sacrament of the Eucharist as much as it did on the orthodoxy that surrounded its purpose and significance. For instance, transubstantiation was still an unresolved issue, even within the walls of the Church. The endorsement discussed in Canon I defined the Church’s stance, forevermore:

There is one Universal Church of the faithful, outside of which there is no salvation. In which there is the same priest and sacrifice, Jesus Christ, whose body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine; the bread being changed, (transsubstantiatio) by divine power into the body, and the wine into the blood, so that to realize the mystery of unity we may receive of Him what He has received of us. And this sacrament no one can effect except the priest who has been dually ordained in accordance with the keys of the Church, which Jesus Christ Himself gave to the Apostles and their successors.228

This excerpt served the most poignant of all the canons concerning orthodoxy; first, unlike baptism, it notes that only priests can conduct the sacrament of the Eucharist. It was essentially a summary of all of Innocent’s decretals on the subject of the Eucharist, and furthermore his beliefs regarding who was worthy of salvation. To further support the significance of the Eucharist Canons XX and XXI explained the care and practice of the Eucharist. Canon XX supported the Church’s faith in transubstantiation and demanded that Eucharist, the consecrated body and blood of Christ, must be kept in a safe place, under lock and key.229 Canon XXI commanded that the faithful, especially before the Easter celebration, take penance before they participated in the Eucharist otherwise they would be excommunicated.230 The canon makes it clear that the sacraments were not optional for believers, and because of this they had to be administered regularly and by pious, upstanding members of the clergy.

230Medieval Sourcebook, Canon XXI
Papal reform dominated the whole of the 1215 Canon. In fact, almost every canon of the Fourth Lateran Council was, in some way, directed at clergy reform, and included a new approach to lay investiture, prelate behavior and a cleric responsibility to the Church as well as their responsibility to their communities where they were expected to reject abuses and to reform the morals of their subjects. Since the canon confirmed that absolution could only be granted by a priest through the sacraments, it was imperative that clerics were free of all other distractions which included their entertainment of temporal offices. Canon XLIII- XLV outlined clerics responsibility to laymen.

Canon XLIII states:

Some laymen (that is, princes) attempt to usurp too much of the divine right when they compel ecclesiastical persons who are under no obligation to them in matters temporal, to take an oath of fidelity to them. Wherefore, since according to the Apostle, ‘To the Lord the servant standeth or falleth (Romans 14:4), we forbid by the authority of the sacred council that such clerics be forced by secular persons to take an oath of this kind.

As discussed above, it was common for princes to abuse the offices of their clerics. In addition to taking advantage of their advice, many princes had grown accustomed to usurping the property of their clerics. Many secular rulers also took advantage of the power of excommunication, and ordered clerics regularly to assign damnation to those who they wanted to punish for matters far from the faith. However, the canon made it clear that first, and foremost, clerics were obligated to God, the Church and the Pope before any secular rulers. In order to serve their holy master, clerics in the sacred orders were expected to maintain a demeanor that was complimentary to their purpose. Canons XIV-XVII dictated proper cleric behavior. They dismissed drunkenness, gambling and even dictated the clothing that they should wear to the


color. But of all these canons the one that resonated throughout the greater movement toward clerical reform, and the initiatives of Innocent III was Canon XIV, which above all things, guaranteed the perpetuation of the faith through the performance of the sacred mysteries.

Canon XIV states that:

The morals and general conduct of clerics may be better let all strive to live chastely and virtuously, particularly those in sacred orders, guarding against every vice or desire, especially that on account of which the anger of God came from heaven upon the children of unbelief, so that in the sight of Almighty God they may perform their duties with pure heart and chaste body…If therefore anyone suspended for this reason shall presume to celebrate the divine mysteries, let him not only be deprived of his ecclesiastical benefices but for this twofold offense let him be forever deposed.²³⁴

Innocent wished to reclaim his flock and these canons assured their return. The Fourth Lateran Council did not fully agree to every element of the canon, especially the secular rulers and lay participants whose opinions often conflicted, but “they were invited to witness the declarations of the faith, not to treat them.”²³⁵ It did, however, set precedence for secular invitation in subsequent ecumenical meetings. The lack of secular proposals and objection did not mean that the canons, which again were based off of Innocent’s decretals, were embraced fully by church leaders, either. In fact a great deal of disagreement in older orders of the Church who were happy with the familiar practices and customary procedures for which they had adopted, groups like the Benedictines, Augustinians and Cistercians.²³⁶ In the end, if you were present at the council you were expected to adopt its laws and furthermore to witness to them to your people; their salvation and the survival of the faith depended on it.

²³³Medieval Sourcebook, XIV-XVII
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The power of the Catholic Church, from its inception, was endowed to it by Christ. Through Paul and the fishers of men he called his apostles; Christ trusted that his teachings would survive and that ultimately the souls of man would reach salvation though the sacraments. However, while Christ left his apostles with an outline for orthodoxy, it was ultimately up to believers of the faith whether Greek or Latin or Bulgarian to devise their own interpretations of these teachings, particularly the sacraments, and to perpetuate them in their respective regions of the world. Baptism and the Eucharistic celebration that symbolized Christ’s sacrifice were the two greatest symbols of an individual’s faithful devotion as well as their investment in their promise of everlasting salvation. Everything from the liturgies to the theology that surrounded these rituals helped define their legitimacy as well as the power of the central Roman Church that felt it was endowed the right to determine their significance. From 400 to 1200 these rituals received attention and recommendation from a myriad of theologians, each of who used their own canon and their own preferred theories to dictate the sacraments’ administration and their symbolism. Toward the end of the twelfth century however, this sea of opinions drew parishes and their congregations further away from the Roman Catholic Church and its orthodoxy.

In an effort to return Christ’s followers to their original Church, Innocent III was convinced that he had “cast nets for the fish and returned them to their proper place in the mater omnium Christi fidelium.” In a sermon from Innocent, he claimed the Church, and in turn Christ, had conferred on him spiritualium plenitudinem as well as latitudinem temporalium and that these favors gave him limitless power and exercise of it without any objection what so ever.\footnote{A.J. and R.W. Carlyle, Mediaeval Political Theory in the West, II (Edinburgh: Blackwood and Sons, 1903), 166.}
The *Gesta Innocentii* listed Innocent’s attributes as a series of contrasts:

He was a man who was learned in both literature and scripture…neither prodigal nor covetous…harsh with the inobedient and the obstinate, but kind to the humble and loyal…humble in prosperity and patient in adversity, a little prone to anger, but quick to forgive.\(^{238}\)

Although his personality was firm and calculated when he dealt with stubborn princes and priests alike, his personal writings indicate that he had expressed joy for having lived in an age during which “Christ granted victory to Christendom over schismatics, heretics and infidels.”\(^{239}\) The Roman Pope who grew up yielding to the power of the symbolism and the faith that would come to define his life as the Holder of the Holy See was ultimately committed to preserving what he felt were the true means to salvation and to his role “above all people and kingdoms, less than God but greater than man, judging all, but judged by God alone.”\(^{240}\)

Innocent saw himself as the judge of all God’s people on earth, and worked to assure that God, as the final judge of their souls, would be satisfied with their actions and their devotion to the faith, including the sacraments, on earth. While there had been pontiffs that were considered reformers, Innocent III was the first pope to a.) use one collection of decretals to lead his church and b.) to wage a crusade against heretics, specifically those that denied the Trinitarian church, saw Christ as anything but divine, and finally those who continued to see their local customs and traditions, including their customary laws, as superior to the laws assigned by the Church. It is important to note that under Innocent’s reign the arm of the Church stretched far beyond the regions that were pinpointed in this study. From Prussia to Sicily, Christian bishops adopted the new canon and started to enforce it.

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\(^{238}\)Kenneth Pennington, “Innocent the II and the Devine Authority of the Pope,” entry in CUA Faculty Database [http://faculty.cua.edu/pennington/canon%20law/POPEBISHOPSChaptOne.htm](http://faculty.cua.edu/pennington/canon%20law/POPEBISHOPSChaptOne.htm) (Accessed April 16, 2013)


\(^{240}\)Ibid.
The fruits of his labor were not witnessed by Innocent, as he died in 1216, just a year after the completed canon was issued. He also did not live to see the regions targeted by the Albigensian Crusade return to their heretical ways. Within four years after his death, heretics of Southern France started to worship freely again.\textsuperscript{241} Some scholars argue that the Albigensian Crusade was a failure because these groups were not completely vanquished till 1330.\textsuperscript{242} However it is fair to say that aspects of the crusade were a success, for instance the Catholic takeover of Montsegur, a Cathar castle and military stronghold near Carcassonne France, caused a mass exodus of Cathars into the Pyrenees. The four Perfects that managed to escape the castle got away with only a small treasure, as well as some holy texts.\textsuperscript{243} Innocent is also often cited as having initiated the Inquisition itself, however, the persecution of the heretics in that case were far worse than even the darkest days of the Albigensian Crusade. Innocent’s goals for the faith were not inherently based on murder, they were based on creating a legislation and a papal body that were equipped to protect the piety, sacraments and leading bodies of its institution. While extinguishment was a solution to ensure his agenda was followed, Innocent’s record shows that his approach was generally diplomatic before it resorted to force. He also employed the confiscation of goods and excommunication which, according to the faith, was the greatest punishment of all.\textsuperscript{244}

As the 1215 Canon stated, all who were excommunicated were denied the sacraments, and in accordance with their promise they were also denied salvation. The sacraments were not a marginal issue to Innocent and as such he worked diligently to make sure that they were well

\textsuperscript{243}Strayers, \textit{The Albigensian Crusade}, 141.
defined, enforced and administered by model clerics who humbly behaved in accordance with the canon. As a result, no compromises were allowed on the position of the priesthood or the secondary role of lay and secular rulers in matters of the Church. After Innocent priests and friars were no longer pawns in secular initiatives, they became authorities of the faith and assumed a role that, like the law they enforced, was above temporal rule.  

For all practical purposes the 1215 Canon changed the Catholic Church forevermore, and that body of laws was shouldered by one man. This is particularly true when you look at the increase in court cases that were seen by ecclesiastical courts after the issuance of the 1215 Canon. However papal and canonical authority was defined before Innocent III came to power, his effort to transform and re-establish the Church’s power on earth certainly left an indelible mark on Western Europe after his death.

This study of the 1215 Canon, Innocent III and the sacraments was inconclusive in a number of areas. For instance, it needs more information regarding the relationship between Innocent III and Petrus Beneventanus including Petrus’s personal recommendations, if any, to the decretals that would become the 1215 Canon. I think that this is significant because of Innocent’s reputation as a lawyer pope, when in fact there is little evidence that he ever formally attended law school. This suggests that at least in matters of law, he might have had a fair deal of help from his legalist friend. In terms of law I also feel that more attention should be given to the Gratian’s *Decretum* and how this document influenced the role of the Latin Church in civil matters after the 1215 Canon was issued. I find it interesting that Gratian’s work appears to serve the papacy and to support its supreme position in law, yet it was not endorsed by Pope Innocent. I can only purport that because it was a product of legalists and not of the Church itself that he

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felt endorsing Gratian’s work, while submitting his own canon, undermined the power of the law coming from the papacy.

In addition, customary practices within local churches, particularly those concerning marriage, also deserve more attention. There are a number of case studies which one might explore these same sympathies in Italy, where we know that there were growing groups of Cathars even within Rome. This study would need to trace the Cathar faith back to the Bogomils in Bulgaria as well as the Paulican movement. After researching many of the heresies in Western Europe at this time, I believe that almost every group that was deemed heretical by the Catholic Church, save the Jews and the Muslims, can be traced back to the Paulican movement. This group, as far as I can tell laid some of the earliest objections to a hierarchical Christian Church, and certainly one that had exclusive rights to the interpretation of the gospels and the delegation of the sacraments.

Finally this study, in an effort to create a more accurate portrait of Innocent III, deserves further expansion on Innocent’s issuance of the Fourth Crusade, which specifically targeted Muslims, as well as his preaching and military campaigns in Northeastern European territories. I feel that including these regions would further support Innocent’s ultimate goals of reforming the papacy’s power, and furthermore his belief that the Catholic Church possessed the one true faith of the world, endowed to it by Christ, forever.
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